

**An explorative study:
Necessity, motivation and uncertainty – Enacting
entrepreneurial hustle**

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A research project submitted to the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration.

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Abstract

Day labourers are a marginalised category of worker operating in the unregulated informal sector, which is characterised by high levels of competition and uncertainty. Day labourers are so-called necessity entrepreneurs who have largely been pushed into the informal sector due to structural economic factors. This qualitative study delved into the day labourer phenomenon in South Africa with a view of understanding why these individuals have chosen the entrepreneurial path, what opportunities and hurdles they face in looking for work and plying their respective trades. Drawing on data collected, the study revealed how these individuals employed various entrepreneurial strategies and tactics to make a living. From the analysis of the findings, three constructs emerged: the uncertain environment to which day labourers are constantly exposed; the motivational factors driving day labourers' decision to become necessity entrepreneurs; and the pervasiveness of the entrepreneurial hustle as a catalyst for success. In many ways, the entrepreneurial hustle is the key to transitioning away from 'push' factors, which necessity entrepreneurs know only too well, towards 'pull' factors, which are more readily associated with opportunity-driven entrepreneurs. The study also enabled the formulation of a conceptual model showing how the economy (both formal and informal) and the environment (with its certainties and uncertainties) impact necessity entrepreneurs and how the entrepreneurial hustle assists to navigate the challenges that surround it.

Keywords

Entrepreneurial hustle, necessity entrepreneurship, informal sector, day labourers, uncertainty

Plagiarism Declaration

I declare that this research project is my own work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration at the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university. I further declare that I have obtained the necessary authorisation and consent to carry out this research.

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1 November 2023

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Research Problem

1.1 Introduction

In the informal economy, day labourers play a crucial and dynamic role, often serving as the backbone of various industries in many regions throughout the world. Operating within the informal sector, day labourers are essential contributors to the informal economy, providing valuable labour and services on a short-term basis. Their work is characterised by temporality, flexibility and a lack of formal employment contracts, which exposes them to a myriad of uncertainties and challenges (Webb et al., 2013).

Day labourers in the informal sector face a unique set of circumstances. Their work is often dependent on daily demand and subject to fluctuations in economic conditions. They are also reliant on informal networks for job opportunities (Xweso et al., 2022). As a result, they encounter constant uncertainties relating to income, job security and access to basic social protection (Blaauw et al., 2017).

This study seeks to shed light on the importance of day labourers in the informal sector and the resilience they demonstrate in navigating these uncertainties. By delving into their experiences, coping mechanisms and entrepreneurial behaviours, this study aims to recognise the significance of their role in the broader economic landscape and identify the strategies they deploy to enhance their opportunities. The creation of opportunities forms part of their resilience, as they do not become day labourers in the informal sector by choice.

Factors driving individuals into day labour activities out of necessity is an important boundary condition for this study (Webb et al., 2013) – alongside motivation theory in the form of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs – as it fosters a sense of urgency in day labourers' work and prompts an investigation into how the dimensions of the 'entrepreneurial hustle' influence their entrepreneurial endeavours. The insights gained from this study have the potential not only to inform policymakers, practitioners and stakeholders on how to support day labourers and improve their livelihoods, but also to contribute to a better understanding of the informal day labour economy.

The contribution made by day labourers to the informal sector cannot be understated. Their resilience, adaptability and entrepreneurial spirit in the face of uncertainties play a major role in sustaining local economies and supporting the informal workforce. This study seeks to honour their contribution, highlight their challenges and ultimately

advocate for policies that promote their well-being and status as integral to the fabric of the economy.

The foundational elements that have shaped the trajectory of this study are presented in the sections that follow. Section 1.2 ('Background') provides a contextual framework, painting a historical and current picture of day labourers operating in the informal sector and explaining why they are the focus of this study. Section 1.3 ('Purpose statement') discusses the main driving force behind this study, revealing why the chosen line of research is significant. Section 1.4 ('Research problem') pinpoints the specific issues and gaps that this study aims to address. Section 1.5 ('Research aim') sets out the main goals that the study intends to achieve, providing readers with a guide as to the academic aspects to be explored.

1.2 Background

With South Africa's gross domestic product (GDP) standing at a mere 0.4% in Q1 and 0.6% in Q2 of 2023, it is projected to be 1.1% by year end. Forecasts for 2024 see a continuation of this trend, with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) predicting very low to no real GDP growth (IMF, 2023). Domestic economic constraints, which have been exacerbated by South Africa's electricity crisis, are deepening inequality and poverty and elevating national unemployment, thus threatening social stability in the country (Deloitte, 2023).

The official unemployment rate in South Africa, recorded as 32.6% in Q2 of 2023, is now the highest in the world. This rate does not include so-called discouraged work seekers who have given up looking for employment. If they were included, the unemployment rate would rise to 46.5% (Gumbi, 2023). Education and skills levels lie at the heart of the challenges faced by the unemployed when looking for work. For example, according to Stats SA (2023), those with a post-matric qualification account for some 10.2% of the unemployed population, while those who did not complete school account for 46.5% of the unemployed population. Unemployment is particularly acute among young people – 63.9% among those aged 15–24 and 42.1% among those aged 25–34 (Stats SA, 2023).

Given that the formal sector is more skills-orientated, it is expected that those who cannot find jobs turn to the informal sector to make a living. Webb et al. (2013) assert that informality is driven by a lack of access to legitimate professional pathways as well as individuals' ambitions to elevate their social standing or merely ensure their survival. (Webb et al., 2013). The informal sector may not be the preferred choice of employment as it typically offers lower remuneration, but barriers to entry are low as it is not

prescriptive when it comes to skills level requirements and it can be a valuable outlet for those competing for survival (Xweso et al., 2022). However, the South African informal sector remains relatively small. Ranked in the bottom five of 54 African countries, the informal sector accounts for approximately 29% of South Africa's GDP, in contrast to a peer-group country like Nigeria where it accounts for 57.7% of GDP (World Economics, 2023).

A number of academic scholars, including Skinner (2019), have found that the combination of entrepreneurship and the informal economy is a catalyst for economic growth in developing countries (Skinner, 2019). Dencker et al. (2021) highlight the importance of 'necessity entrepreneurship' and motivation as means to satisfy basic needs. They stress the importance of differentiating between various 'necessity entrepreneurs' and understanding how these entrepreneurs engage with their environment (Dencker et al., 2021).

Serviere and Munoz (2010) note that self-employment is a last-resort means of survival, with the term 'necessity entrepreneurship' being used in acknowledgement of the limited employment opportunities in the formal sector (Serviere & Munoz, 2010). Necessity entrepreneurship in the form of day labour has mostly been discussed from a demographic perspective and in descriptive terms in the South African context. Studies on day labourers have explored aspects such as subjective wellbeing, foreign migrants, the role of religion, working environments, hiring sites and the impact of Covid-19 (Blaauw et al., 2012; Blaauw et al., 2013; Blaauw, 2016; Blaauw et al., 2018; Harmse et al., 2009; Krugell & Blaauw, 2014; Mapendere et al., 2019; Theodore et al., 2015; Xweso et al., 2022). More research is needed to understand the role of psychological factors at play and how these influence the lived experiences and behaviours of day labourers in an uncertain environment (Xweso et al., 2022).

To survive, day labourers need to take active steps to address the challenges they face. McMullen and Shepherd (2006) researched entrepreneurial activity and how it is a fundamental catalyst for people facing or dealing with uncertainty. They contend that entrepreneurship is not just about making a decision; it is about making a decision to act (McMullen & Shepherd, 2006). Reacting in this way to an uncertain environment is fundamental to entrepreneurship and requires further investigation.

Fisher et al. (2020b) introduced a new construct of entrepreneurship within the action-oriented realm, which they called the 'entrepreneurial hustle'. In their seminal paper, they define four specific themes relating to entrepreneurs' ability to navigate challenges and exploit opportunities in the environment under conditions of uncertainty: (1) urgency, (2)

unorthodoxy (3) intended usefulness, and (4) addressing immediate challenges and opportunities (Fisher et al., 2020b). These entrepreneurial hustle constructs are used in this study as a basis for understanding how day labourers navigate uncertainty in the informal sector.

In exploring how day labourers exploit opportunities and navigate challenges in the informal sector in South Africa, this study offers insights into the motivational drivers of day labourers, although they are pushed into this uncertain environment by structural economic factors. Additionally, the study will contribute to the entrepreneurship literature by proposing a new key construct in the action-oriented domain that showcases real-world application.

The next section introduces the purpose statement which presents the primary goals and intentions of this study. It also provides an investigative foundation by clarifying the intended direction of the research. This is designed to give readers a clearer understanding of the study's rationale.

1.3 Purpose statement

This study aims to investigate the socio-economic profile of necessity entrepreneurs engaged in informal day labour activities and to explore the psychological behaviours that they invoke to maintain their livelihoods. The intention of the study is to provide valuable insights into the experiences of and challenges faced by informal entrepreneurs, as well as the factors that drive their persistence in the face of uncertainty.

To gain a deeper understanding of how day labourers tackle environmental uncertainties when they are pushed into entrepreneurial activities, the concept of the entrepreneurial hustle is explored as a key factor in these entrepreneurs' success – notwithstanding the challenges and difficulties they face.

According to Fisher et al. (2020b), entrepreneurial success does not only depend on physical activities, artifacts or attributes. Entrepreneurial success is enhanced by psychological factors and behaviours, including the mindset to act – which is associated with the entrepreneurial hustle (Fisher et al., 2020b). Entrepreneurs who display a strong work ethic, perseverance, creativity and risk-taking are more likely to be successful in their economic endeavours, even in the face of challenges and setbacks.

The findings from this study should strengthen the literature on the concept of the entrepreneurial hustle, while also informing the development of programmes and policies aimed at supporting and encouraging entrepreneurship.

1.4 Research problem

According to Xweso et al. (2022), informal day labourers face many challenges owing to the unregulated work environment in which they operate. These challenges include fierce competition, the short-term nature of their relationship with employers, difficult wage negotiations, environmental factors, ongoing employment uncertainty, and poverty (Xweso et al, 2022).

It is important to state that entrepreneurial activity is not only pursued to achieve personal goals and/or satisfaction. Serviere and Munoz (2010) found that high levels of unemployment and a disproportionate number of low-income jobs in a country are catalysts for necessity entrepreneurial activity. According to the push motivation theory, the drivers of necessity entrepreneurship are 'insufficient job opportunities, low income and social marginalisation' (Serviere & Munoz, 2010).

Considering that day labourers operating in the informal sector have been pushed into an uncertain environment in order to satisfy their basic needs, their plight needs further investigation (Dencker et al., 2021). The findings from such an investigation could go a long way towards revealing – and finding ways to reduce the impact of – external factors that place a burden on necessity entrepreneurs. Another important dimension in such an investigation is how day labourers in the informal sector overcome the hardships that they face.

Therefore, the research problem that this study addresses is how day labourers in the informal sector in South Africa, using various strategies and action steps, navigate the uncertainties of their environment, fulfil their basic needs, and overcome the inherent challenges that they face on a day-to-day basis.

1.5 Research aim

The aim of this study is to use the sub constructs of entrepreneurial hustle to provide a practical example of where entrepreneurial hustle is being practiced daily to address uncertainty and strengthen the construct with new literature and context. To this end, the intersection of push and motivational theories is used as an important boundary condition to gather different perspectives on day labourers, thereby adding new insights to the current literature on necessity entrepreneurship.

1.6 Research report structure

The rest of this research report is structured as follows:

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter provides an in-depth examination of theoretical arguments and foundation principles related to the research problem. It explores prior research and scholarly work on necessity entrepreneurs, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and the entrepreneurial hustle.

Chapter 3: Research Questions

This chapter identifies the research questions which are pivotal to addressing the core research problem. The questions are designed to delve into the different dimensions of the entrepreneurial hustle and how it is applied by day labourers in the informal sector to navigate the uncertainties they face.

Chapter 4: Research Methodology

This chapter outlines and explains the chosen research methodology, including the research instrument, sampling approach, and measures adopted to ensure the study's validity and reliability.

Chapter 5: Results

This chapter presents and analyses the results from the study. In this regard, the data collected during the study is examined and interpreted so as to shed light on the significance of the entrepreneurial hustle and how it is applied within the informal sector.

Chapter 6: Discussion of Results

This chapter critically evaluates the research results in the light of the research questions and the existing literature. It also delves into the implications of the results and their alignment with previous scholarly work.

Chapter 7: Conclusion and Recommendations

This final chapter distils the principal findings from the study, while also acknowledging the study's limitations. Additionally, it provides suggestions for potential future research, based on the key insights gained from the study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Entrepreneurship is often seen as a path towards innovation and success, but there is another side to it – necessity-driven entrepreneurship. This is especially true in the informal sector where day labourers and other vulnerable groups work under unpredictable conditions. As pointed out by Xweso et al. (2022), these workers face many hurdles every day, like tough competition, short-term job offers, low wages, constant uncertainty about where their next job will come from, and poverty (Xweso et al., 2022). Unlike other entrepreneurs who chase big dreams, for these individuals it is more about getting by and meeting basic needs.

Serviere and Munoz (2010) take this notion further by linking necessity-driven entrepreneurial activities to high unemployment and low-paying jobs. They explain that when faced with few job opportunities, low income and social exclusion, individuals turn to entrepreneurial activities as a way to survive (Serviere & Munoz, 2010). They paint a clear picture of day labourers in the informal sector who must navigate a tough environment with the main goal of fulfilling basic needs.

Building on this, Dencker et al. (2021) suggest that a better understanding is required of the lives of day labourers in the informal sector. There is a pressing need to delve more deeply into their everyday experiences, the tough realities they face and how they handle their multitude of challenges (Dencker et al., 2021). This sets the stage for the current inquiry which aims to reveal how day labourers deal with uncertainties and what keeps them going in such a volatile environment.

As a visual representation to ground the different sections in this research report, the entrepreneurship process, supported by its relevant theoretical frameworks and adapted from Webb et al. (2013), appears in Figure 1. Webb et al. (2013) considered institutional theory and motivation-related theories which were expanded to incorporate informality as a form of deviance as well as resource allocation theory.

The Webb et al. (2013) model is useful as it shows the flow from entrepreneurial intent to action within the informal environment. Additionally, motivation theory – which conveys a basic needs perspective – is seen as the catalyst in the process which pushes day labourers into the informal economy.

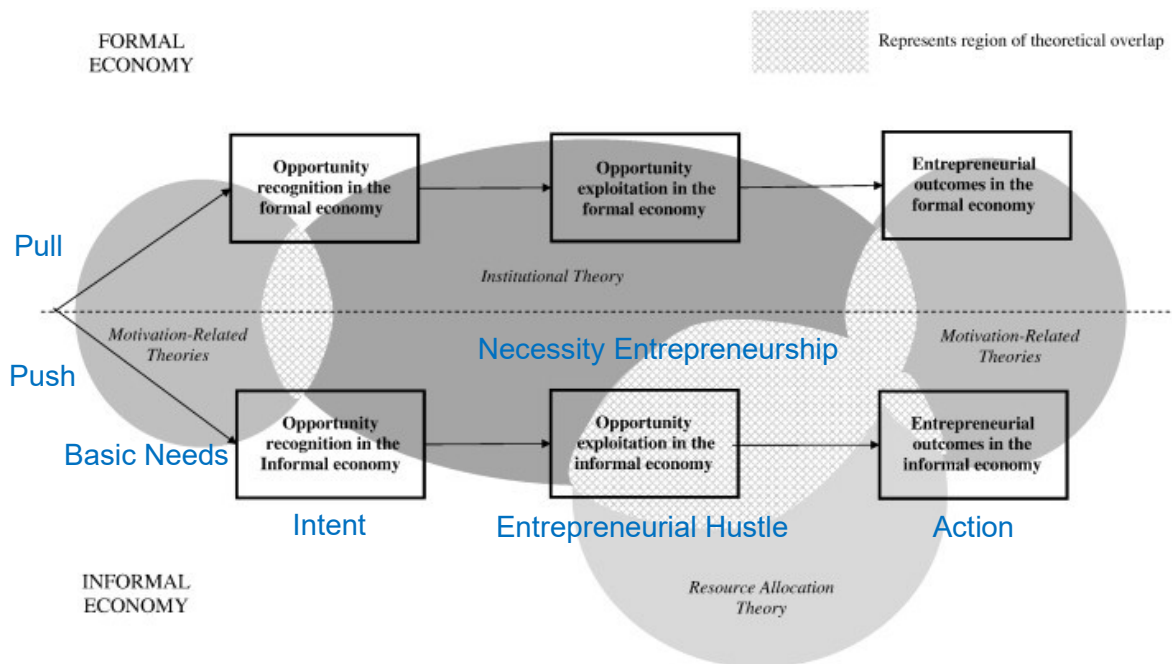


Figure 1: The theoretical frameworks underpinning the entrepreneurship process in the informal sector

Source: Original model (Webb et al., 2013); adapted elements in blue (author's own compilation)

In the ensuing sections, topics such as the informal sector, entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial actions, and how all these pertain to day labourers are discussed. The focus is on how these workers navigate challenges and uncertainty, balancing needs, difficulties and motivation. Central to the discussion is the concept of the entrepreneurial hustle which is used to shed light on the urgent, unorthodox actions undertaken by day labourers to survive – and/or to thrive – amidst volatility and uncertainty.

2.2 Day labourers in the informal sector

In the context of South Africa, the term day 'labourers' refers to individuals who engage in economic activities in the informal sector to earn a livelihood because of the limited opportunities in the formal sector (Harmse et al., 2009). Against the backdrop of South Africa's low GDP growth rate and constrained formal sector employment opportunities (Stats SA, 2023), a significant proportion of the population has been compelled to seek alternative work in the informal sector. This sector has gained prominence as a result of the government's inadequacies in bringing about structural changes and generating sustainable employment opportunities (Mahadea & Khumalo, 2020). This phenomenon is not unique to South Africa. The informal sector exists globally but is particularly prevalent in African and Asian countries (ILO, 2023).

The subsections below begin with a definition of the informal sector, highlighting its unique characteristics and dynamics and emphasising its significant influence on entrepreneurs operating within it. As outlined by Webb et al. (2013), this often-overlooked sector operates on the economic fringes but plays a pivotal role in the global economic discourse. However, this sector is riddled with challenges. The uncertainties that day labourers face every day are then explored, especially within the South African context. Recognising and probing these challenges helps to contextualise the motivations and actions of day labourers.

2.2.1 A definition of the informal sector

According to Webb et al. (2013), the informal sector is often referred to as the underground or shadow economy, as it deviates from traditional business norms (such as formal business registration). Yet it remains an integral part of many communities, with its many actors providing legal products and services, despite their unregistered status (Webb et al., 2013). This sector has sparked much curiosity, especially regarding how entrepreneurial activities flourish in the absence of formal structures.

Webb et al. (2013) examined the informal sector's rules, people's motivations for working in the sector and how resources are managed in the sector. They found that, while formal businesses grapple with stringent regulations and tax obligations, the informal sector attracts many entrepreneurs due to its flexibility and lower operational hurdles (Webb et al., 2013). This space can be a haven for those wishing to meet their basic needs. By delving into how entrepreneurship is practised in this sector, scholars and decision-makers alike can gain valuable insights, which will lay the foundation for integrating and improving the quality of business practices across both the formal and informal sectors.

2.2.2 Challenges and uncertainty in the informal sector

The informal sector, where day labourers operate, is characterised by a set of distinctive opportunities and challenges. Opportunities include low barriers to entry, while challenges include limited-scale operations, an unregulated competitive environment and a lack of social protection (Whitfield, 2021). The latter combination of factors creates an environment rife with uncertainty, as day labourers operate without the safety nets typically offered by the formal sector.

In the South African context, day labourers are confronted by structural barriers that hinder their prospects, such as restricted access to resources, a lack of legal recognition, and limited formal training or education opportunities (Schenck et al., 2014). These

collectively contribute to a heightened state of uncertainty within the informal sector, which shapes the experiences of day labourers.

The next section explores the push and motivational aspects guiding entrepreneurs in the informal sector. By leveraging frameworks like Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, entrepreneurial motivations (particularly among day labourers) can be decoded. This understanding allows for a more in-depth exploration of the unique entrepreneurial dynamics at play in the informal sector and reveals the entrepreneurial elements on display in that environment.

2.3 Push motivation theory: drivers of necessity entrepreneurship

Dencker et al. (2021) conducted an investigation into the underlying factors propelling individuals towards necessity entrepreneurship, shedding light on the distinct dynamics of push-based motivations compared to the more commonly studied pull-based motivations. Historically, scholarly attention in entrepreneurship has predominantly gravitated towards opportunity-seeking behaviours, with the exploration of necessity-driven entrepreneurship being a relatively recent development (Dencker et al., 2021). A notable observation made by Dencker et al. (2021) is that the process by which individuals transition to entrepreneurship due to push factors remains inadequately understood, and that it likely diverges from the pathways created by pull factors.

Figure 2 offers a visual representation of the foundational relationship between the driving force of having to fulfil basic needs and the subsequent push of entrepreneurs into the uncertain environment of the informal sector.

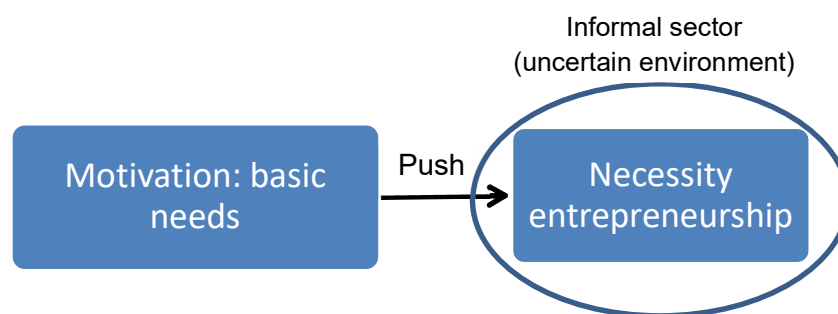


Figure 2: Basic framework of motivational drivers pushing day labourers towards necessity entrepreneurship

Source: Author's own compilation

2.3.1 Basic needs fulfilment in an uncertain environment

The proposed construct positions itself as a critical boundary condition, acknowledging that individuals in the informal day labour market often act out of a need to satisfy fundamental needs, such as obtaining food or ensuring safety. However, there is a significant contrast in motivations. While some day labourers are driven by these basic, essential needs, others pursue higher-level objectives. The disparity highlights the unique entrepreneurial pathways followed by individuals who are driven by survival and whose motives differ from those with more advanced aspirations. The urgency of the former group is evident and has been identified as a key trait of those primarily concerned with survival (Carsrud & Brännback, 2011).

A pivotal framework that sheds light on these motivations is Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. Formulated by Maslow in 1943, the framework takes the form of a five-tier model of human needs, ranging from basic physiological needs (such as food and shelter) to self-actualisation (Maslow, 1943). This structure acts as a guiding prism, offering clarity on the intrinsic motivations propelling entrepreneurial behaviours, particularly among day labourers in the informal sector.

Analysing the behaviours of these day labourers through the lens of Maslow's Hierarchy reveals that their efforts are initially geared towards meeting their basic physiological needs and ensuring their safety (Schenck et al., 2014). Such efforts directly correlate with the lower tiers of Maslow's Hierarchy, emphasising the intersection between entrepreneurship and the need to fulfil fundamental human needs in the informal sector. Using Maslow's Hierarchy to interpret the motivations of day labourers also allows for a deeper understanding of their daily struggles. For example, it creates opportunities to study the interplay between the intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors that influence day labourers as they apply their entrepreneurial skills in the face of necessity and uncertainty.

Building on this understanding, the combination of push and motivational theories offers some rich perspectives on necessity entrepreneurship. This blended approach provides a boundary condition for entrepreneurship in this study. Those engaged in necessity entrepreneurship align predominantly with the base tiers of Maslow's Hierarchy, focusing on physiological and safety needs. This adds to their vulnerability. This perspective separates the motives and behaviours of day labourers operating in the informal sector from profit-driven entrepreneurs. By highlighting the distinct differences between the two types of entrepreneurs, this study is able to analyse and interpret the entrepreneurial

journey of day labourers in the informal sector. With the broader motivational factors having been discussed, the next section looks at the dynamics shaping necessity entrepreneurs.

2.4 Necessity entrepreneurship

The intention of this study is to advance necessity entrepreneurship theory by researching the engagement patterns of necessity entrepreneurs in an uncertain environment. By probing the interplay between push factors in motivation theory (Dencker et al., 2021) and by aligning these with the fundamental concept and manifestation of basic needs (Maslow, 1943), the study strives to provide a framework that explains how entrepreneurs navigate the challenging environment in which they operate. Such a framework would position day labour activities within the informal sector as a construct of necessity entrepreneurship, against the backdrop of uncertainty.

With the focus on necessity entrepreneurship, which is rooted in the immediate need for survival and obligation rather than the proactive pursuit of new ventures, the concept of 'liability of poorness' becomes relevant. This concept specifically highlights unique hurdles that these entrepreneurs face, such as limited education and external pressures.

2.4.1 Towards an understanding of necessity entrepreneurship

Necessity entrepreneurship is characterised by a survival motivation and circumstantial obligation, which is in contrast to opportunity-driven entrepreneurship. As deliberated by Dencker et al. (2021), Coffman and Sunny (2021) and Morris et al. (2022), necessity entrepreneurship emerges predominantly in settings where individuals are propelled into entrepreneurial roles to ensure their livelihoods amidst a scarcity of alternative employment pathways (Coffman & Sunny, 2021; Dencker et al., 2021; Morris et al., 2022). The underlying motivational drivers of necessity entrepreneurship centre on fulfilling basic survival needs, which aligns closely with the lower levels in Maslow's model of motivation.

In their paper, Morris et al. (2022) state that entrepreneurs in tough financial situations face extra challenges due to a (new) concept called the 'liability of poorness', as illustrated in Figure 3. This concept is concerned with problems such as not having enough education, having a scarcity mindset, dealing with many outside pressures, and not having a backup plan (Morris et al., 2022). These problems make it even harder for entrepreneurs' small ventures to survive. Morris et al. (2022) examined the impact of these issues and how some hardworking entrepreneurs manage to get past these

problems. Morris et al. (2022) suggest that entrepreneurs operating under intense outside pressure should be scrutinised to create a better understanding of how they build resilience and overcome their challenges. Clearly, the liability of poorness framework has a direct relationship with the experience of day labourers operating in the informal sector.

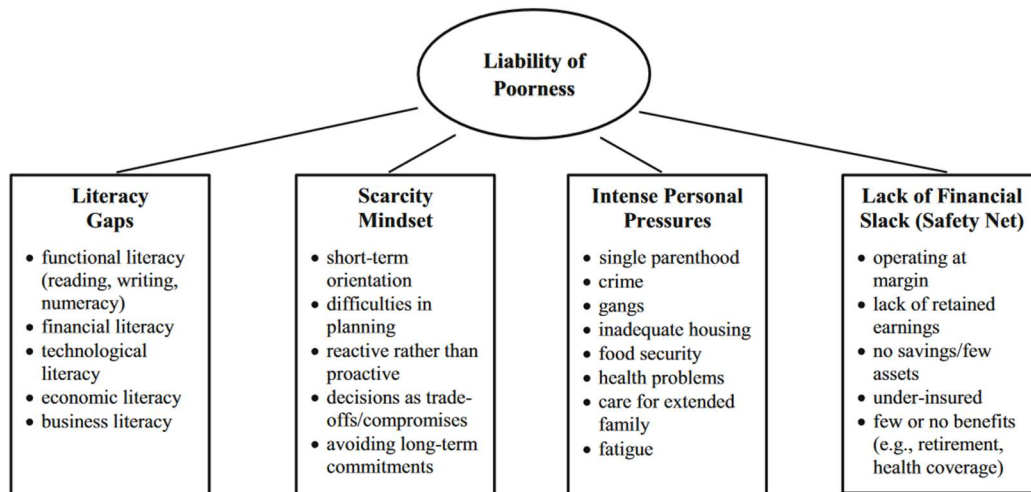


Figure 3: The liability of poorness concept and its components

Source: Morris et al. (2022)

In the informal sector, day labourers embody the distinctive qualities of necessity entrepreneurship as they are propelled by survivalist pressures rather than entrepreneurial ambitions. Day labourers' participation in the informal economy illustrates the interplay of survival instincts and economic self-sufficiency, underscoring a narrative of entrepreneurship that is born out of necessity rather than the pursuit of innovative opportunities (Coffman & Sunny, 2021).

Articles on entrepreneurs starting ventures out of need reflect a wide range of viewpoints, but they all agree on the basic idea that these entrepreneurs are just trying to get by. Nevertheless, there is a discussion to be had on whether this kind of entrepreneurship can move beyond just getting by, to spotting and taking advantage of new opportunities for better, more stable growth (Serviere & Munoz, 2010). There is more to learn about how moving from needs-based to opportunity-driven entrepreneurship occurs.

Looking closely at the day-to-day efforts of day labourers through the lens of needs-based entrepreneurship helps one to understand the bigger picture of how people work around challenges in such an environment. The combination of just-getting-by business activities against the backdrop of limited resources and unsure market conditions highlights the immense challenges that these day labourers have to confront every day.

Research on necessity entrepreneurship in the informal sector, where individuals seek sustainable livelihoods out of dire necessity, remains relatively limited (Blaauw et al., 2018; Mapendere et al., 2019). However, the emerging body of work in this area provides valuable insights. For instance, Tobias et al. (2013) explored how entrepreneurial endeavours in the coffee sector in Rwanda elevated living standards for necessity entrepreneurs (Tobias et al., 2013). This underscores how adversity can spur entrepreneurial action, even in environments characterised by challenges and uncertainty.

Although previous studies have significantly broadened people's understanding of necessity entrepreneurship, the perpetuation of the usual research approach in this field has hampered theoretical growth. This is because it overlooks the different ways in which necessity entrepreneurs operate and therefore the methods they use to practise entrepreneurship (Dencker et al., 2021).

Existing studies reflect a common view that necessity entrepreneurship is about surviving rather than thriving. Despite tough challenges, some necessity entrepreneurs show a remarkable ability to keep going, which invites further investigation into how this resilience is built and how it could be more actively supported, which would help them to move beyond just getting by. The everyday struggles of day labourers, working in a challenging environment with very limited resources, exposes a subsection of necessity entrepreneurship and calls for a deeper analysis of how they survive and possibly even thrive in such an environment.

Building on the foundation of necessity entrepreneurship, it is imperative to delve deeper into the mechanics of how these entrepreneurs navigate their complex terrain. While their motivation for survival and meeting of basic needs forms the basis of their entrepreneurial pursuits, the manner in which they manoeuvre their way through their many challenges is encapsulated in the concept of the entrepreneurial hustle. The next section sheds light on the techniques and tactics employed by entrepreneurs to thrive, even when faced with adversity and limited resources. The shift from the 'why' of their entrepreneurial journey to the 'how' promises a richer understanding of their resilience and resourcefulness.

2.5 Entrepreneurial hustle

The journey from entrepreneurial intent to action represents a dynamic continuum that captures the essence of entrepreneurship (Krueger et al., 2000). Krueger et al.'s (2000)

study aligns insights from different scholars to explain the intricate relationship between entrepreneurial intent and action and the role of the entrepreneurial hustle.

Entrepreneurial intent is the foundation upon which the entire entrepreneurial journey rests. Intent signifies an individual's inclination and motivation to engage in entrepreneurial pursuits (Adam & Alain, 2015; Alam et al., 2019; Krueger et al., 2000; Munir et al., 2019). This phase of the entrepreneurial journey draws insights from the theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen, 1991; Munir et al., 2019), highlighting how attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control influence an individual's intention to embark on an entrepreneurial venture. Intent represents the mental trigger that sets the journey in motion.

Many scholars have demonstrated that entrepreneurial intent alone remains passive until it is translated into tangible actions. The transition from intent to action represents a significant leap, where the theoretical inclination is transformed into practical engagement. This shift emphasises that intent transitions into action when individuals perceive viable opportunities and overcome barriers. The entrepreneurial ecosystem comes to life as individuals take concrete steps to establish and grow their ventures (Boyd & Vozikis, 1994; Kautonen et al., 2015; Van Gelderen et al., 2015).

Hustle emerges as the dynamic embodiment of entrepreneurial action. It encompasses urgent, unorthodox actions that are used to navigate uncertainty while addressing challenges and seizing opportunities (Fisher et al., 2020b). Fisher et al. (2020b) highlight how entrepreneurial hustle encompasses both the urgency to adapt and the unorthodox strategies employed to drive ventures forward. On the journey from intent to action and hustle, intent sets the trajectory, action establishes the foundation, and hustle propels the venture with agility and resilience.

When day labourers set out to gain an advantage, it can be likened to entrepreneurial action. Taking action is a means of progression, moving circumstances from a state of uncertainty to an environment in which day labourers manage their risk (Fisher et al., 2020b).

The next section discusses the relationship between entrepreneurship and uncertainty. The path from intent to action maps out the process of entrepreneurship, but it is also essential to recognise the unpredictable environment in which it occurs. Entrepreneurship often involves navigating unknowns, facing challenges and managing risks. By exploring this relationship between entrepreneurship and uncertainty, the key role played by uncertainty is highlighted.

2.5.1 Entrepreneurship and uncertainty

Shepherd et al. (2020) argue that uncertainty is an inherent part of the entrepreneurial process and that entrepreneurs who can persist in an uncertain environment are more likely to be successful. The authors also suggest that uncertainty is closely connected to entrepreneurial action, as entrepreneurs are more likely to take action in a bid to achieve their goals (Shepherd et al., 2020).

Historically, scholars, such as Cantillon, Say, Sombart, Weber, Knight, and Schumpeter, agreed that the creation and capture of value in entrepreneurship hinged on actions taken in the face of a certain amount of unknowingness (or uncertainty). However, the frequent use and vague definition of 'uncertainty' started to blur its theoretical relevance. More recent scholarly discussions (Packard et al., 2017; Ramoglou & Tsang, 2016; Townsend et al., 2018) advocate for a more refined definition and understanding of uncertainty in entrepreneurship theory, signifying a move towards a more insightful perspective on uncertainty.

The essence of entrepreneurial action is that it occurs within the realms of uncertainty. This concept, deeply rooted in theories of Knightian uncertainty (Arikan et al., 2020), suggests that an unpredictable world creates new avenues for businesses to garner profits. Entrepreneurs find their playground in environments that others may shy away from, thus creating a framework for the application of the entrepreneurial hustle.

The importance of uncertainty in entrepreneurial spheres is undeniable, despite its theoretical and practical challenges. It acts as a cornerstone of opportunities needed to revitalise organisations and economies, as Townsend et al. (2018) assert. The entrepreneur–opportunity connection, which is value-creating, thrives on human agency and action amidst unresolvable uncertainty. In this regard, a parallel can be drawn between a ship's captain voyaging through unexplored waters in search of treasures and an entrepreneur navigating through unknown, yet potentially rewarding, territory. The next section explores the entrepreneurial hustle as a strategy adopted to navigate an uncertain environment.

2.5.2 Entrepreneurial hustle: A strategy to navigate uncertainty

The entrepreneurial hustle, a phenomenon characterised by urgent, unorthodox actions aimed at addressing challenges and opportunities under conditions of uncertainty, has recently been introduced into the entrepreneurship literature (Kuratko et al., 2022). Kuratko et al.'s (2022) review synthesises findings from key articles to identify the

constructs that constitute the entrepreneurial hustle: urgency, unorthodox behaviour, intended usefulness, and the addressing of challenges or opportunities in an uncertain environment (see Figure 4).

Munir et al. (2019) suggest that a person's intentions are the most important predictor of their behaviour and that the entrepreneurial hustle could be regarded as a type of behaviour that is driven by a strong intention to succeed. Therefore, if a person has a strong intention to succeed as an entrepreneur, this could be a predictor of their level of hustle or effort. Munir et al. (2019) further argue that the entrepreneurial hustle may be influenced by a variety of other factors beyond planned behaviour, such as personality traits, motivation and environmental factors (Munir et al., 2019).

While adversity can motivate entrepreneurs, overcoming obstacles is not always straightforward. Entrepreneurs often face barriers that demand innovative strategies and novel approaches to achieving their goals. Korber and McNaughton (2018) suggest that future research should probe the intricacies of entrepreneurial resilience, examining psychological traits, behavioural patterns, organisational dynamics, external environments and strategies that entrepreneurs employ to prepare for and respond to challenges (Korber & McNaughton, 2018). This is where the concept of the entrepreneurial hustle finds its relevance, as it encapsulates the urgent and unorthodox actions taken by entrepreneurs to address challenges and seize opportunities in uncertain environments.

While entrepreneurial actions refer to a specific set of activities that must be undertaken to start and grow a business, the entrepreneurial hustle is more of a mindset or attitude that an entrepreneur enacts. In other words, the hustle can help to drive and sustain entrepreneurial actions, but it is not a substitute for it (Kuratko et al., 2022). The concept of the entrepreneurial hustle refers to the drive, passion and relentless pursuit of opportunities that are often associated with successful entrepreneurship (Fisher et al., 2020a).

Figure 4 shows how the sub-constructs of the entrepreneurial hustle are crucial for pinpointing behaviour that is action oriented. These elements are reflected in the daily activities of necessity entrepreneurs operating in the informal sector as they navigate various uncertainties. Each second-order theme is explored to provide a deeper understanding of its context within this challenging environment.

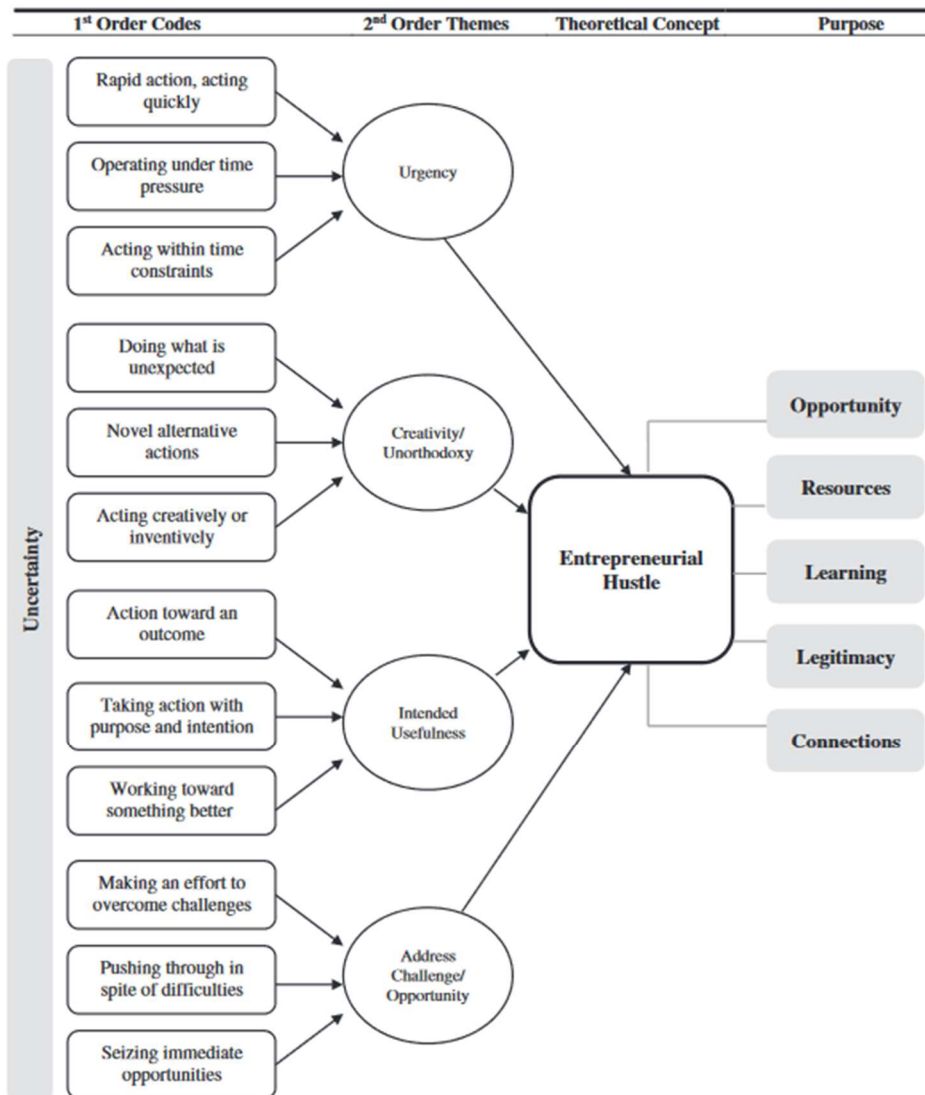


Figure 4: Entrepreneurial hustle - initial coding structure

Source: Fisher et al. (2020b)

The aspect of urgency underscores the imperative for entrepreneurs to act swiftly in response to time-sensitive circumstances. Thieme (2018) delves into the ‘hustle economy’ where individuals navigate informality and uncertainty to make ends meet. This aligns with the urgency of the hustle, as entrepreneurs in this context are driven by the need to seize immediate prospects or mitigate challenges (Thieme, 2018). Fisher et al. (2020b) emphasise the proactive stance of entrepreneurs in enacting the hustle, driven by the urgency to adapt and thrive within uncertain environments.

Unorthodox behaviour is central to the entrepreneurial hustle, reflecting the inclination of entrepreneurs to adopt unconventional approaches in the face of uncertainty. Fisher et al. (2020b) highlight that entrepreneurs navigate uncertainty by embracing unorthodox actions that challenge norms and disrupt the status quo (Fisher et al., 2020a). Kuratko

et al. (2022) delve into the manifestations of the entrepreneurial hustle, stressing the importance of creative and innovative approaches that set entrepreneurs apart in the competitive landscape (Kuratko et al., 2022).

Intended usefulness in the entrepreneurial hustle refers to the pragmatic orientation of actions taken by entrepreneurs. Fisher et al. (2020a) talk about the 'permission to hustle', which is an organisational perspective on how to foster entrepreneurship. This concept aligns with intended usefulness as organisations empower employees to engage in actions that yield meaningful outcomes. The hustle's usefulness lies in its results-oriented nature, where entrepreneurs direct their efforts towards addressing immediate challenges and creating value (Fisher et al., 2020a).

The entrepreneurial hustle is particularly evident in the adept handling of immediate challenges and emerging opportunities. Fisher et al. (2020b) emphasise the role of the hustle in bringing venture stakeholders on board through swift and purposeful actions (Fisher et al., 2020b). Kuratko et al. (2022) accentuate how entrepreneurs navigate uncertainties by acting promptly to address challenges and capitalise on opportunities (Kuratko et al., 2022). This aligns with the core aspect of the hustle, which is that entrepreneurs demonstrate adaptability and resilience when faced with adversity.

The urgency of the hustle, while instrumental in addressing immediate challenges, might have limitations. For instance, the focus on short-term gains could potentially overshadow long-term strategic planning, thus limiting the scalability and sustainability of day labourers' activities. Moreover, the concept of the entrepreneurial hustle, though celebrated for its resilience and adaptability, might fall short in providing a structured pathway towards entrepreneurial success, especially in the absence of critical resources like access to finance. As shown in Figure 5, using the elements of the entrepreneurial hustle excessively can be detrimental and counterproductive to the outcome.

It is clear that adopting the hustle approach can offer substantial advantages to the entrepreneur, yet it is crucial to be aware of the possible dangers associated with this behaviour. Kuratko et al. (2022) raise concerns about the risks of the entrepreneurial hustle, pointing out that extreme urgency, excessive unorthodoxy or a poorly timed hustle can exacerbate challenges instead of alleviating them (Kuratko et al., 2022).



Figure 5: Elements of an effective entrepreneurial hustle

Source: Kuratko et al. (2022)

In conclusion, entrepreneurship thrives in uncertain environments, where the hustle becomes a strategic tactic. The relationship between entrepreneurship and uncertainty fosters innovation, resourcefulness and stakeholder engagement, which in turn contributes to the dynamic evolution of businesses and economies. It is also important to consider the broader context in which this hustle takes place – to understand what else might trigger the entrepreneurial hustle and provide evidence of such hustle in action.

Collectively, Kuratko et al.’s (2022) reviewed articles highlight the multidimensional nature of the entrepreneurial hustle and its underlying constructs. The urgency-driven, unorthodox actions taken with intended usefulness contribute to entrepreneurs' ability to address challenges and seize opportunities (Kuratko et al., 2022). Understanding the hustle's constructs sheds light on their role in fostering resilience, innovation and strategic adaptation within the scope of entrepreneurship.

In the informal sector, the entrepreneurial hustle is notably apparent among day labourers. Thieme (2018) provides a nuanced explanation of how this group engages in hustling behaviours to navigate the unstructured, often volatile markets in which they operate (Thieme, 2018). The spontaneous and opportunistic nature of day labourers' entrepreneurial engagements is highlighted as a coping mechanism in the face of the uncertainties and resource constraints common in the informal sector. The imperative of urgency in day labourers' entrepreneurial activities underscores their relentlessness in securing their daily livelihoods in an environment laden with uncertainties.

By dissecting the when, where and how of these entrepreneurial activities, a more holistic understanding can be achieved. A detailed analysis will not only enrich the theoretical foundation but will also foster practical approaches to dealing with the uncertainty underpinning entrepreneurial endeavours. This should make a significant contribution to the advancement of entrepreneurship theory and practice.

There is a clear call for further research into this complex domain and an urgent need to produce alternative action models that entrepreneurs can deploy to effectively navigate uncertain environments. The goal of these new research endeavours is to identify what entrepreneurial actions can positively steer outcomes under uncertain economic and market conditions.

2.6 Conclusion

The literature reviewed in this chapter offered comprehensive insights into the different dimensions of the entrepreneurial hustle, necessity entrepreneurship and the nuances of Maslow's motivation theory within the broad context of day labourers working in the informal sector. It unveiled the intricate connections between necessity-driven entrepreneurial behaviours and the inherent human needs and motivations that drive the informal economy.

The importance of understanding the entrepreneurial hustle practised by day labourers should not be seen only from an academic standpoint; it also has significant implications for policymaking and socio-economic development, including how to foster a supportive ecosystem for these entrepreneurs. By unpacking entrepreneurial actions within a necessity context and highlighting the foundational aspects of human needs, this literature review reinforced the multifaceted reality that day labourers have to navigate on a day-to-day basis. It exposed their resilience, adaptability and inherent hustle tendencies that steer their entrepreneurial activities in a landscape that is constantly plagued by uncertainty and resource constraints.

The various studies referred to in this chapter exposed the multifaceted character of the entrepreneurial hustle, from its theoretical underpinnings to its practical manifestations among day labourers in the informal sector. Such comparative insights not only broaden people's understanding of the entrepreneurial hustle but also vividly depict the entrepreneurial landscape within which day labourers operate, foregrounding the intricate interplay between urgency, uncertainty and the relentless pursuit of economic sustenance.

The existing literature lays a strong foundation for further research. The discussion on the intersection of the core concepts of the entrepreneurial hustle, necessity entrepreneurship and Maslow's motivation theory offers a clearer picture of the challenges faced by entrepreneurs in an informal setting and helps to throw light on the crucial but frequently ignored group of necessity entrepreneurs – the day labourers. With more research, the conversation could shift from theory to the provision of real support

for, and significant changes in the lives of, day labourers specifically and the informal sector more broadly.

The alignment of push factors, motivation theory and the core concept of basic needs can be effectively directed at the construct of the entrepreneurial hustle. For example, the strong sense of urgency observed in individuals driven by survival needs seamlessly intersects with the dynamic character of the hustle. As these individuals navigate the uncertainties of the informal sector, their actions embody the urgent and unorthodox strategies characteristic of the hustle, as they seek to satisfy their immediate and most basic needs.

Chapter 3: Research Questions

The focus of this research report is on day labourers who have been pushed into engaging in entrepreneurial activities in the informal sector. In this regard it is also important to analyse their perceptions of self to gauge the psychological factors driving their behaviours in an uncertain environment.

The context of this study has given rise to the following research questions:

1. How do day labourers cope with uncertainties in their economic environment?
2. What motivates day labourers to operate in this environment?
 - 2.1 What is their locus of control or perception of self? (intrinsic or extrinsic)
 - 2.2 Is the motivation to fulfil basic needs (food, water, shelter) or safety needs (employment, stability, health)?
3. What is the lived experience of the challenges they face and how do they overcome them?

The purpose of the above questions is to guide the process of addressing the gaps identified in the literature review, which will add to the current academic literature on entrepreneurship. The goal is to broaden the conversation on entrepreneurship by looking at how day labourers apply the entrepreneurial hustle and navigate uncertainty in the informal sector. By looking at the problem from this angle, the study seeks to uncover what drives day labourers' daily entrepreneurial activities at a personal level, thereby providing new insights into the workings of the informal economy and the various entrepreneurial activities that give it momentum.

This study examines day labourers through the lenses of necessity entrepreneurship and motivation theory. Ultimately, the study aims to unveil and understand the dynamics at play when basic survival needs drive entrepreneurs to operate in an uncertain environment. By adopting this specific focus, the study is more than a mere theoretical engagement; it is rooted in the reality of the daily struggles and urgent responses associated with day labour activities. Additionally, the study provides an opportunity to identify the entrepreneurial actions deployed by day labourers to take advantage of opportunities within an uncertain, resource-constrained environment.

Chapter 4: Research Methodology and Design

4.1 Introduction

The literature on the research discipline in general indicates that the selection of a particular research methodology plays a pivotal role in the quality of the research that is conducted (Saunders & Lewis, 2019). This chapter elaborates on the approaches chosen to methodically answer the research questions and achieve the study's goals, while adhering to academic research standards.

The exploration of necessity entrepreneurship in the informal sector demands a structured methodological approach, given the complexity of the environment and behaviours involved. The literature reviewed in Chapter 2 has greatly enhanced people's understanding of entrepreneurial actions in the face of uncertainty, with the studies in question employing diverse research methods, ranging from in-depth interviews to participant observation (Mapendere et al., 2019; Schenck et al., 2014; Thieme, 2018; Xweso et al., 2022).

Qualitative studies, in particular, offer rich, textured insights into the lived experiences of day labourers, revealing the organic and unstructured nature of the informal sector. This nuanced understanding informed the structure of this chapter (though adapted), where steps were taken to maintain the reliability and rigour of this study, as outlined below. The overarching intention with the research methodology was to ensure that both the depth of individual experiences and the broader systemic interactions were captured truthfully.

4.2 Choice of methodology

4.2.1 Philosophy

An interpretivism philosophy was used in this study, allowing the researcher to become immersed in the phenomenon of day labourers who willingly expose themselves to various challenges and uncertainties on a daily basis, in the hope of earning a wage for the day.

According to Frechette et al. (2020), the goal is to understand the context from an individual's perspective, 'to pull existentialia out of forgetfulness' and uncover a new understanding. Interpretivism is a philosophy that accentuates the importance of a subjective experience and meaning in research conducted into social phenomena. Interpretivists assume that individuals construct their own subjective reality and that

understanding the meanings and interpretations of social phenomena requires an empathic and holistic approach to inquiry. Interpretivists tend to use qualitative research methods and employ inductive reasoning to generate hypotheses from the data (Frechette et al., 2020).

4.2.2 Approach

An inductive approach was used in this study as the entrepreneurial hustle is a recent concept. According to Hsieh and Shannon (2005), inductive reasoning is a bottom-up approach to theory development, where researchers begin with empirical data and then use that data to develop a theoretical framework or hypothesis. This approach involves collecting data, identifying patterns or themes in the data, and then developing a theoretical framework that explains those patterns or themes. In other words, it starts with specific observations and arrives at general conclusions. In contrast, deductive reasoning starts with general observations and ideas and arrives at specific conclusions. Inductive reasoning is often associated with qualitative research, as it involves generating hypotheses or theories from the data (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005).

Given that the aim was to understand how the participants overcame challenges and uncertainty in their work environment, an inductive approach was well suited to the study. The inputs for theory development in this study were derived from the data collected to test if entrepreneurial hustle had been deployed.

4.2.3 Methodological choice

To explore the domain of necessity entrepreneurship in the informal sector, a range of methodological approaches have been employed, as evidenced in the reviewed literature, thus pointing to the complexity of such an investigation. These methodologies have contributed significantly to the depth and breadth of understanding of entrepreneurial actions in uncertain environments (Shepherd & Williams, 2023).

The studies by Fisher et al. (2020a) and Kuratko et al. (2022) exemplify a quantitative approach that uses structured surveys and statistical analyses to measure and codify different aspects of the entrepreneurial hustle within specified frameworks (Fisher et al., 2020a; Kuratko et al., 2022). This quantitative approach provides a structured lens through which the dynamics of the entrepreneurial hustle can be examined, offering generalised insights that could inform broader entrepreneurial theory and practice.

In contrast, qualitative insights provided by Mapendere et al. (2019), Schenck et al. (2014), Thieme (2018) and Xweso et al. (2022) give rise to a more textured

understanding of the lived experiences of day labourers within the informal sector. Using in-depth interviews and participant observation, these studies unearthed the organic, unstructured environment of individuals navigating the informal sector.

The variations in methodological approach underscore the complexity of studying individuals in this environment. The quantitative analyses provide a bird's eye view of generalised tendencies and correlations, while the qualitative insights offer a personal perspective or lived-experience view of day labourers' activities. Thus, leaning on past studies conducted in this environment, a monomethod research approach was chosen for this study. Monomethod research involves using a single research method (Saunders et al., 2019) or technique to collect and analyse data. For example, a researcher conducts interviews using a semi-structured interview guide to collect data on a particular population which is inferred by the research problem or aim (Melnikovas, 2018). A combination of interview data and researcher field notes are used in the analysis.

In assessing these methodologies, it is apparent that each comes with its set of strengths and limitations. Quantitative approaches may run the risk of oversimplification or may miss nuanced, contextual insights. Qualitative approaches, while rich in contextual insights, may struggle with generalisability and the establishment of causal relationships.

4.2.4 Purpose of the research design

Explanatory research is used to describe a phenomenon or population and also to explain the relationships between variables or factors that influence the phenomenon (Saunders et al., 2019). The research design in this study was intended to capture rich, detailed accounts of the lived experiences of day labourers and to create an in-depth understanding of the actions taken to overcome and cope with uncertainty.

Qualitative, inductive research is a type of research that involves collecting data through observation, interviews and other forms of fieldwork to develop a theory about or to understand a phenomenon. It is often used to explore new or under-researched topics, of which little is known, or to gain deeper insights into a specific topic (Hong & Cross Francis, 2020).

Day labourers in emerging economies are an important focus of research in the field of entrepreneurship because of these individuals' vulnerability to economic shocks and the potential for entrepreneurship to provide an alternative livelihood. With this study aiming to explain how day labourers cope with uncertainty and overcome challenges, it is important to understand (from individuals' own perspectives) the underlying thought

processes and decision-making strategies that shape their actions, which impact millions of people operating as necessity entrepreneurs. Saunders and Lewis (2019) note that exploratory research aims to uncover fresh perspectives on a subject, potentially introducing novel information (Saunders et al., 2019).

4.2.5 Strategy

According to Creswell (2014), phenomenological research is a qualitative method used in the social sciences arena to probe the subjective experiences and perspectives of individuals. It aims to understand how individuals make sense of their lived experiences and how these experiences shape their perceptions and behaviours (Creswell, 2014). Asenahabi (2019) adds that the researcher seeks to uncover the essence of a particular phenomenon, typically through in-depth interviews and observation. The goal is to describe and understand the experiences of the individuals being studied, rather than to generalise findings to a larger population. Phenomenology is often used in the field of psychology to explore subjective experiences related to topics such as mental health, social identity and personal growth (Asenahabi, 2019).

This study utilised a narrative approach. As described by Saunders and Lewis (2019), a narrative strategy refers to 'a recounting of individual experiences, detailing a series of events' (Saunders et al., 2019). This method was chosen because it aligned with the goal of conceptualising the perspectives of those interviewed, allowing them to share personal stories of their experiences and insights.

Qualitative insights provided a more textured understanding of the lived experiences of day labourers in the informal sector. Through in-depth interviews and participant observation, this study aimed to unearth the organic, unstructured environment of individuals navigating the informal sector. The researcher wished to capture the personal perspectives or lived experiences directly from day labourers in the informal sector.

4.2.6 Time frame

The study used a cross-sectional research design, capturing the perspectives and perceptions of respondents at a specific moment in time. According to Saunders and Lewis (2019), cross-sectional research involves studying a phenomenon at a particular point in time. This approach allowed for a snapshot of interview data collected over a brief and specific period, aligning well with the study's objectives (Saunders et al., 2019).

4.3 Research design

4.3.1 Population

According to Saunders et al. (2019), a research population is defined as ‘the full set of cases from which a sample is taken’ (Saunders et al., 2019). The population in this study included individuals engaged in entrepreneurial activities in the informal sector in Johannesburg in Gauteng province. Within this broad population, particular attention was given to those navigating the uncertainties of informal day labour, a segment often overlooked in traditional economic analyses but crucial for understanding common economic activities.

Among these, a unique subset presented itself as being especially pertinent to this study: day labourers who solicit work outside Builders hardware stores. These individuals represent a critical component of informal sector dynamics, the entrepreneurial hustle and the urban economic ecosystem. Every day they actively seek employment opportunities in a highly competitive environment, often with little to no safety net, thus underscoring their reliance on personal initiative and adaptability.

The target population for this study was specifically delineated as day labourers lobbying for work outside Builders hardware stores within the greater Johannesburg area, with typical trades being plumbers, electricians, bricklayers, plasterers, tilers and painters. Their experiences and strategies formed a rich investigative focal point for understanding necessity entrepreneurship, survival tactics and the broader implications of informal sector engagement in urban South Africa. Their daily hustle, set against the informal sector environment and marked by both opportunity and disparity, provided significant insights into the interplay between personal agency, economic structures and the entrepreneurial spirit.

4.3.2 Unit of analysis

The primary focus of the analysis was individual participants and their perspectives on the uncertain environment and conditions in which they operated as well as the actions they deployed to mitigate the challenges they faced as day labourers.

4.3.3 Sampling method and size

For this study, purposive sampling was employed as it facilitated the selection of a homogeneous group of participants possessing in-depth knowledge of the phenomenon in question, thus providing rich, descriptive data. Participants were chosen on the basis

of defined criteria, which included engaging in day labour activities in the informal sector, being 18 years or older and frequenting the hiring site in question for at least six months.

Robinson (2014) explains that sampling is a conscious act of determining the inclusion and exclusion criteria, along with the sample size (Robinson, 2014). Malterud et al. (2016) argue that the sample size in qualitative research should be based on information power and the relevance of such information to the subject under investigation (Malterud et al., 2016). This means that the ability of the subjects to provide sufficient information for a rich analysis is more critical than the sample size. Hong and Cross (2020), in turn, discuss the quality and richness of the data as the main determinant of the sample size in qualitative research (Hong & Cross, 2020). Thus, the sample size for this study was determined by the participants' domain experience and their understanding of the questions being asked about their lived experiences and work environment.

Saunders et al. (2019) characterise purposive sampling as a subjective method guided by the research question and objectives (Saunders et al., 2019). In concordance with this, Hong and Cross (2020) describe it as the intentional selection of participants who, due to their knowledge and experience, can deepen the understanding of a phenomenon and optimise the use of limited resources (Hong & Cross, 2020). With this study's research questions and objectives in mind, a non-probability purposive sampling technique was selected, taking into account the experiences of the participants, which, as Collingridge et al. (2019) emphasises, is vital for ensuring the quality and credibility of a study (Collingridge et al., 2019).

Creswell (2014) advises that for phenomenological studies, the sample size should ideally range from 12 to 18 interviews or continue until theoretical saturation is reached (Creswell, 2014). In alignment with this, Xweso et al. (2022) conducted 18 interviews in their study on the same sector and type of participant (Xweso et al., 2022).

In line with the literature guidelines and the objectives of this study, 13 semi-structured interviews were conducted. Prospective participants were approached and asked if they would be willing to share their lived experiences in their work environment for research purposes, via an interview. The interviews, which were designed to facilitate an exploration of the subject matter, were open-ended and of a 20-minute (the shortest) to a 45-minute (the longest) duration.

4.3.4 Measurement instrument

A semi-structured interview guide was devised to ensure that all participants were asked the same set of open-ended core questions, while also allowing for flexibility to follow up on interesting or unexpected responses (Adeoye-Olatunde & Olenik, 2021). The interview questions focused on the challenges that the day labourers faced, the strategies they use to overcome their challenges and the factors that contributed to their perseverance.

4.3.5 Data-gathering process

Three distinct sites in Johannesburg were pinpointed in which to conduct the research, as depicted in Figure 6. It is notable that Johannesburg has many hardware stores, all offering similar products. However, day labourers were only seen and found in reasonable numbers outside the Builders hardware stores. In the interests of efficiency, the researcher identified locations that were easily accessible and in relatively close proximity to each other.

These employment points are temporary, self-occupied hiring sites situated at the entrances to Builders hardware retail outlets in different locations: Builders Express in Robindale, Builders Warehouse in Northridding and Builders Express in Bryanston.

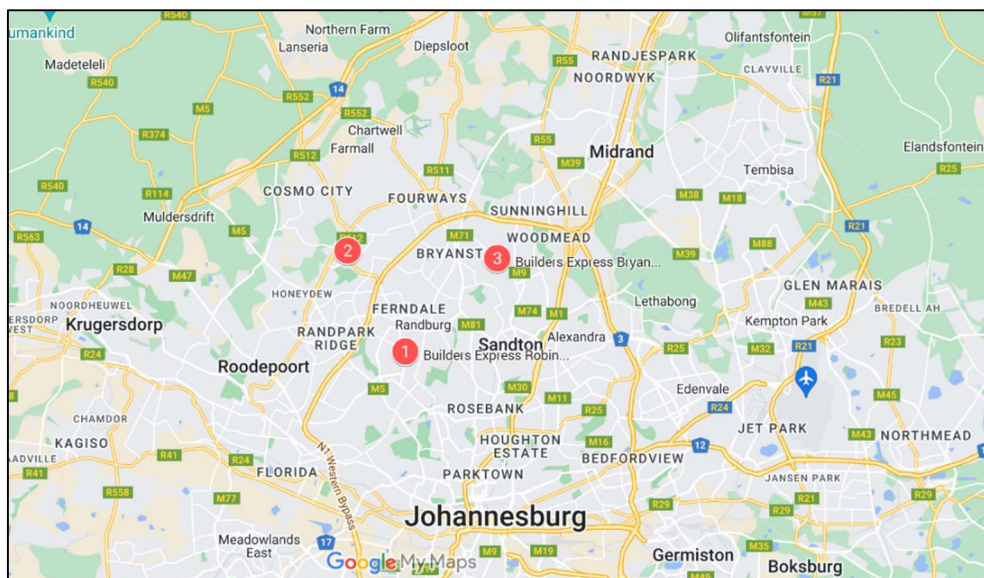


Figure 6: Map of Johannesburg showing the three hiring site locations

Source: Google.com/maps, showing the three identified sites: (1) Builders Express, Robindale, (2) Builders Warehouse, Northridding, and (3) Builders Express, Bryanston

According to Saunders et al. (2019), the use of semi-structured interviews in an exploratory study could be effective in capturing the different scenarios as they played out within their respective contexts. The preference for using semi-structured, face-to-face interviews was motivated by the researcher's desire to centre the discussions on particular themes that were pertinent to the research questions, thus ensuring a level of uniformity across the different respondents. At the same time, this approach allowed a flexible environment in which participants were able to discuss their understanding of the topics at hand. An interview guide, focusing on the key themes, was deployed – in line with the recommendations of Kothari (2004) – to ensure a realistic consistency in the line of questioning on the core aspects of the research. Each interview was recorded, using a digital voice-recording device, to ensure the precision and reliability of the data, and to facilitate later transcription and evaluation of the data. Prior consent was obtained from the participants to record the interviews.

Adeoye-Olatunde et al., 2021 point out that in a semi-structured interview, the interviewer's focus is on both the context and the content of the discussion (Adeoye-Olatunde & Olenik, 2021). For additional context, field notes were meticulously maintained to record the interviewees' overall demeanour and emotional undertones, and the qualitative aspects of the interviews, which were later used in the data analysis phase. Open-ended questions relating to the central themes of entrepreneurship, as described in Chapter 2, were employed to probe the interviewees' perspectives more deeply. Glinyanova et al, (2021), underscore the importance of assessing the credibility of evidence based on the data-collection methodology and a thorough examination of the data source. The audio recordings of the interviews enhanced the trustworthiness of the data by providing a transparent means of verification, in the form of an authentic representation of the interviewees' versions of events. Besides the above-mentioned strategies aimed at bolstering validity and reliability, the study incorporated triangulation which also demonstrated researcher bias.

The hiring sites were visited at varying hours and on randomly selected days over a period of four weeks. This arrangement enhanced the richness of field notes through diverse observations and offered the opportunity to interact with a mixed group of individuals who might otherwise have been engaged on previous visits.

4.3.6 Analytical approach

Thematic analysis, a well-regarded and frequently recommended method in qualitative research, owing to its systematic and transparent methodology for deep data exploration (Braun & Clarke, 2021), was employed to analyse the data gathered from the interviews.

This analytical approach facilitated a structured examination and discussion of the interviewees' data in relation to the study's objectives and research questions. Following the six-phase model of thematic analysis (see Table 1) outlined by Braun and Clarke (2021), an iterative approach to analysing the data commenced after each set of data was collected, and before the start of the next interview. This enabled the early determination of codes and themes which were instrumental in adapting the semi-structured questions to ensure deeper insights.

During the data analysis, which thoroughly dissected the acquired information, voice recordings were listened to and transcribed, with patterns or themes identified at every step of the process. The important data was labelled with simple, relevant descriptions. This helped to identify key themes or major trends in all the gathered information. These themes were then more closely examined to ensure that they accurately reflected the data and their relative importance. Subsequently, these themes were refined and named.

This thematic analysis process followed the step-by-step approach suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006). This organised method of analysing themes, aligned with the questions posed to the interviewees, facilitated a thorough examination of the data and helped to inform the discussion in Chapter 6, in alignment with the objectives of the study.

Table 1: Six-phase thematic analysis model

Phase	Actions executed
One – Become familiar with the data	The recorded interviews were transcribed. The transcripts were thoroughly reviewed to ensure the researcher's immersion in the data and grasp of its contextual significance. This was followed by a data-reduction process to discard irrelevant information. Additionally, the transcripts were formatted to ensure uniformity.
Two – Generate initial codes	The collected data was assigned meanings to create a structure that would facilitate the interpretation of the unstructured data. Data was categorised into codes based on its relevance to the research questions and the context of the study. During this phase, a code list was formulated.

Three – Identify themes	In this phase, similar or related codes were organised into categories. After every set of transcripts was completed, codes were reviewed to group them into categories and remove any possible duplicates. This process also embraced a reflexive approach, which involved continually evaluating the relevance of the themes to the research questions and the context of the study.
Four – Review identified themes	Braun and Clarke (2021) propose that reviewing themes should involve asking questions about the sufficiency of the theme and its supporting data, clear delineations and potential overlaps (Braun & Clarke, 2021). Initially defined themes were reassessed in terms of this guideline and evaluated against the research questions to ensure alignment and consistency.
Five – Define central themes	In this phase, which expanded on the previous phase, considerable effort was put into defining themes to guarantee that each one had a distinct meaning and significance. This stage involved the clear identification of what constituted a theme and why it was deemed important. It also helped to convey the meaning of the themes to readers who might not be familiar with the data.
Six – Present and discuss themes	Visualisation tools, as suggested by Saunders et al. (2019), were employed when appropriate to represent the data. This was achieved using tables or network diagrams, which helped to illustrate the relationships between themes and their categories.

Source: Braun and Clarke (2021)

To find meaning from the codes, an iterative approach was used. Codes were classified by grouping similar ones together and themes were discerned, from which theory could be progressively formulated (Saunders et al., 2019). Codes, which summarised meanings extracted from the interview data, were then assembled. It should be noted that several iterations were needed to remove overlaps and potential duplications in the original set of themed codes.

4.3.7 Quality controls

In academic research, trustworthiness forms the foundation upon which the integrity of the study is built. It is of paramount importance that a study's findings are both reliable and valid, meaning that they accurately represent the truth and are consistent across different measurements and observations (Saunders et al., 2019). To achieve this level of trustworthiness, quality control strategies are essential.

Quality controls refer to the protocols and methodologies implemented at various stages of the research to check the accuracy and reliability of the data collected, the tools used, the analyses performed and the conclusions drawn.

Without rigorous quality controls, research findings may be flawed or misleading, undermining the value of the study and potentially leading to ill-informed decisions or policies. Thus, outlining the specific quality control strategies employed, such as methodological triangulation, reflexivity or the establishment of a chain of evidence, reassures readers about the trustworthiness of the research and the study's contributions to the field. In this study, trustworthiness was assured by implementing the quality control strategies discussed below.

4.3.7.1 Credibility

As suggested by Gani et al. (2020), the fundamental reason for evaluating credibility is to choose the optimal data-collection method which effectively addresses the research questions (Gani et al., 2020). Various strategies were incorporated into the study to uphold the reliability and validity of the research, such as using a measurement instrument that was well suited to answering the research questions.

Furthermore, to safeguard reliability and validity, the researcher followed a consistent approach in determining the codes, ensuring that they comprehensively represented the gathered data while maintaining their distinctiveness, and reaching a point of coding saturation where no new insights could be gleaned from the data (Hennink et al., 2017; Saunders et al., 2018)

Fusch et al. (2018) assert that, to enhance objectivity and validity, data should be triangulated by examining it through various lenses to convey diverse interpretations of the same occurrence. The use of triangulation in this study encompassed data triangulation and theory triangulation (Fusch et al., 2018).

Data triangulation was performed by doing a comparative analysis of the amassed data across different day labourer service offerings as well as by conducting interviews at different hiring sites. This generated varied perspectives through which the research questions could be examined. Theory triangulation was performed to bolster the interpretation of the collected data by testing the themes against pre-existing entrepreneurial constructs. Theory triangulation involved leveraging more than one theory to explain the evidence found in the data. In this regard, it relied on the theories of motivation, necessity entrepreneurship and the entrepreneurial hustle.

4.3.7.2 Transferability

As outlined earlier, the method of purposive sampling was employed to collect 'thick', detailed data. The nature of this data prevented it from being generalised from a sample to a wider population due to the significance of the socio-cultural context from which the outcomes emerged. Therefore, the findings from the study were derived from a specific context and cannot be generalised. The study captured insights solely from the viewpoints of day labourers at three distinct locations. Day labourers situated in other geographical regions may have different opinions, which could contribute valuable insights to the existing body of knowledge, if investigated further.

4.3.7.3 Dependability

To address the aspect of reliability, daily field notes were taken in the form of a research diary. The aim was to record the context and the researcher's reflections as well as observations about the day's activities while the researcher was engaged in data collection.

4.3.7.4 Confirmability

The bias and objectivity of the researcher were managed by carrying out a systematic and consistent process of data analysis. This helped to ensure trustworthiness by employing recognised data analysis methods like thematic analysis.

Saunders and Lewis (2019) point out that the researcher's worldviews and assumptions could impact the reliability of the research since the researcher is an integral part of the study (Saunders et al., 2019). To mitigate researcher bias and maintain rigour, as recommended by Natow (2020), the study was primarily undertaken to contribute to the academic body of knowledge on entrepreneurship, particularly in terms of actions and behaviours, and the researcher had no personal interest in the investigation.

Another concern that might potentially have affected the reliability of the research was the researcher's lack of experience in conducting interviews. Natow (2020) further proposes that testing the interview instrument for validity and appropriateness could help to overcome potential interviewer bias (Natow, 2020). With reference to this concern, the interview questions were tested for clarity and ease of understanding in a practice run in which two individuals were interviewed. The feedback obtained was used to pinpoint and rectify any uncertainties in the questions posed.

4.3.7.5 Research ethics

The researcher employed verification strategies, such as methodological coherence which assesses whether the selected methodology effectively addresses the research questions, ensuring the appropriateness of the participant sample on the basis of set criteria, and performing iterative data collection and analysis based on established theory (Braun & Clarke, 2022). These strategies were used to ensure alignment between the research questions and the execution process. The iterative verification process allowed the researcher to react to the evolving data and maintain a disciplined approach to curbing researcher bias while interpreting the data.

4.3.8 Limitations

The limitations of this qualitative research study were derived from its very nature. Based on the methodological design and approach discussed above, the following are considered limitations of the study which may have impacted the validity and reliability of the results.

4.3.8.1 Subjectivity

Qualitative research inherently carries a risk of subjectivity, as it is influenced by the researcher's own experiences, viewpoints and biases, which could affect the accuracy and consistency of the outcomes.

The researcher, acting as the instrument for data collection, was not professionally trained to conduct interviews. This lack of experience could potentially have impacted the research results. Moreover, the discussion and conclusions were the product of the researcher's analysis and interpretation. Therefore, alternative insights and conclusions might be possible.

4.3.8.2 Small sample size

Qualitative research often involves a small sample size, which can limit the generalisability of the results to a larger population. However, Frechette et al. (2020) note that in phenomenological studies, a small sample size is not considered a limitation as the objective is not to generalise but rather to showcase the lived experiences within a given context (Frechette et al., 2020).

4.3.8.3 Geographical limitation

The study was conducted at selected day labour hiring sites in the Gauteng province of South Africa, imposing a geographical bias on the research results.

4.3.8.4 Time and resource constraints

Qualitative research can be time-consuming and resource-intensive, as it often involves in-depth interviews, observations and other data-collection methods that can be challenging to implement.

4.3.8.5 Openness to interpretation in the analysis

Compared with quantitative data, qualitative data analysis is often more subjective and open to interpretation, which can impact the reliability of the results.

4.3.8.6 Time horizon

Cross-sectional studies are limited as they consider data at a particular point in time only. Longitudinal studies could be conducted to gain a more comprehensive understanding of a particular phenomenon.

4.3.8.7 Methodological choice

The monomethod may lack the depth and richness of data that can be obtained from using multiple methods.

4.4 Conclusion

Sundler et al. (2019) assert that assessing the validity of research findings demands that the researcher demonstrates rigour in employing suitable methods and in ensuring the credibility of the results. Demonstrating the necessary academic rigour from a research perspective, this chapter explained the rationale behind the selected methodology and the ways in which validity and reliability were upheld throughout the study. The next chapter presents the research findings, describes the sample from which the data was obtained and provides an analysis of the research outcomes.

Chapter 5: Research Results

5.1 Introduction

Previous studies on day labourers in the informal economy have been predominantly descriptive in nature, there is limited understanding of the strategies and mechanisms they employ to navigate the challenges and uncertainties inherent in their environment. The nature of entrepreneurial activities, motivation behind their resilience and the dynamics of their daily decision-making have been somewhat overlooked. While some of the challenges they face have been explored, less attention has been paid to the resourcefulness and adaptability they exhibit from an entrepreneurial perspective.

This chapter presents the research results, detailing the data captured from the field interviews with the day labourers at the three hiring sites around Builders hardware stores in Johannesburg. The chapter also discusses the uncertainties that these day labourers face, providing first-hand accounts of their daily experiences. In addition, it describes the realities of working in the informal sector and the ongoing effort required to identify and seize opportunities. Furthermore, it emphasises the resilience and adaptability that these workers display in their unpredictable work environment. This insight is crucial for shaping future research, informing policy decisions and improving support systems for day labourers. Importantly, too, this chapter explores the motivations behind the day labourers' work ethic, determining whether their drive is intrinsic or extrinsic.

Overall, the chapter offers a comprehensive view of the day labourers' experiences, motivations, and actions or tactics deployed, which provide valuable insights and understanding of the lived experiences of necessity entrepreneurs in the informal sector. The entrepreneurial hustle's sub-constructs of urgency, unorthodoxy, intended usefulness and addressing of immediate challenges and opportunities are used to categorise the behaviours within this environment.

Before the collected data is presented, it is necessary to delve more deeply into the specifics of the sample. This will ensure a thorough understanding of the demographics, backgrounds and characteristics of the participants, thereby setting a solid foundation for the subsequent revealed insights and analyses.

5.2 Sample description

The specific attributes of the individuals interviewed during the study are presented in Table 2. A total of 13 participants took part, drawn from three distinct locations in the province of Gauteng. The average age of participants was 42, with the youngest at 31 and the oldest at 58. Further, participant nationality split was 46% Zimbabwean, 23% South African, 23% Mozambiquan and 1 participant (8%) from the Congo.

Table 2: Interviewee descriptive data

Interview	Specialisation	Qualification	Nationality	At hiring site since ...	Age	Residence
#1	Plumber	School up to Standard 9; apprenticeship (2006–2014)	South African	2016	31	Diepsloot
#2	Bakkie for hire	Matric	South African	2018	46	Cosmo City
#3	Bakkie for hire; gardener	Standard 8	South African	2019	54	Windsor
#4	Tree felling	Matric	Mozambiquan	2011	41	Soweto
#5	Tree felling	Tertiary education	Mozambiquan	2011	43	Soweto
#6	Waterproofing; rubber sealing; roof specialist	Apprenticeship	Zimbabwean	2017	38	Diepsloot
#7	Plumber; painting	On-the-job training	Zimbabwean	2006	48	Diepsloot
#8	Builder (plaster, rhinolite, foundation)	Certified (Murry & Roberts, Group 5)	Zimbabwean	2003	50	Diepsloot
#9	Security supervisor	Certified	Congolese	2013	46	Midrand
#10	Carpenter; painter; Roof sealant (rubberising)	On-the-job training	Zimbabwean	2014	37	Diepsloot
#11	Painter; electrician; fitter and turner; tiler; paver	Tertiary education; mining apprenticeship and certification	Zimbabwean	2008	58	Cosmo City
#12	Tiler	On-the-job training	Zimbabwean	2013	33	Diepsloot
#13	Plasterer; plumber	On-the-job training	Mozambiquan	2014	31	Diepsloot

These individuals had a diverse set of skills, with their trade specialties including plumbing, carpentry, tree felling, painting, tiling, plastering and transporting of materials. This variety in skill sets offers a broad perspective on the different types of work that day labourers in the informal sector perform (and the types of markets that they serve), along with some nuanced insights into their experiences, motivations and coping strategies. Table 2 presents their specialisations, qualifications, nationalities, duration at the particular hiring site, age and current place of residence.

The day labourers' qualifications represented a mixture of formal education and apprenticeships or on-the-job training. While some possessed tertiary education, others had undergone certified training or had acquired knowledge through practical experience, such as job shadowing. This demonstrates the spectrum of educational and vocational paths that these labourers had taken to gain proficiency in their respective trades.

Diverse nationalities underscore the multicultural nature of the day labourer landscape. Apart from local South Africans, there was strong representation from neighbouring countries like Mozambique and Zimbabwe. This highlights the transnational nature of the search for better opportunities and the resilience of these workers in navigating foreign terrains. It also provides some initial insights into the regulatory restrictions that migrants face due to the official processes and procedures that must be followed by foreigners to obtain a work permit and local employment.

The number of years spent at a hiring site influenced participants' accounts of their lived experiences as day labourers. Most participants had been at their particular hiring site for over a decade. This could be indicative of both the earning potential of some workers and the stability and consistency of others in deploying favourable tactics.

The age range of the labourers was early 30s to late 50s, showing both young and more experienced hands at work. Their places of residence, such as Diepsloot, Soweto and Cosmo City, were in and around Johannesburg, suggesting both local and migratory patterns in their work arrangements.

In conclusion, the data paints a picture of day labourers with each one possessing a unique background and blend of experience and skills which they brought to their profession. Their life experiences underscore the adaptability and tenacity of individuals seeking opportunities in challenging environments. The next section analyses the results of the study, shedding light on key trends, patterns and critical insights that emerged. This analysis sets out to explain the core phenomena underpinning the entrepreneurial

hustle associated with the day labour environment and to connect the empirical results to the broader academic discourse.

5.3 Analysis of results

In this chapter, the research results are presented through a systematic exploration of the day labourers' experiences, drawing on data collected and subsequently analysed using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis, as a qualitative method, allows for the identification, analysis, and interpretation of patterns or themes within the data (See Appendix 2). This method was used to break down the narratives into coherent and meaningful themes that captures the realities of day labourers.

First, the uncertainties in the day labourers' environment are considered, and insights are provided on what they perceived as challenges. This addresses the first research question about coping strategies in an unpredictable economic setting.

Second, the factors that drove day labourers to operate in such an environment are analysed, including their locus of control (either intrinsic or extrinsic) and whether their motivation stemmed from basic necessity or the pursuit of longer-term stability. This addresses the second research question and its sub-questions.

Third, the day labourers' strategies are explored, including how they mitigated the obstacles that they faced. This addresses the third research question about the practical challenges encountered and overcome.

5.3.1 The uncertain environment of day labourers

As gleaned from the interviews, the day labourers operated within a realm of unpredictability. The primary source of this unpredictability was the absence of assured work.

“I do not know if I will get a job for today, I have paid for transport to get here, but making money today is not certain.”

Interviewee #1's experience reflected this, as he reported waiting in the hopes of finding customers. This sentiment was echoed by Interviewee #3, who grappled with the unpredictability of job continuity, especially in gardening.

“Every week I work for a particular person, the next week or month they tell you the house is sold, I will be very lucky if the new property owner keeps me. If they bring their own staff, I don't earn for that day

in the week.”

A simple property sale by a client, for example, could disrupt his entire income stream. He also mentioned the problem of inconsistent payment patterns on the part of past employers, thus underscoring the financial instability that often characterises the informal sector.

Interviewee #10's story illustrated broader challenges. Extended periods without employment, inconsistency of employment opportunities and competition from fellow day labourers featured prominently in this narrative. Seasonal work fluctuations compounded these uncertainties, with work availability waning during the middle of the month or over extended holiday periods, such as December and January. The unpredictability of this seasonal demand added another layer of risk to the day labourers' already-risky income prospects.

Beyond their immediate environment, larger socio-economic factors also played a role. Interviewee #10's migration from Zimbabwe, spurred by economic and political turmoil in that country, added a new layer of complexity to his life. Migrants, for example, often face regulatory hurdles in obtaining a work permit or securing a permanent job in the formal sector. Additionally, the stigma attached to foreign workers heightens uncertainty, with the majority of day labourers having to contend with the harsh reality of xenophobia. These factors highlight that the uncertainties that day labourers face are not necessarily limited to finding work and sustaining themselves; they are also influenced by national and even global events.

Another common theme was the competition at Builders hardware store sites. Day labourers must compete for jobs and navigate an environment in which the allocation of work is not always fair. This is exacerbated by the fact that desperation often prompts day labourers to undercut their peers, which simply intensifies the unpredictable nature of the work and day labourers' earning potential. In an environment in which employment is piecemeal and irregular, each opportunity becomes crucial, resulting in a cutthroat atmosphere where drastic measures are sometimes taken to secure the next job.

In the face of these uncertainties, the day labourers displayed great adaptability and resolve. Whether by securing jobs during slow periods or ensuring payment after the completion of a job, they showed an ability to navigate and sometimes thrive in their unpredictable circumstances. As two interviewees remarked, they would not be at the hiring site if it did not provide job opportunities and earning potential.

In conclusion, the day labourers' experiences revealed an environment filled with uncertainties, stemming from daily work challenges as well as broader economic influences. Despite these challenges, their resilience and adaptability were evident – from the motivation that kept them retuning day after day, to the creative solutions they employed to secure jobs in a competitive environment. This is discussed more fully in the ensuing sections.

5.3.2 Push motivation in necessity entrepreneurship

The day labourers' motivation to engage in entrepreneurship out of necessity was influenced by a variety of factors. Their testimonials shed light on their daily realities and what pushed them into the informal sector.

“Nowadays, people are just working for food.”

This statement from one of the interviewees captures the fundamental shift in priorities among day labourers. In essence, the interviewee was saying that there had been a drastic deterioration in economic conditions. Where once day labourers might have had aspirations beyond just daily needs, their immediate concern now was putting food on the table. This pointed to heightened challenges in a weak economic climate.

“It is up to me now to say, I have to put something on the table. But if I am to go with the prices of the yesteryears, then I'll be here throughout without anything.”

Delving more deeply into the practical implications of the current economic realities, one interviewee remarked that they were being exploited and forced to reduce their prices just to earn something for the day. This underscored the dynamic and volatile nature of the economic landscape. It also pointed to the challenges of competition in this sector, necessitating a proactive approach to adapting strategies to overcome current conditions.

“We are now desperate. it is the main thing which is now causing problems.”

The level of desperation among the day labourers was clear from this comment. Desperation encourages certain actions which might, in turn, lead to more desperation. The above comment not only underscored the gravity of the challenges that the day labourers faced but also hinted at a potential hurdle to long-term strategic thinking, as immediate concerns took precedence.

Interviewees #4 and #5 both shared their insights on the push towards working in the informal sector. They spoke of their previous intermittent formal employment with a company that provided work only when needed. This inconsistent work pattern and the need to provide for their families propelled them into starting their own venture to gain more job-related control.

Macro-level socio-economic factors were also discussed. Most of the interviewees were expatriates from neighbouring countries, with the departure from their home countries being driven by economic and political upheavals. This reinforced the fact that the uncertainties that the day labourers faced often stemmed from broader events beyond their immediate environment and even the national context.

In synthesising these insights, it was clear that the day labourers were influenced not only by the immediate need to survive but also by the rapidly changing economic landscape, to which they had to constantly adapt. Their resilience and adaptability were noteworthy, yet they faced immense challenges. The overarching picture that emerged was one of urgent necessity, coupled with the ever-present shadow of desperation.

Having explored the motivators that pushed day labourers towards necessity entrepreneurship, it was crucial to understand how these motivations manifested in their actions. The next section analyses the concept of the entrepreneurial hustle. Here, the focus shifts from the 'why' to the 'how' – specifically, the proactive strategies and tactics that the day labourers employed to navigate and thrive amidst the many challenges that they faced.

5.3.3 Enacting entrepreneurial hustle

Table 3 presents a breakdown of the entrepreneurial hustle sub-constructs derived from Figure 4: Entrepreneurial hustle - initial coding structure by Fisher et al. (2020a). Each 2nd order theme represents three 1st order codes rolled up showing the number of times the interviewees made reference to it, these were identified and captured in the context of day labourers' experiences in the informal economy based on the semi structured research questions.

Several insights emerged from this exercise, which are discussed below in relation to the entrepreneurial hustle sub-constructs.

Table 3: Interview insights coded to the sub-constructs of the entrepreneurial hustle

Entrepreneurial hustle sub-constructs	Count of interpreted occurrence	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	#11	#12	#13
Urgency	9		1	2		1	1			2	1			1
Creativity or unorthodoxy	28		1	5	1	2	3	1	3	2	3	3	4	
Intended usefulness	31	2		4	2	5	2	2	6	3	1	1	2	1
Addressing of challenges and opportunities	26	1	1	3	1	1	2	2	5	1	2	6		1

Urgency

While important, urgency had the least number of (nine) occurrences. This sub-construct was displayed in only a few cases during the interviews. This could be an indication that while the day labourers probably felt the pressure of time or the need for immediate action, it was not spoken about or experienced as much as some of the other sub-constructs. The field notes revealed that the inherent nature of the day labourers' environment was an intrinsic driver of urgency. The field notes also conveyed a visual impression of the day labourers' actions. If unorganised, the labourers tended to rush at potential customers like a swarm of bees, putting their sense of urgency on full display in a bid to land the next job.

“We get that job. We go do it. We come back.”

One interviewee explained the sense of urgency in the above statement. Quick action to secure the job and a quick return to look for the next opportunity were fundamental to the entrepreneurial hustle. The goal was clear and straight forward – complete the task at hand as quickly and as efficiently as possible, while taking all steps to mitigate the challenges faced.

“Simply because the situation we are facing now, everyone wants a job. When you come here looking for a painter, an electrician will run to you. The plumber will run to you, everybody runs to you. They will tell you I know this job. I can do it, I can do it.”

This statement vividly portrays the intense competition and sense of urgency that permeated the day labourers' environment. The image of day labourers running to a potential client is a testimony of the depth of their desperation and the lengths to which

they were prepared to go to secure employment, even if it meant venturing outside their area of expertise. This eagerness to grab any opportunity, even if it was beyond their acquired skill set, speaks not only to the adaptability and versatility of these labourers but also to the pressures they felt in their uncertain and competitive environment.

Although it might have a detrimental effect on a day labourer's job search or deprive him of future work if he did not complete a job to the customer's satisfaction (because he misled the customer about his capabilities), it was clear that day labourers were often willing to take on any task. This creates an impression of a pool of labour driven by the sheer necessity of survival and the urgent need to secure any available work.

Although not explicitly referred to, common concerns among all the interviewees were their family responsibilities and the pressure to support their loved ones. This amplified the urgency in their actions. The immediate need to secure work, earn money and provide for their dependents reinforced the sense of urgency experienced by the day labourers. This highlighted that while urgency was not the most frequently mentioned aspect, its constant presence in the background profoundly influenced their daily decisions and actions.

Creativity or unorthodoxy

Creativity or unorthodoxy was observed 28 times across the interviewees. Several interviewees, such as #3, #6, #8, #10, #11 and #12, reported instances of unconventional approaches or innovative thinking in their activities, suggesting an inclination to think outside the box. The day labourers navigated their work environment with the help of various creative strategies, as evident in the following insight.

“A guy is doing some other job, maybe electrician. They get a job for building; they call me to come. After working there, I give a portion to the man who find the job. Like a finder's fee.”

One of the interviewees at the Rivonia Builders hiring site discussed collaborating with other day labourers. If they were hired and other specialisations were required, they called in a fellow labourer from that community. This approach highlighted the value of networking and pooling of resources among the workers. Acting outside of self-interest and supporting each other was unorthodox in this environment. However, the researcher noted that a sense of community and organisation as a group at this hiring site seemed to produce successful outcomes, which was different to the situation at the Robindale and Northriding hiring sites.

An interesting field note taken at the Rivonia site was that if a customer stopped, only one or two day labourers would approach the customer and engage in discussions. They would then return to the group and advise them what skills were required for the job. This tactic conveyed a sense of organisation and professionalism, which seemed to have the effect of boosting the number of customers visiting this hiring site.

“Here at this one, there are less workers. We are a community, the people know us, and trust us.”

Trust in the day labourer community was seen to be crucial, as was building a relationship with customers. All the interviewees indicated that these were critical factors in securing repeat business. Trust was built by performing a job to a high standard. However, building a relationship stemmed from the manner in which the day labourers conducted themselves. Furthermore, forging connections with each other signalled a desire to create and maintain a supportive community.

“Because Builders sells everything. From cement to pipes and lights. They are a good brand whereby you can find what you want, any day.”

When interviewees were asked why they had chosen their particular location and why they were not lobbying outside other hardware stores, they said that it was the brand connection. Builders draws customers for all types of maintenance jobs, plumbing, electrical work, gardening and building materials. The fact that they recognised this showed big-picture strategic awareness on their part and a desire to optimise their chances of success in an uncertain environment.

Technology adoption in the day labourer community seems almost out of place, yet immediate financial transfers are crucial in an unpredictable job environment.

“FNB is the best, their E-Wallet you see the money immediately.”

Choosing FNB for its digital payment capabilities reflected the importance that the day labourers attached to efficient financial transactions.

“In down times I contact previous customers on WhatsApp, to see if they have any jobs available.”

“I was marketing using Facebook. I use Facebook marketplace to share pictures of previous jobs and get work all over the country.”

“I work here for small money to buy data, then I just use Facebook to market and get bigger jobs.”

Their use of digital platforms such as WhatsApp and Facebook was notable as a strategy to reach a bigger customer base. Reaching out to previous customers on WhatsApp or advertising on Facebook’s Marketplace demonstrated their creativity and unorthodox approach to succeed. Interviewee #12 said he used the hiring site to get cash quickly for smaller jobs to fund data for online marketing. This then gave him an opportunity to access bigger jobs, highlighting the importance of using different channels to market his services.

In summary, the above insights show that the day labourers employed a combination of methods, relationship building and modern digital tools to find work. Their varied job-seeking strategies pointed to creative or unorthodox approaches and solutions.

Intended usefulness

Intended usefulness stood out as the most coded sub-construct, with a total of 31 occurrences recorded among the interviewees. This suggests that most of the day labourers were strongly motivated by the potential utility or benefit of their actions to customers and themselves. Their actions were not just directed at getting through the day, but also at achieving specific outcomes and building a better future for themselves.

“I market as a painter, it is the job with most opportunity for work. When I am there, I look for other opportunities like tiling, paving, plumbing and even some electrical. Once I do a good job with the painting, the customer trusts me.”

For example, Interviewee #11 highlighted his primary specialisation as a painter because it offered the most job opportunities. Yet, once he had secured the client’s trust through a well-executed job, he set out to exploit this to secure other opportunities. This tactic was built on solidifying trust with the client and taking purposeful action, delivering on expectations to pave the way for other opportunities and maximising the potential for more work in the future.

“Because I don’t want to be holding this board (sign). Next year in June I need to be doing something that is building my business.”

The above sentiment expressed by Interviewee #11 revealed a desire to progress beyond holding a sign and lobbying for work to ensure his day-to-day survival, to building

a sustainable business that would afford him a better future. This was all about acting with intention, setting future goals and striving for continuous improvement.

“We know each other, if one is not qualified this job, we stop him. Because some clients they come back, and they complain. It gives the others a bad name.”

Maintaining the community’s reputation was another form of action with a purpose. At the Rivonia site, if a worker was unqualified, he was stopped from pursuing a job opportunity by the other day labourers, thus emphasising the shared goal of ensuring quality work and positive customer feedback. This community was protective of its reputation and understood that one person’s actions can impact everyone’s opportunities. Such vigilance ensured that the collective’s trust and reputation were protected.

“If there is one that wants to learn, we arrange for him to assisting somebody to learn the new skill from him.”

Also at Rivonia Builders, there was an emphasis on training and mentorship within the group. They assisted each other to develop multiple skills, thereby creating more opportunities and enabling them to work towards something better. By providing learning opportunities, they not only uplifted individuals but also strengthened the community’s overall skill set.

“With Builders we have a good relationship, even the staff. They give our contact to customers inside, and when we need materials, we come here to buy. We are also marketing the brand.”

Finally, the strategic relationship with Builders underpinned the action-with-a-purpose theme. By fostering good relationships with store staff, the day labourers ensured that both sides benefited. While the labourers got job referrals, their frequent material purchases and word-of-mouth advertising indirectly promoted the Builders brand. This win-win dynamic was a testament to their purposeful actions aimed at forging and nurturing business relationships.

In conclusion, intended usefulness emerged as a guiding principle for the day labourers. Whether this involved skill diversification, setting future goals, building a sense of community, mentoring or entering into business partnerships, their actions were consistently orientated towards delivering meaningful and beneficial outcomes.

Addressing of challenges and opportunities

The need to address challenges and opportunities was recorded 26 times. Notably, Interviewees #3, #8 and #11 accounted for more occurrences, highlighting their proactive approach to identifying and seizing opportunities to navigate obstacles. The entrepreneurial spirit of the day labourers was evident in how they addressed challenges and leveraged opportunities, even in an unpredictable environment.

Furthermore, the proactive mindset of the day labourers was evident in their determination to tackle challenges and seize immediate opportunities. This attitude transcended the need to survive; it was also about getting ahead and thriving, despite adversity.

“When you are hunting, you have to make sure that you are aware of your environment.”

As one interviewee pointed out, being acutely aware of one’s environment can be likened to a hunter's mentality. It is important, he said, for day labourers to identify and understand challenges before they became obstructions, thereby ensuring that they were well positioned to seize opportunities as they arise. By constantly evaluating their surroundings, day labourers could quickly adapt to shifts in the environment and changes in customer behaviour or the competitive landscape. It was not just about finding work for the day; it is also about strategising for a more sustainable future.

Common among the interviewees was a mindset geared towards identifying and capitalising on opportunities. A particularly revealing statement was: ‘Anything that comes, we take.’ This highlighted their inherent drive to make the best of their situation.

“If you are working for a company, to be honest with you, they are giving you R200 a day. I cannot sustain a living.”

Another interviewee highlighted the unsustainability of working for a fixed, and arguably low, daily wage when employed by a company in the formal sector. This view underscored the challenges that many day labourers faced, where the traditional employment model might not provide a living wage. It also displayed their resilience in pushing through these difficulties, often opting for an independent employment route that gave them more control over their earning power and the types of work that they undertook.

“I have business cards, my name and number is written on the wall at the exit.”

Moreover, using what was available for marketing, like having business cards and leaving personal contact details at strategic points, indicated an enterprising spirit. It was not about sitting around waiting for opportunities to come; it was about actively putting themselves out there, making their services known to potential clients. It was a clear demonstration of an ability to seize immediate opportunities and ensure that they were still there in future engagements.

“To bring them here (tools). That is where I get a problem. Because you cannot carry all those tools. So, we bring some of the tools, just to do the emergency jobs.”

Interviewee #10 highlighted the logistical challenges that confronted him. The daily expense of travelling to and from the hiring site, coupled with the limitations of transporting his tools, constituted a significant hurdle. This insight underscored the hidden costs and logistical complexities of the day labourers' work environment.

Another field note related to the frequent disparity between customer expectations and the compensation offered for a particular job. While customers had high expectations when it came to service quality and trustworthiness, the remuneration often remained low – almost to the point of exploitation, even though day labourers were already a vulnerable segment in the economy. This meant that day labourers needed to deliver exceptional service to build trust and relationships, even when the monetary returns did not reflect the effort invested.

In summary, addressing challenges and opportunities was not just a vague concept for the day labourers; it was part of their lived experiences. The strategies that they adopted – whether they entailed environmental awareness, bypassing of formal employment in favour of independence, or proactive marketing – all signalled their commitment to pushing through challenges and maximising opportunities. In fact, it was a testament to their resourcefulness, determination and unyielding spirit in the face of adversity. The day labourers' entrepreneurial hustle was evident in how they seized opportunities, reacted to challenges and strategically positioned themselves for success in a volatile and uncertain environment.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter provided a detailed analysis of the research results which were drawn from the lived experiences of day labourers operating in an environment characterised by challenge and uncertainty. Through the interviewees' narratives, a deeper understanding emerged of their multifaceted challenges and motivations and the various strategies that they deployed.

The inherent uncertainty in their daily existence was revealed in the unpredictable nature of their jobs, the influence of external factors (such as the weather and competition) and the desperation that sometimes fuelled their approach to work. Such unpredictability provided fertile ground for the emergence of the entrepreneurial hustle as a key survival mechanism.

Equally important were the insights gained into what motivated day labourers. Beyond the need to satisfy their own and their families' basic needs, there was an evident desire for stability, security and growth. This intrinsic push, combined with external pulls like economic conditions, shaped the day labourers' entrepreneurial journey.

The application of the entrepreneurial hustle was evident in day labourers' resilience, adaptability and creativity when it came to pursuing employing opportunities and navigating challenges. Their strategies, from relying on their reputation and word of mouth to more innovative marketing tactics, offer valuable lessons on the practicalities of being a successful entrepreneur in the informal sector.

This chapter served as a foundation for Chapter 6 by providing a window into the world – and the spirit – of day labourers who engaged in an entrepreneurial hustle to overcome the obstacles that they routinely faced. In Chapter 6, the study's findings are further analysed, contextualised and compared against the existing literature with a view to painting a more comprehensive picture of the phenomenon of entrepreneurial hustle in the day labourer community.

Chapter 6: Discussion of Results

6.1 Introduction

The analysis to date has positioned the entrepreneurial hustle in a practical setting, highlighting how it is used to address uncertainties in the day labourer community. It has also shown how push motivation theory acts as a boundary condition, thereby adding new perspectives to the literature on necessity entrepreneurship. The key results are discussed below in relation to three research questions associated with the research questions.

Chapter 5 provided a detailed discussion of the main results of this study. This chapter discusses these results within the context of the literature review in Chapter 2 which was intended to provide insights into the experiences of day labourers operating in the informal sector. Section 6.2 discusses the uncertain environment, section 6.3 deliberates on the push motivation factors of day labourers to function as necessity entrepreneurs, section 6.3 reflects on the constructs of the entrepreneurial hustle.

This chapter therefore shows the connection between theoretical constructs and the real-world experiences of day labourers, while also emphasising their distinctive entrepreneurial behaviour in the face of uncertainty.

6.2 Research question 1 – An uncertain environment

Uncertainty is one of the foundational elements of entrepreneurship, and those who are skilled at navigating it often end up being successful (Shepherd et al., 2020). The root of entrepreneurial success is the ability to take action amidst uncertainty. However, there is a growing call to clarify the definition of uncertainty in the entrepreneurial context because of its growing prevalence in academic circles. This foundational idea of effective entrepreneurship being the ability to thrive in the face of uncertainty is derived from theories like Knightian uncertainty, which holds that unpredictability can open up profit-making pathways (Arikan et al., 2020). The stories of migrant labourers like Interviewee #10 resonate with this. These individuals not only grapple with the uncertainties associated with plying their trade every day, but also face larger socio-economic challenges, from regulatory hurdles to discrimination.

The informal sector is characterised by specific opportunities, such as low entry barriers, and challenges, such as small-scale operations, an unregulated competitive environment and the absence of social safeguards (Whitfield, 2021). In South Africa, day

labourers face structural barriers such as limited access to resources, a lack of legal status and few opportunities for formal training (Schenck et al., 2014). Collectively, these challenges amplify the uncertainty that day labourers face in the informal sector. This study confirmed that the day labourers at two hiring sites experienced uncertainty most acutely in their struggle to find consistent work because of the intense competition. One interviewee remarked that if there were five painters, then there needed to be five customers looking for painters. The competition arose out of the need to secure the job from the first arriving customer. This competitive crunch was exacerbated by a lack of consistent job opportunities and the negative impact of seasonality on day labourers' earning potential. Interviewees also explained that skills transfer predominantly took place through job shadowing, which lacked any form of formal certification.

The informal sector's competitive character was stressed in Chapter 2, as was its unregulated nature (Schenck et al., 2014). This was mirrored in the findings from the study, which revealed the cut-throat competition at (mainly two of) the hiring sites where the interviews were conducted. The unpredictable and uneven job allocations and the pervasive atmosphere of desperation, which prompted price undercutting, provide further evidence of the intense competition that day labourers routinely face.

Both the literature and the findings from this study highlight the impact of an uncertain environment on entrepreneurial activities. The strategies that day labourers deploy, such as venturing to hiring sites even in slow periods or using multiple marketing channels, underscore their sense of urgency and compulsion to earn. Such behaviours resonate with the broader themes of perseverance and resourcefulness, both crucial for navigating the challenges of the informal sector. It was evident from the study that day labourers operate in a realm characterised by intense competition, unpredictability and socio-economic challenges. Despite facing this adversity, their resilience and adaptability emerged as their most leveraged abilities, enabling them to persist and at times even thrive.

Their uncertain work environment, plagued by fluctuating work opportunities and erratic earning potential, acted as the challenging backdrop against which these labourers were forced to operate. The next section discusses push motivations in the context of necessity entrepreneurship.

6.3 Research question 2 – Push motivation and necessity entrepreneurship

Research question 2 reveals how external pressures trigger certain internal dynamics. The interplay between the external environment creating push factors and the day labourers' internal drivers is important. These push factors, deeply rooted in personal motivation and the inherent necessity to survive drive the labourers to act and innovate. This is the essence of necessity entrepreneurship.

The literature on entrepreneurship highlights the differences between necessity-driven and opportunity-driven entrepreneurship. Dencker et al. (2021) identified a gap in people's understanding of push-based motivations in entrepreneurial research because of the historical leaning towards pull-based motivations (Dencker et al., 2021).

From the interviews with the day labourers, it became evident that various factors pushed them towards necessity-driven entrepreneurship. One interviewee's comment that 'nowadays, people are just working for food' underscored the shift in day labourers' priorities, hinting at deteriorating economic conditions that necessitated the urgent need and daily struggle for survival. Another interviewee spoke of the implications of a changing economic landscape, noting that occasionally he had to reduce his prices to ensure his daily earnings in a competitive environment. This pointed to the volatility of the environment and day labourers' corresponding vulnerability.

The testimonies further revealed a prevailing sense of desperation among the day labourers. Past experiences of inconsistent employment in the formal sector had pushed some towards the informal sector, motivated by a need to support their families. Additionally, broader socio-economic factors also influenced their decision to move in that direction. For example, several of the day labourers had migrated to South Africa from elsewhere in Africa because of the challenges they faced in their home countries. This showed that the transition to necessity entrepreneurship was not merely an individual choice, but was also influenced by larger, regional events.

The literature, such as Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, provides a framework to interpret day labourers' motivations. Within the context of necessity entrepreneurship, the Hierarchy offers insights into why individuals venture into different types of work. In the day labourers' case, they were compelled to meet their basic physiological and safety needs, which aligns with previous studies conducted. Morris et al. (2022) portray necessity entrepreneurship as primarily driven by survival and circumstantial obligation, setting it apart from opportunity-driven entrepreneurship. They proposed the concept of

liability of poorness (Figure 3), emphasising the unique challenges faced by necessity entrepreneurs.

The lack of basic functional literacy, along with limited financial, technological, economic and business literacy, is some of the major obstacles that they face. Without these competencies, day labourers in the informal sector are handicapped in their efforts to recognise, assess and leverage opportunities. The usual narrative in entrepreneurship literature celebrates the virtue of spotting opportunities (Serviere & Munoz, 2010). However, without foundational knowledge, these entrepreneurs are at a distinct disadvantage.

As highlighted in Figure 3, a scarcity mindset entails a short-term orientation and a reactive approach. This makes long-term planning and vision-setting difficult for necessity entrepreneurs. Day labourers, as a subset of necessity entrepreneurs, often resort to making immediate trade-offs for short-term gains, even if they compromise long-term sustainability (Coffman & Sunny, 2021). Such a mindset, born out of immediate pressures, represents a stark deviation from the more strategic approach seen in opportunity-driven entrepreneurship.

Entrepreneurs from impoverished backgrounds often grapple with overwhelming personal pressures, such as crime, gangs, inadequate housing and health problems. Such pressures affect their personal well-being and could have a detrimental effect on their entrepreneurial pursuits. As Dencker et al. (2021) theorise, understanding the transition of individuals into entrepreneurship calls for an acknowledgement of the attendant personal challenges, as these shape their motivations, actions and resilience.

Working with limited resources or lacking a financial safety net exacerbates the vulnerabilities of these entrepreneurs. In the realm of necessity entrepreneurship, and day labour in particular, the absence of 'financial slack' means that they are constantly operating on the edge, with little room for error or experimentation. This stifles innovation and amplifies the consequences of any business downturns or operational mistakes.

The liability of poorness concept (Morris et al., 2022) illustrates necessity entrepreneurship in a much more nuanced light. It underscores the fact that these entrepreneurs do not operate in a vacuum. Rather, their actions, decisions and motivations are deeply intertwined with the socio-economic challenges that they face. A perfect parallel can be drawn between the resilience displayed by necessity entrepreneurs, even in the face of considerable adversity, and the staying power of day labourers operating in the informal sector.

By understanding these challenges holistically, researchers, policymakers and social innovators are better equipped to design interventions that will alleviate these problems and empower entrepreneurs to transition from push to pull entrepreneurship.

The empirical approach used in this study showed that the challenges of literacy gaps, a scarcity mindset, intense personal pressures and the absence of financial safety are not just theoretical constructs but actually lived realities for most of the surveyed day labourers. The collected data underscored the significance and impact of these challenges and highlighted the stark contrast between necessity entrepreneurs and their opportunity-driven counterparts.

The testimonies from the day labourers resonated with the views offered in the literature. The need for immediate sustenance and changing economic fortunes were the day labourers' primary motivators. Their daily struggles, including the need to reduce their prices to ensure adequate daily earnings, reflected the competitive environment in which they had to operate. The visible sense of desperation observed among the day labourers revealed a worrying cycle in that the pressing need to survive led to further desperation, necessitating aggressive entrepreneurial effort and tactics to combat it. When comparing the literature with the information shared during the interviews, it was clear that the day labourers' efforts were aligned with the foundational tiers in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs.

The entrepreneurs participating in the study were primarily driven by urgent needs. Yet they exhibited an intrinsic drive, suggesting a shift from push to pull entrepreneurial activities. The literature concurs that necessity entrepreneurship is survival-centric. However, the resilience of the entrepreneurs in this study indicated a heightened sense of responsiveness. In this regard, the concept of the entrepreneurial hustle came to the fore and served to spotlight the day labourers' resourcefulness in adverse conditions.

Dencker et al. (2021) emphasise the role of push factors in necessity entrepreneurship, which aligns with the testimonies of the day labourers participating in the study who turned to entrepreneurship out of necessity. The alignment of the day labourers' motivations with the foundational levels of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs was evident in the research results. Moreover, the challenges highlighted by Morris et al. (2022) in the liability of poorness concept were the lived realities of the day labourers. Yet there was a sense that the latter were making the transition from necessity entrepreneurship to opportunity-driven entrepreneurship.

The day labourers ventured into necessity entrepreneurship primarily due to the urgent need for survival, with their immediate economic circumstances and broader socio-economic dynamics influencing their decision. Their adaptability and resilience in facing these challenges were commendable. However, their actions were primarily shaped by the looming shadow of desperation and other pressing concerns.

In conclusion, the literature and research findings offer well-aligned perspectives of necessity entrepreneurship in the informal sector. Despite the many challenges, there is immense potential for growth and transformation. The willingness and resilience of day labourers and the manner in which they cope with their harsh environment are remarkable. The next section explores the concept of the entrepreneurial hustle, focusing on the strategies that day labourers employ to confront their daily challenges.

6.4 Research question 3 – Entrepreneurial hustle

This section draws on the literature and the findings from the study to explain the parallels between the behaviours of day labourers and the constructs of the entrepreneurial hustle.

6.4.1 Urgency

The hustle economy described by Thieme (2018) could be clearly seen in the day-to-day activities of the day labourers. Day labourers operate in an environment where every opportunity counts, and hesitation can have painful consequences. The act of rushing towards potential customers, similar to a swarm of bees, is a clear manifestation of the need to fight for survival in a volatile and uncertain informal market. This mirrors Thieme's description of navigating through unpredictability.

The insights shared by Fisher et al. (2020a) reinforce the phenomenon of urgency. Fisher et al.'s (2020a) emphasis on the proactive nature of entrepreneurs was reflected in the day labourers' actions. For example, their readiness to take on jobs outside their area of expertise suggests a broader theme of adaptability, which is crucial for survival in uncertain environments. However, Kuratko et al. (2022) (see Figure 5) warn that this adaptability comes at a cost. The potential pitfall of taking on tasks that fall outside one's area of expertise is that it can lead to dissatisfaction among customers. This dissatisfaction might even spiral into more severe problems, such as reduced trust or ruined reputations, affecting both the individual's and the greater group's job prospects in the long run. The literature stresses that while adaptability is beneficial, it is essential to strike a balance to ensure sustainability of opportunities.

Furthermore, the family responsibilities mentioned by the day labourers added another layer of complexity to their lives. They were not just hustling for themselves; they also bore the weight of their families' needs and expectations. This dual pressure intensified the sense of urgency, adding emotional depth to their hustle.

By drawing these parallels, it is evident that the urgency displayed by day labourers is multifaceted. It is driven both by external pressures, such as the competitive job environment, and internal motivations, like family responsibilities. The literature on urgency not only provides a theoretical backdrop; it also offers a lens through which one can understand the nuanced challenges and decisions that these labourers face on a daily basis.

6.4.2 Creativity and unorthodoxy

Integrating the entrepreneurship literature into the discussion on the creativity and unorthodoxy displayed by day labourers offers a broader lens through which to analyse their actions and strategies. Kuratko et al. (2022) assert that unorthodox behaviour is a cornerstone of the entrepreneurial hustle. This inclination to venture beyond conventional methods, especially in uncertain environments, is fundamental to taking advantage of opportunities (Kuratko et al., 2022). Fisher et al. (2020b) emphasise that unorthodox actions challenge established norms and disrupt expected outcomes (Fisher et al., 2020b). They are strategic moves that give entrepreneurs a competitive edge in unpredictable environments.

Comparing the literature and the findings from the study, similarities were evident in the strategies employed, which were in turn creative and unorthodox. For instance, the observed collaboration between day labourers at the Rivonia Builders hiring site was unorthodox in an extremely competitive environment. Likewise, the innovative use of a finder's fee and the unique way in which day labourers approached potential employers (so as not to intimidate them) were examples of the kind of unorthodox actions that Fisher et al. (2020b) and Kuratko et al. (2022) discuss.

Moreover, the strategic choice of lobbying outside a well-known establishment and connecting to the Builders brand was aligned with the insights provided by Kuratko et al. (2022). Just as entrepreneurs employ creative tactics to stand out, these labourers' understanding of the power of brand association was a demonstration of their innovative attempts to maximise their opportunities.

The adoption and integration of digital platforms into the day labourers' workflow, particularly the use of WhatsApp and Facebook as marketing tools, were a further testament to their unorthodox approach. In a space where one might expect traditional methods to take precedence, the labourers demonstrated digital savviness which was consistent with the innovative strategies discussed by Kuratko et al. (2022).

The day labourers' strategies and actions, as observed in the study, resonated deeply with the literature on the entrepreneurial hustle. Their blend of unorthodoxy and creativity, their strategic networking capabilities and their integration of modern digital tools to leverage desired outcomes – in an age-old profession dominated by hard labour – painted a clear picture of them not just as labourers but as entrepreneurs who hustle.

The innovative and unconventional approaches employed by the day labourers, be it through personal collaboration, digital platforms or support given to trusted brands, aligned well with the concept of unorthodoxy which is central to the entrepreneurial hustle. Fisher et al. (2020b) explain how entrepreneurs embrace unorthodox actions to challenge norms and thrive amidst uncertainty (Fisher et al., 2020b). This was clearly evident among the day labourers.

6.4.3 Intended usefulness

Fisher et al. (2020b) explored intended usefulness through their exploration of permission to hustle, a theory that sheds light on organisational efforts to bolster entrepreneurship in a corporate setting (Fisher et al., 2020b). The crux of their argument is that entrepreneurial activities, or the hustle, should always possess an inherent intention to yield meaningful outcomes. By empowering employees to participate in such endeavours, organisations are recognising and endorsing the value of actions taken that have a distinct purpose.

The accounts provided by the day labourers mirrored these academic insights, such as the strategy employed by Interviewee #11 to market himself primarily as a painter but then to expand into other areas like tiling or plumbing once trust and a relationship had been established. This confirms the rational orientation highlighted by Fisher et al. (2020a). Despite securing a job for the day; it is about leveraging that opportunity to create added value both for the client and the day labourer.

The goal of Interviewee #11, which was to progress from passively holding a sign to actively building a business, was a reflection of the forward-thinking, results-oriented mindset that is central to the concept of intended usefulness. This intention to progress

and build a sustainable future resonates deeply with the academic notion of directing entrepreneurial efforts towards addressing immediate challenges while ensuring long-term value creation.

Furthermore, the communal dynamics at the Rivonia hiring site, with its emphasis on delivering quality workmanship, protecting reputations and mentoring others, exemplified the usefulness associated with the entrepreneurial hustle, as portrayed in the literature. By ensuring quality work and training their peers, the day labourers were protecting their livelihoods and ensuring consistent, high-quality opportunities for the future. This approach again reinforced the notion of action being taken with a clear, beneficial purpose in mind.

In addition, the joint venture type of relationship that the day labourers had developed with Builders illustrated the practical orientation of their actions. It was about securing jobs, but also about building a healthy environment and lasting, mutually beneficial partnerships that go a long way towards delivering ongoing value. This dovetailed with the principle of value creation, as described by Fisher et al. (2020b).

In conclusion, the day labourers, as evidenced in the research results, embodied intended usefulness. Their actions, strategies and aspirations, although set in a different context, were clearly aligned with the concept of intended usefulness, as described in the literature. Whether it was by diversifying their skill sets, setting future-oriented goals or forging beneficial partnerships, their actions were driven by a clear intention to achieve meaningful outcomes in the long term.

6.4.4 Addressing of challenges and opportunities

Entrepreneurs are known to drive innovation, meet consumer demand and stimulate economic expansion by identifying, assessing and capitalising on identified opportunities (Pryor et al., 2016). Fisher et al. (2020a) stress the importance of swift and purposeful actions, a concept that they refer to as the hustle, which is the act of engaging stakeholders and driving entrepreneurial endeavours forward (Fisher et al., 2020a). Similarly, Kuratko et al. (2022) show how entrepreneurs navigate uncertainties, accentuating the agility, adaptability and resilience required to address challenges and opportunities in the entrepreneurial domain (Kuratko et al., 2022).

The experiences of the day labourers were aligned with these theoretical insights. The hunter mentality described by one of the interviewees suggested a heightened sense of environmental awareness, a readiness to identify challenges before they escalate, and

the agility to take advantage of opportunities as they arise – all attributes associated with the entrepreneurial hustle.

The entrepreneurial spirit of the day labourers was not passive; it was enthusiastically proactive. Statements such as ‘anything that comes, we take’ demonstrated this drive and determination to grasp every available opportunity, regardless of the prevailing challenges. This mirrored the view expressed by Kuratko et al. (2022) that entrepreneurship in essence involves rapid action to circumvent obstacles and to capitalise on opportunities (Kuratko et al., 2022).

Another example, provided by one of the interviewees, was the inherent difficulties of formal sector employment. His view was indicative of the desire to address challenges, which is one of the hallmarks of the entrepreneurial hustle, by rejecting conventional employment and, arguably, removing some uncertainties and the perception of inadequate compensation. In the process, the day labourers addressed the challenge by assuming more risk in pursuit of potential greater rewards.

The day labourers’ marketing initiatives in turn, such as using business cards or strategically placing their contact details on walls and other visible points at the exits of Builders, reflected the kind of proactive approach discussed by Fisher et al. (2020b). They were not merely waiting for opportunities; they were actively pursuing potential clients, positioning themselves to take advantage of available opportunities and remaining at the forefront of clients’ minds.

There were other observed challenges, such as the logistical complexities of travelling with tools on public transport and striking a balance between customer service expectations and compensation. These reported challenges align with Kuratko et al.’s (2022) insights on how entrepreneurs navigate challenges.

In an environment where trust is a critical factor for success, Fisher et al. (2020a) contend that those entrepreneurs who are seen to be hustling are perceived to be more trustworthy (Fisher et al., 2020a). The informal sector, much like other sectors, is built on a foundation of trust. Delivering quality work consistently can lead to word-of-mouth referrals. For day labourers, their reputation is their most valuable asset. Investing in building that reputation, therefore, becomes a critical component of their entrepreneurial hustle.

The entrepreneurial hustle, characterised by urgency, unorthodoxy, intended usefulness and a proactive approach to addressing challenges and opportunities, shows clear links

with the behaviours exhibited by the day labourers. These individuals exhibited the very constructs that are presented in the literature by Kuratko et al. (2022). Their urgency to secure work, their creativity in navigating challenges, their focus on building sustainable relationships and their forward-thinking approach aligned well with the multidimensional nature of the entrepreneurial hustle, as discussed in this chapter.

Recognising these parallels gives rise to fresh perspectives on day labourers, as they are viewed not merely as temporary workers but as innovative hustlers who are willing and able to navigate a complex, uncertain environment. The foregoing discussion of their behaviours, coupled with the various entrepreneurial constructs in the literature, reflects the universal nature of the hustle across different contexts.

In other words, while the environment may differ, the core tenets of the entrepreneurial hustle resonate both within formal entrepreneurial domains and in informal day labour settings. This highlights the universality of these traits, emphasising that when faced with challenges and uncertainty, individuals – irrespective of their context – tend to exhibit similar adaptive behaviours to survive and thrive.

6.5 Conclusion

This chapter compared the research results with the literature, aligning practical evidence with established research questions. The uncertain environment described under research question 1 highlights the dynamic nature of and the uncertainty in the entrepreneurial landscape, and thus its inherent challenges. This unpredictability, as was discovered, often serves as both a hurdle and a catalyst to entrepreneurial success. The discussion also provided insights into the uncertain environment in which day labourers operate.

Under research question 2, the relationship between push motivational factors and necessity entrepreneurship was explored. Judging from the literature and interviews conducted, day labourers operating in the informal sector can clearly be defined as necessity entrepreneurs. This study provided evidence of immediate economic challenges and broader socio-economic factors pushing day labourers towards necessity entrepreneurship. The motivations of day labourers, primarily driven by essential needs, are illustrated in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs framework. The empirical evidence pointed to the day labourers' choice to confront challenges as being driven by the basic need to survive. The liability of poorness framework by Morris et al. (2022) provided a deeper layer of understanding of day labourers' circumstances, which are characterised by literacy gaps, scarcity mindsets, intense personal pressures and the

absence of a financial safety net. This paints a vivid picture of their vulnerability and contrasts with that of opportunity-driven entrepreneurs who embrace uncertainty for profit. However, there was evidence of pull factors potentially influencing some of the participants in the study, suggesting a desire to proactively strive towards success.

Under research question 3, the entrepreneurial hustle was examined, with its key attributes of determination, resilience and adaptability. Fisher et al. (2020a) define the hustle as more than action. It is an approach and mindset that deliberately addresses uncertainties and opportunities. In the context of day labourers, the entrepreneurial hustle is an instinctive response to a complex, unpredictable environment. The entrepreneurial hustle connects intent and action and is vital for overcoming challenges. The point at which intent transitions into action is where the entrepreneurial hustle is most evident, while the actualisation of this intent is where the entrepreneurial hustle comes into its own.

Together, the above-mentioned constructs provide an overview of the entrepreneurial process, its challenges and rewards. According to the literature, entrepreneurial intent is an essential part of the entrepreneurial process (Adam & Alain, 2015; Alam et al., 2019). Without action, intent has no value. The transition from intent to action highlights the value of the entrepreneurial hustle. The entrepreneurial hustle among day labourers was characterised by unconventional approaches designed to address immediate challenges and take advantage of opportunities in the informal sector.

Building on this discussion of the results, the next chapter provides a conclusion to the study. It provides the principal findings based on the conceptual framework, the implications and limitations of the study, and recommendations for future research based on the key observations.

Table 4: Key findings of the research evaluated against study determinants

Study determinants	Description	Reference	Key Findings
Uncertain Environment	An uncertain environment is one of the foundational elements of entrepreneurship. It can be a catalyst for success, although it is a deterrent to acting entrepreneurially. It refers to a set of conditions in which outcomes, repercussions, or future states are unpredictable or not well-defined. These environments are characterized by ambiguity, volatility, complexity, and a lack of clarity about future events.	(Schenck et al., 2014; Shepherd et al., 2020; Whitfield, 2021;	Day labourers face a myriad of uncertainties. These are defined as socio-economical, unregulated highly concentrated competitive environment. Limited access to resources, lack of legal status, consistency in work availability, restricted earning potential and lack of formal certification opportunities.
Necessity Entrepreneurship	The literature on entrepreneurship highlights the differences between necessity-driven and opportunity-driven entrepreneurship. Necessity entrepreneurship is primarily driven by survival and circumstantial obligation, setting it apart from opportunity-driven for-profit entrepreneurship. The concept of liability of poorness further emphasising the unique challenges faced by necessity entrepreneurs.	(Dencker et al., 2021; Morris et al., 2022)	Day labourers' priorities are predominantly centred around basic needs for survival. Lack of opportunity in formal sector and regulatory barriers push them toward necessity entrepreneurship. Necessity Entrepreneurs are extremely vulnerable to economic shocks. This study showed that the challenges of literacy gaps, a scarcity mindset, intense personal pressures and the absence of a financial safety net are lived realities for day labourers.

<p>Entrepreneurial hustle</p>	<p>Urgency: This reflects the immediacy and promptness with which entrepreneurs respond to opportunities or challenges. An inherent need to act swiftly, often driven by pressing circumstances.</p> <p>Creativity/Unorthodoxy: This dimension speaks to the inventive ways entrepreneurs approach situations. It is finding unique, sometimes unconventional, solutions to problems or challenges.</p> <p>Intended Usefulness: This is centred around the purposefulness of actions taken by entrepreneurs. Every move or decision made has a clear, intended benefit, whether it's for immediate gain or long-term advantage.</p> <p>Address Challenges/Opportunity: This highlights the proactive nature of entrepreneurs in confronting obstacles head-on and seizing opportunities when they arise. It's about turning challenges into potential growth areas.</p>	<p>(Fisher et al., 2020b; Kuratko et al., 2022;)</p>	<p>The transition from intent to action highlights the value of the entrepreneurial hustle. This is highlighted among day labourers and characterised by unconventional approaches designed to address immediate challenges and take advantage of opportunities in the informal sector.</p> <p>There is a risk of overusing entrepreneurial hustle with detrimental effects on the entrepreneur. Caution must be exercised not to overextend the constructs.</p>
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Chapter 7: Conclusion and Recommendations

7.1 Introduction

Day labourers in emerging economies are an excellent example of an extremely marginalised group who are at the mercy of a poor policy environment and intense competition, and who lack formal safety nets to sustain them during particularly hard times. Yet it is often out of their vulnerability and precarious existence that they find their inner strength, using their experience as a sort of fuel to power their transition into the world of entrepreneurship – albeit in an environment that is unpredictable and prone to economic shocks and other upheavals.

The desperation of day labourers, who have been pushed into the informal sector as necessity entrepreneurs, often provides the spark for the entrepreneurial hustle, which sees workers leveraging opportunities in creative ways in a bid to survive and even thrive in an unrelenting environment (Fisher et al., 2020b). The entrepreneurial hustle is a new concept, yet it is key to understanding the massive scope of the entrepreneurial domain. The entrepreneurial hustle is a dynamic extension of entrepreneurial action. It involves adopting urgent, unorthodox strategies to navigate uncertainty, while leveraging opportunities and addressing challenges (Fisher et al., 2020b) – all with a view to keeping customers coming and keeping them satisfied.

This study explored how a sample of day labourers dealt with uncertainty and mitigated challenges, while making a living in a highly volatile and sometimes lonely environment, using the entrepreneurial hustle as a competitive strategy. Of particular interest was the fact that the study uncovered the thought processes and decision-making strategies driving day labourers' activities, providing insights that could resonate with necessity entrepreneurs in other parts of the country or surrounding region. The journey to entrepreneurial success was shown to be as profound as it was simple – starting with intent (which sets the trajectory), moving to action (which establishes the foundation) and culminating in the hustle (which propels the venture forward), underpinned by agility and resilience.

This chapter sets out the study's principal findings, the study's implications and limitations, and some recommendations for future research. The chapter concludes by focusing on the novelty and some of the key contributions of the study.

7.2 Principal findings

Entrepreneurs constantly find themselves navigating challenging environments. They are often resource-constrained and therefore have to find non-traditional yet still compelling ways to convince stakeholders of their venture's legitimacy and worth (Fisher et al., 2020b; Müller et al., 2023). This study's principal findings centred on the real-life strategies employed by day labourers to meet basic needs, earn a living, provide for their families and pursue their own personal dreams and aspirations.

The study provided some unique insights into what entrepreneurs do at a practical level – how they present themselves, how they interact, how they take decisions and how they solve problems. These perspectives could be invaluable to those who are considering becoming entrepreneurs in the informal sector. A key requirement is that entrepreneurs remain adaptable to changing laws, market conditions, competitive forces and customer expectations.

Furthermore, the study revealed the value that entrepreneurs attach to relationship-building and networking. Trust (particularly in an uncertain environment) is pivotal to the forging of successful business partnerships and, at a deeper level, personal relationships. There was also a sense of community and teamwork evident among the day labourers participating in the study, with various informal support systems in place to provide some relief in the face of the competitive, financial and logistical hurdles that they faced.

A key takeaway from the study was the pervasiveness of the entrepreneurial hustle among day labourers, which underscored the importance of using aggressive, short-term strategies to capitalise on immediate opportunities (survival) but also investing time and effort in building customer and revenue streams for ongoing future returns (growth and development). The entrepreneurial hustle is characterised by an ability to 'think out of the box' and the agility to adjust strategies and tactics as circumstances (including the competitive climate) change. Although the entrepreneurial hustle acts as a valuable catalyst, turning intent into action and (hopefully) positive results, its various constructs (from urgency to unorthodoxy) should not be over-utilised to the extent that trust is compromised. The entrepreneurial hustle should, after all, be an accompaniment to other strategies.

Figure 7 illustrates, in the form of a conceptual model, how the entrepreneurial hustle is impacted by the economy (basic needs, informality and the ever-present risk of failure)

and the broader environment (ranging from certainty to uncertainty). The two main axes in the model are the economy (horizontal) and the environment (vertical).

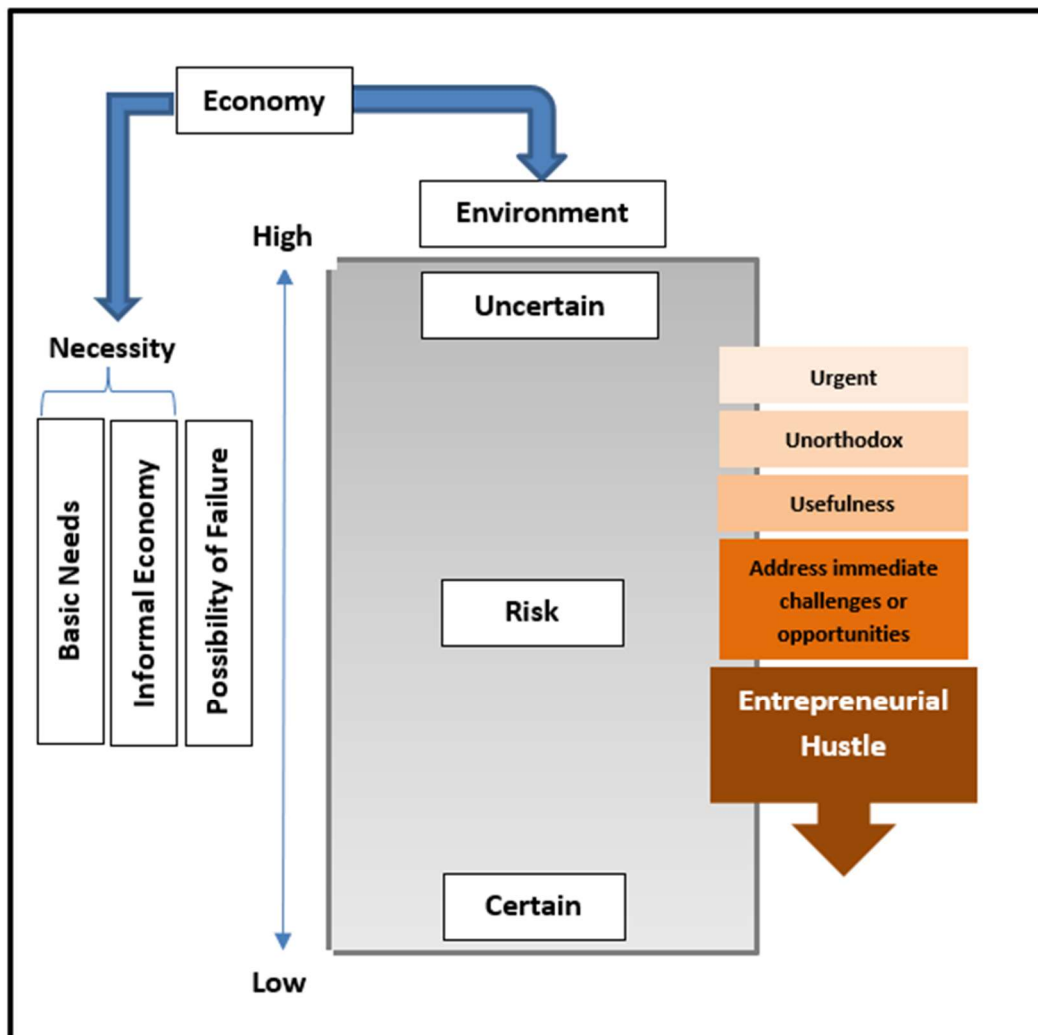


Figure 7: Conceptual model of the entrepreneurial hustle's impact in an uncertain environment

Source: Author's own compilation

This horizontal axis depicts the informal economy on the left (which is typically driven by basic needs and necessity) and the formal economy on the right (which is typically viewed as a structured environment with established systems and processes).

The vertical axis depicts the degree of certainty/uncertainty in the environment. When most entrepreneurs start out, they experience a great deal of uncertainty, suggesting an environment laden with unpredictability, complexity and challenge. As entrepreneurs gain more experience, the environment becomes more certain and less risky. A certain environment is perceived as stable, predictable, less volatile and low in risk.

The entrepreneurial hustle is performed at the intersection of these two axes. It can be regarded as a coping mechanism or a proactive strategy employed by entrepreneurs to navigate the challenges posed by an uncertain environment and a lacklustre or volatile economy. The entrepreneurial hustle has four distinct yet interconnected sub-constructs:

- Urgency: Reflects the time-sensitive nature of decisions and actions that are needed in uncertain environments.
- Unorthodoxy: Denotes alternative, often unconventional strategies employed to navigate challenges or seize opportunities.
- Usefulness: Emphasises the entrepreneurial value proposition and ensures that entrepreneurial endeavours align with market or community needs.
- Addressing of immediate challenges and opportunities: Captures the proactive and reactive measures adopted by entrepreneurs to leverage available resources, adapt to changing circumstances and capitalise on immediate opportunities.

Embedded in the model is the concept of risk. Risk underscores the inherent vulnerabilities and challenges that come with operating in an uncertain environment, especially in the informal economy context. It acts as a bridge or a pivot around which the hustle revolves, with the nature and magnitude of the hustle often determined by the perceived risks in the environment.

This conceptual model therefore provides a visual representation of how entrepreneurial behaviours can be applied, strengthened and adapted. The hustle acts as an enabler when an entrepreneur is setting out to navigate an uncertain environment, pushing them from an uncertain environment to a more certain one with more manageable risks. The entrepreneurial hustle can also assist in encouraging the transition from push to pull entrepreneurship, which is a more sustainable and satisfying solution than the day-to-day grind.

7.3 Implications

This study brought to the fore the challenges and opportunities that day labourers face in the informal sector, providing lessons that could be of interest to other disciplines as well. Policymakers, in particular, should take note of the results of a study of this nature when devising ways to support informal sector workers, making a distinction between necessity entrepreneurship and opportunity-driven entrepreneurship and focusing on how the former can become a sturdier springboard to the latter.

7.3.1 Building relationships

Given the emphasis on relationship building and trust among the labourers, policymakers should consider introducing initiatives that facilitate and strengthen these relationships. For instance, creating community-based hubs or platforms where day labourers could share employment opportunities and build professional relationships would be beneficial – similar to the hiring facilities on offer in Europe and the USA.

7.3.2 Entrepreneurship training

This study constituted a microcosm of how the entrepreneurial hustle plays out on a broader scale. Entrepreneurship training programmes could incorporate modules on the entrepreneurial hustle, with the insights gained on the workings of the day labourer community used to teach entrepreneurs about the importance of adaptability and the management of risk in an uncertain business environment.

7.3.3 Improving working conditions

Employers could benefit from day labourers' strong sense of community and hustle tendencies. Employers should therefore incentivise activities centring on the entrepreneurial hustle. Giving people 'permission' to hustle is an important first step as it will help to shift rigid institutionalised mindsets.

Hardware stores could create proper support programmes for day labourers. There is much scope for mutual benefit as day labourers already act as informal agents for these stores. Creating a supportive work environment with convenient shelters, for example, would enhance the legitimacy of the day labourers and improve the physical spaces around the hiring sites. Another support measure would be to provide additional training (with certification opportunities) to enhance day labourers' skills and prospects in the market. Finally, day labourers could be incentivised with financial 'kickbacks' if they are instrumental in getting customers to buy materials from the stores that they frequent and informally represent.

7.3.4 Financial support

Knowing how vulnerable day labourers are to economic shocks and the general vagaries of the market, governments and financial institutions should consider developing flexible financial products that would be entrepreneur-friendly (and particularly necessity entrepreneur-friendly). These could provide a valuable safety net to day labourers in the face of unpredictable earning patterns, generally lean periods and periodic crises.

7.3.5 Changing perceptions about day labourers

Society needs to change its perceptions about the day labourer community, recognising the values that they embody and the economic contribution that they make. In a country where almost half the population is unemployed and where cities are so often bereft of a clear vision and strong leadership, day labourers should not be overlooked at the policy level; nor should they be exploited at the commercial level. Instead, their entrepreneurial flair and willingness to work hard (and not simply rely on welfare or the proceeds from crime) should be acknowledged, harnessed and suitably rewarded. The fact that day labourers are often foreign migrants makes their circumstances all the more dire but their contribution to the informal economy no less valuable.

In the face of widespread government inaction, societies have to do more to help themselves and effect positive change from within. If more stakeholders acknowledge and support the day labourer community, even the taking modest steps could pay dividends in the long run and help other necessity entrepreneurs in South Africa come out of the shadows and make a more visible and meaningful contribution.

7.3.6 Academic Contributions

This study addresses gaps identified in the current entrepreneurship academic discussions. Dencker et al. (2021) highlighted the need to differentiate between necessity entrepreneurs and their interactions with their environments. This study explores necessity entrepreneurs in the form of day labourers in the informal sector and how they navigate their uncertain environment.

Xweso et al. (2022) emphasised the exploration of psychological factors influencing day labourers. This study responds to that by providing evidence on the aspects of psychological factors as portrayed through the lived experience of day labourers. Dencker et al. (2021) identified an unclear understanding of the transition to entrepreneurship due to push factors. This research clarifies this transition, differentiating it from the usual pull-factor approaches.

Morris et al. (2022) noted the importance of studying entrepreneurs facing external pressures. This study examined the external pressures in detail, providing fresh perspectives on its impact on entrepreneurs. Building on Serviere & Munoz (2010), the research considers the possibility of entrepreneurship moving beyond survival to capitalise on growth opportunities, it has been found that the transition to a pull motivation is present in the environment.

Building on the new concept of the entrepreneurial hustle presented by Fisher et al. (2020b) this study provides a practical example of entrepreneurial hustle in an uncertain, challenging setting. The study showed how its enactment created a positive impact even for the most desperate of entrepreneurs, operating out of necessity to fulfil basic needs to survive. For day labourers in the informal sector, entrepreneurial hustle is a strategy to overcome immediate challenges. If aligned to long-term goals, the entrepreneurial hustle can contribute to the transition from push theory to pull, from necessity to for profit activities and long-term sustainability.

Overall, the study filled and addressed existing gaps identified during the literature review and offers a fresh, lived experience perspective in the form of day labourers operating in the informal sector within South Africa.

7.3.7 Practical Contribution

A robust work ethic, perseverance, creativity, and calculated risk-taking have been identified as hallmarks of entrepreneurial success, even when confronted with formidable challenges (Müller et al., 2023). By further developing insights to understanding these traits through the entrepreneurial hustle and its sub-constructs, there is an opportunity to apply the entrepreneurial hustle to enhance the outcome of business practices, encompassing both formal and informal sectors.

However, the urgency underpinning the entrepreneurial hustle, presents a double-edged sword. While it facilitates swift responses to pressing challenges, it may simultaneously hinder long-term strategy. Emphasis on immediate gains could, at times, undermine the broader perspective required for strategic foresight, thereby potentially restricting the expansion and longevity of entrepreneurial activities.

The everyday realities of day labourers, encapsulated by fierce competition, fleeting job opportunities, modest remunerations, and prevalent uncertainty, as highlighted by Xweso et al. (2022), underscores the significance of diving deeper into their lived experiences to understand their perspective and practically intervene to assist this vulnerable population group through adaptation of community programs, regulation and basic support services.

7.4 Study limitations

The study had a number of limitations. Acknowledging these limitations promotes transparency and improves the credibility of the research. It also shows how the integrity of future studies can be enhanced.

7.4.1 Potential researcher bias

The researcher, who acted as the instrument for data collection, was not professionally trained to conduct the interviews. This lack of experience could potentially have impacted the interview process and ultimately the results. For example, it is possible that the collected data were not analysed with a sufficient amount of objective detachment and that researcher bias (influenced by the researcher's past experiences and personal worldview) influenced the interpretation of the data and the conclusions drawn.

7.4.2 Small sample size and selection

The small sample size of 13 participants inhibited the generalisability of the results to a larger population. Studies on larger groups would provide opportunities for both a broader and more in-depth analysis of the entrepreneurial hustle and its implications for this particular demographic. The sampling technique – although intended to be random – was confined to three hiring sites, and the not-very-scientific snowball method was used by the researcher to approach second or third participants at each hiring site.

7.4.3 Scope of the study

The study was conducted at day labour hiring sites in Johannesburg in the Gauteng province of South Africa, thus limiting the study to a specific geographical region, cultural context and economic setting. This placed a geographical and economic bias on the research findings, which could affect the generalisability of such findings to other regions or cultures. The study could be expanded to cover different regions, different types of entrepreneurs or different cultural settings, thereby providing an opportunity to collate more data and determine how the day labour phenomenon is perceived in other parts of the country under different demographic conditions.

7.4.4 Time horizon

Cross-sectional studies are limited as they only consider data at a particular point in time. Longitudinal studies could be conducted to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the manifestation and impact of the entrepreneurial hustle over a longer period, as economic and market forces change.

7.4.5 Cultural and linguistic barriers

The study was conducted in a multicultural setting. In some instances, it was challenging capturing the nuances of various responses due to language barriers or cultural misunderstandings.

7.5 Recommendations for future research

The results of this study, being qualitative in nature, were limited to the specific sample population operating in a unique cultural and social setting and cannot be broadly applied to other settings and situations. The insights gained were based solely on the experiences of day labourers in the informal sector. However, the customers who play a crucial role in the success or otherwise of the entrepreneurial hustle may offer different perspectives which could enrich people's understanding of this interesting demographic. Therefore, future studies could be conducted on the phenomenon of the entrepreneurial hustle from different stakeholders' perspectives.

This study provides a rich foundation for interdisciplinary research. Researchers from disciplines such as sociology, economics and anthropology may find value in exploring the intricate dynamics in the day labourer community and their necessity entrepreneurial activities. Furthermore, the role of social networks – including community, family and peer interactions – warrants more thorough investigation to determine how they shape entrepreneurial behaviours and decisions among day labourers. Another potential research topic is the physical and mental health implications of being a day labourer, which would offer insights into their relative well-being in the face of constant uncertainty. These implications are already loosely grounded in the current study's findings and, if studied more closely, could offer valuable insights for policymakers, educators, businesses and researchers alike.

Future research on the entrepreneurial hustle among day labourers could benefit from the use of a mixed-method approach. The integration of both quantitative and qualitative methodologies into the research design could yield more holistic perspectives. This approach could aid in understanding not only the broad behavioural patterns but also the intricate, personal experiences of day labourers. There is also merit in conducting longitudinal studies that observe the same group of day labourers over extended periods. Such research would reveal how the entrepreneurial hustle and other influencing factors evolve over time, and how day labourers adapt to changing personal and environmental circumstances.

A comparative analysis could also be beneficial. Studying the entrepreneurial hustle across different geographical regions, economic contexts or cultural settings would provide interesting insights into how these external factors shape and influence necessity entrepreneurship. At the same time, determining how policy and regulatory frameworks impact day labourers is crucial. Understanding how different policies either support or hinder day labourers' activities could reveal optimal strategies for policymakers, lawmakers and other stakeholders.

In today's digital age, investigating the impact of technology, including the role of digital platforms or mobile applications, on the entrepreneurial activities and opportunities of day labourers has become a priority. Similarly, the range of skill-specific development programmes and entrepreneurial training initiatives targeting day labourers should be explored to understand how they can enhance day labourers' capabilities, opportunities and acceptance in society.

Finally, the intricate interplay between intent, action and hustle carries practical implications for entrepreneurship training and support, and should be thoroughly researched. Programmes should focus on driving intent by fostering entrepreneurial mindsets and instilling a passion for innovation. Action-oriented training, in turn, would equip individuals with the skills to translate intent into practice. Hustle-centric initiatives could then further empower entrepreneurs to proactively and confidently navigate challenges, ensuring that they remain responsive and adaptable to changing environments.

7.6 Conclusion

As a conclusion to this chapter, it should be stressed that day labourers and the environment in which they operate are often overlooked or misunderstood. Yet they are ripe for academic research. The resilience and adaptability displayed by these individuals are both a testament to human ingenuity and a stark reminder of the challenges that they encounter every day. The importance of relationships, community and teamwork has emerged as pivotal for their survival and success in such a hostile environment. These dynamics, though transactional, are deeply rooted in trust, fairness and mutual support.

This study has unveiled the importance of the entrepreneurial hustle to the day labourer community, demonstrating the sometimes delicate balance between necessity and opportunity. The implications of this study are diverse, from revealing policy priorities to highlighting the important role played by entrepreneurship training and support, tailored to day labourers' unique context.

The uncertain environment in which day labourers in South Africa operate is unlikely to change any time soon. However, this and future studies have an important role to play in sharing real-life examples of day labourers' and other necessity entrepreneurs' experiences and hustle tactics while also acknowledging their place and contribution in society. In short, day labourers deserve more respect and support. They have earned it.

*'Things may come to those who wait, but only things left by those
who hustle' – Abraham Lincoln*

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Appendix 1: Research instrument – semi structured interview guide

Considering the specific context of day labourers in the informal sector, the following questions will be used in a semi-structured interview, with open-ended questions, to explore their motivation for joining the hiring site and to gain insight into the different dimensions of the entrepreneurial hustle.

I am here to listen to your story.

Dimension	Questions
Lived experience	Can you describe to me a typical day here or at a job? Can you tell me more about your daily activities and how the day ends?
Push theory and necessity entrepreneurship	Please share with me how you decided to participate in this line of work (construction, day labourer, handyman). Tell me how you became a day labourer. How did you identify this opportunity? Did you have full-time employment before joining the hiring site?
Motivation theory	I am interested in why you are looking for job opportunities at this hiring site. Where do you want to see yourself one year from today? What brings you to this place every day to look for job opportunities?
Uncertainty	Please tell me more about your ups and downs working in this environment. Share some of the best moments you have experienced. Also, share some of the more negative moments (not so great moments) you have experienced.
Urgency	How did you go about finding opportunities quickly, and what actions did you take to secure employment? Share an example of a time when acting quickly helped you get a job for the day. How do you prioritise and decide which job opportunities to pursue when they are limited?
Unorthodoxy	Can you describe a situation when you had to think creatively or adopt an unconventional or different approach to find work? How do you stand out from other workers in the same profession? What tactics have you used to attract potential employers or to increase your chances of getting selected for a job? How do you use your unique skills or qualities to differentiate yourself from other day labourers?

Intended usefulness	<p>How do you know you have done a good job?</p> <p>Do high-quality jobs result in more opportunities?</p> <p>How else can a person get more opportunities?</p> <p>Can you provide an example of how you tailor your skills or adapt your approach to meet specific employer requirements?</p> <p>How do you gather feedback or gauge the satisfaction of employers regarding your work performance?</p>
Addressing of challenges and opportunities	<p>Can you provide an example of a difficult situation at a job?</p> <p>Can you share a significant challenge or opportunity you encountered?</p> <p>How did you manage the challenge or take advantage of the opportunity?</p> <p>Describe a time when you had to adapt your work approach or take advantage of an unexpected opportunity to enhance your income or job stability as a day labourer.</p>

Thank you for your time. Hamba gahle.

Appendix 2: Thematic analysis code mapping

2nd Order Themes	1st Order Codes	Count of Occurrence
Uncertainty	Employment uncertainty	18
	Uncertainty surrounding customers - Payment, Trust, Unrealistic expectations, language barrier	13
	Environmental uncertainty	13
	Competitive uncertainty	8
	Financial uncertainty	8
Push motivations towards necessity entrepreneurship	Financial necessity/survival	15
	Supporting families	8
Pull motivations towards opportunity-driven entrepreneurship	Building a business	10
Urgency	Rapid Action, Acting quickly	9
	Operating under time pressure	
	Acting within time constraints	
Creativity / Unorthodoxy	Doing what is unexpected	28
	Novel alternative actions	
	Acting creatively or inventively	
Intended usefulness	Action toward an outcome	31
	Taking action with purpose and intention	
	Working toward something better	
Address Challenges / opportunity	Making an effort to overcome challenges	26
	Pushing through in spite of difficulties	
	Seizing immediate opportunities	