

# **THE IMPACT OF BOTSWANA INTERNATIONAL TRADE FAIR ON INFORMAL SMALL SCALE CLOTHING PRODUCERS**

**MILANE KGALANYANA SELWE**

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**Discipline of Community Resources  
School of Agricultural Sciences and Agribusiness  
University of KwaZulu-Natal  
Pietermaritzburg**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Micro and small businesses have become a contributor to both reduction of unemployment and to national development. The informal small scale clothing producers in Botswana have been supported by government through policies directed towards poverty alleviation and employment creation. Despite the government's efforts of availing financial assistance, technical expertise, promotional and marketing support, the informal small scale clothing producers do not seem to be utilising these for full benefit. Participation of the informal small scale clothing producers at Botswana International Trade Fair was expected to provide them with avenues for long term benefits through marketing their products and learning. The purpose of this study was to establish the impact of Botswana International Trade Fair on the informal small scale clothing producers. The informal small scale clothing producers have had assistance and access to promoting their products for a considerable time, with not much change in the market share and quantities of production. The challenges facing these informal small scale clothing producers has been to utilise BITF for competing with local and regional producers in providing quality products; to increase production for meeting the demands of the market; to increase profits, and expand businesses to reduce unemployment.

Purposive sampling was used to select participating informal small scale clothing producers and council Home Economists while the independent small scale exhibitors were conveniently sampled during the 2006 trade fair. Seventeen informal small scale clothing producers from the eastern part of Botswana were interviewed to establish impacts from participating at the trade fair. One producer who had won most prizes at the trade fair was interviewed for a different perspective in production strategies employed. Fifteen council Home Economists, acting as liaison and change agents for the informal small scale clothing producers, also participated in the survey and focus group discussions. Two case studies were developed from in-depth interviews with independent small scale exhibitors to ascertain impact brought about by BITF on these producers. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches were used in collecting

data. The results were analysed in terms of frequencies and chi-square relationships.

Great similarities were found to exist between the three samples. The results revealed that there was adequate knowledge about BITF on the informal small scale clothing producers, as well as with council Home Economists and the independent small scale exhibitors. The three groups understood the objectives of BITF to be mostly educational and followed by promotion. All the groups reported noticeable impact to be growth in the number of customers, increase in production, increase in assets, improvement in quality of products and addition of newly developed products. Perceptions of the three groups on the benefits from BITF matched what they experienced as result of participation at the trade fair. The producers on the other hand experienced a decline in the number of employees while the independent small scale exhibitors had an increase.

For utmost benefit of BITF, the producers have to strengthen their marketing strategies, during and outside the trade fair. There is need for the producers to take initiatives to secure their own stalls for participation during the trade fair as individuals or jointly with other producers. Producers could benefit more from using funding from government for promotion of products. Home Economists should support self representation by the producers so that they directly learn from participation and eventually wean off continued support from government. For monitoring and planning purposes, a national data base for micro and informal small scale clothing producers should be kept by the Department of Social Services. Benchmarking on involving micro and small scale businesses in training is essential, and establishment of local markets for continued contact with customers could expand producers' knowledge in production.

## DECLARATION

I MILANE K. SELWE declare that


- (i) The research reported in this thesis, except where otherwise indicated, is my original research
- (ii) This thesis has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any university
- (iii) This thesis does not contain other persons' data, pictures, graphs or other information, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons
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Signed  .....

Milane K. Selwe

Feb 11, 2008  
Date

As the candidate's Supervisor I have/ have not approved this thesis for submission.

Supervisor  .....  
Prof. J. Maryann Green

11 Feb 2008  
Date

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this thesis in memory of my late husband Churchill and remembering the contributions made by my late beloved father Molemane Alpheus Monametsi for believing in education, exposing me to it and always trusting in me. Thank you very much and may your souls rest in peace.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<b>AIDS</b>	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
<b>ACHIB</b>	African Council of Hawkers and Informal Businesses
<b>BITF</b>	Botswana International Trade fair
<b>BNPC</b>	Botswana National Productivity Centre
<b>CEDA</b>	Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency
<b>CSO</b>	Central Statistics Office
<b>DNFE</b>	Department of Non Formal Education
<b>FAP</b>	Financial Assistance Policy
<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>HIV</b>	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
<b>ICPD</b>	International Conference on Population and Development
<b>IFS</b>	Integrated Field Services
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organisation
<b>LEA</b>	Local Enterprise Authority
<b>MTTC</b>	Madirelo Training and Testing Centre
<b>MEP</b>	Market Encounter Programme
<b>MSEs</b>	Micro and Small Enterprises
<b>MFDP</b>	Ministry of Finance and Development Planning
<b>MLG</b>	Ministry of Local Government
<b>NACA</b>	National AIDS Coordinating Agency
<b>NDP</b>	National Development Plan
<b>NSCI</b>	National Small Industries Corporation
<b>NGO</b>	Non Governmental Organisation
<b>RSA</b>	Republic of South Africa
<b>SETA</b>	Sector Education and Training Authorities
<b>SBC</b>	Small Business Council
<b>SMEs</b>	Small and Medium Enterprises
<b>SMMEs</b>	Small Medium and Micro Enterprises
<b>SIAPAC</b>	Social Impact Assessment and Policy Analysis Corporation
<b>SPSS</b>	Statistical Programme for Social Scientists
<b>WIEGO</b>	Women in the Informal Economy; Globalizing and Organizing

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

#### **1.0 Introduction**

Botswana's poverty level continues to rise despite efforts by government in providing poverty alleviation strategies such as training and other assistance to the general populace including small-scale entrepreneurs for improved livelihoods. Although the country has been reported to be performing well in the past as indicated by the GDP per capita growing at the rate of 3.3 per annum during the eighth National Development Plan (NDP 8) period covering 1997/98-2002/03, poverty still remains one of the major challenges (Botswana Government 2003b). Africa Development Bank (2005) indicates that 30% of the population live below the poverty datum and that rural areas were the most affected. The Long Term Vision for Botswana: Towards Prosperity for All, popularly referred to as the Vision 2016 document, which is a guide towards improving the country's socio-economic situation, however seeks to reduce poverty to not more than 23% in 2007 and to zero by the end of 2016 (Botswana Government 2003a; 2003b).

#### **1.1 Unemployment**

Although small scale entrepreneurs employ a large number of people as mentioned by Temtime *et al* (2004), unemployment continues to be a major challenge. This could be that small scale entrepreneurs do not seem to graduate from this level (small scale) and grow to a level (medium or large scale) that could absorb more employees, for greater production of goods and services. According to African Development Bank (2005) between 80-85 percent of small-scale enterprises cease to operate within the first five years of operation. Botswana is striving to improve the lives of her people through encouragement of projects aimed at diversifying the economy and creation of employment,

especially in the rural areas. These projects are directed towards alleviation of poverty at the household level and bring about development to the communities. The NDP 9, a five year plan period for 2003/04-2008/09, stresses diversification of the economy away from diamonds and addressing the problem of unemployment and poverty (African Development Bank 2005).

## **1.2 Government Support**

Small scale enterprises play a crucial role in economic growth and employment creation (African Development Bank 2005; Gaskill 2001). Small scale enterprises multiply rapidly in terms of numbers and employ a large number of the unskilled labour force which contributes to the micro economic development of a country. Temtime *et al* (2004) state that small businesses employ more people than larger businesses, country-wide, therefore they contribute more widely to household income. Lund and Skinner (2003), indicate that over 10% of those working in the informal employment are in manufacturing, thus a high usage of human labour for production. Nwankwo (2000) citing World Bank (1995b) states that the small business sector employs 60 percent of the urban population in most low income countries. In the majority of cases, small businesses address the gap left by the larger business in addressing the needs of the population (Ahson & Aslam 2003). In order for this role to be noticeable in small-scale enterprises, support is necessary from both the government and the private sector. This is provided through a number of government assistance programmes such as skills training and financial assistance. In Botswana financial assistance has been provided through programs and policies like Financial Assistance Policy (FAP) of 1982, Small Micro and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMME) policy of 1999 and Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency (CEDA) of 2001. The intention was to provide financial support to entrepreneurs in building their business ventures.

### **1.3 Government support levels in relation to small businesses**

Financial Assistance Policy (FAP) was introduced to encourage the Botswana citizens to engage in manufacturing activities and employment creation through provision of grants to either start businesses or expand the already existing ones (African Development Bank 2005). FAP was a non repayable financial assistance which was not properly coordinated and monitored, hence open to abuse to some of the beneficiaries and suppliers which led to its failure (Botswana Government 2003b). Some of the applicants to this funding were incapacitated by lack of contributions to access the grant and lack of information (SIAPAC 1990). The SMME policy followed later as an improved version of encouraging participation in business activities through provision of loans to those who needed to start businesses. Its main aim was to provide an opportunity for small, micro and medium scale businesses to contribute towards building the national economy through economic diversification brought about by an array of business activities.

Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency (CEDA) programme on the other hand came in to address the same issues of economic diversification, but with an element of ensuring the success of the established business or any business which was rendered with assistance (African Development Bank 2005). This policy, in addition to provision of assistance to viable citizen-owned enterprises; provides financial loans at subsidised interest rates, as well as business training, monitoring and mentorship. Loans are provided in three tiers such that the small and micro scale business qualify for P500.00 – P150 000.00 at about 5% per year over a period of 5 years. Medium scale enterprises are provided with loans in the range of P150 001 - P2 million at 7.5% per year, with a payment period being 7 years. Large scale businesses are assisted through the Venture Capital Fund which provides risk capital to citizen-owned projects and encourages partnership between citizens and foreigners. The programmes target any citizen

who is 18 years and above and wishes to engage in legal and viable business operations (Botswana Government, 2006a).

Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency (CEDA) was established to address the gaps that were left by FAP such as commitment to businesses by applicants because of the requirement to repay the loan; lack of training of beneficiaries on financial management of business. CEDA funding scheme is faced with the challenges of ensuring that the intentions of the loan beneficiaries are carried through. For this to be achieved, CEDA has to put in place monitoring systems to ascertain that loans are repaid, that beneficiaries received training needed for engaging in the planned business. Additionally CEDA is challenged by the need to reach out to the remotest area of the country to avoid biased assistance, instead of concentrating mainly in urban areas (Hinton *et al* 2006).

The government provides additional support to small scale businesses in the form of technical expertise, through extension officers such as council Home Economists and professionals from other government departments. The council Home Economists facilitate awareness creation on available government assistance programmes, needs identification, skill training and enhancement, which includes clothing production businesses. Ife (2002) citing Chambers (1993) asserts that rather than viewing expertise as knowledge possessed by any person in the community, it is usually understood to refer to knowledge gained through attainment of academic qualifications or being a member of a professional body. The government provided training to council Home Economists to be engines of empowerment and development at local level.

#### **1.4 Botswana International Trade Fair (BITF)**

The trade fair in Botswana came about in 1968 when it was called Gaborone Agricultural Show. It was later changed to Gaborone International Trade Fair and later to Botswana International Trade Fair. Botswana International Trade

Fair started operating in 1986 following the establishment of Fairground Holdings Limited, which is a parastatal company (partly owned by government) (Fairground Holdings 2007; Iyanda *et al* 2005; Mmegi Monitor 2004).

Throughout the years and ever since the beginning of the trade fair, the Ministry of Local Government (represented by the present Department of Social Services), on behalf of the Local Authorities (Councils) has been on annual basis, securing exhibition stalls at BITF. The stalls provide an opportunity for informal small scale clothing producers and other craft producers to promote their products for a period of a week. BITF advertises and promotes their activities through both print and electronic media (television and internet). This is done in a bid to attract both the local and international businesses to participate.

The main source of information and linkages for the informal small-scale clothing producers are council Home Economists in the urban and district councils, who inform the informal small scale clothing producers about the event and ensure proper logistical arrangements for the products at the fair. The informal small scale clothing producers participate in the show through their own interest and after receiving the handicraft catalogue from council Home Economists which guides them on the items to be produced and exhibited. The catalogue is designed by the council Home Economists through observation of trends in production, the availability of production materials and what the consumers want. These items are then classified into promotion and competing categories by the council Home Economists. Participation is by means of representation by the respective council officials, in this case the council Home Economists, thus the producers do not participate directly.

The main aim of the exhibition is to encourage competition and learning among informal small scale clothing producers in order to improve product quality, and also to expose the local products to national and international customers thereby increasing their sales, expanding their markets and eventually improving their

livelihoods. Although the informal small scale clothing producers do not participate directly in the exhibition and promotion of their products, they continue to avail their products for exhibition every year.

### **1.5 Challenges faced by small scale clothing producers**

There is a continued demand and preference for the ready made and factory produced clothing in Botswana, which constitutes a major part of the imported clothing. There has been a significant increase (25.8 % in 2005) in the amount spent on the imported clothing into Botswana (Botswana Government 2005b). This is despite training offered to unemployed and interested groups such as the informal small scale clothing producers. The training offered and the financial assistance availed is meant to prepare the beneficiaries for self-employment and reduction in poverty levels through starting or enhancing their businesses (Hinton *et al* 2006; Temtime *et al* 2004).

The informal clothing sector seems to be stagnant in terms of quality, rendering its products unattractive to potential customers from within and outside the country, consequently making expansion prospects almost not feasible. Small businesses face challenges of having to attract and retain qualified personnel due to lack of funds for attractive wages. This works adversely on the production capacity since in most cases they produce products which are inferior in quality, either due to materials used or workmanship. Lee (2006) citing Korean Federation of Small Businesses (2003b) notes that among challenges that face the small businesses is shortage of qualified personnel and that a larger share of college graduates (30%) are absorbed by larger enterprises as compared to 21% which reach the small business arena. This further deprives the small businesses by taking a greater pool of expertise away from the sector.

There is a disproportional allocation of qualified personnel, in particular in the Botswana situation, since the small businesses are greater in numbers when compared to the large firms. According to the Botswana Government (2005c),

the informal sector is the second largest industry in the country indicated by 35.9% of all employees. The majority of these employees are unskilled. This therefore dictates how the business is conducted, and the ability of the personnel to use certain types of materials and equipments. Inadequate financial resources also have a great bearing on the quality of production materials, the equipments and the calibre of workers (Hinton *et al* 2006).

The participation of the exhibitors in the BITF is expected to trigger more and improved products, however the quality of the products have to meet certain standards required by customers, if they are to result in increased sales. This calls for them to be constantly exposed to competition and knowledge. Vision 2016 has among its objectives, to enhance the productivity and competitiveness among the enterprises (Botswana Government 2003b). BITF is therefore one of the mechanisms put in place towards supporting informal small scale clothing producers in terms of promotion of products.

Preceding the participation of the informal small scale clothing producers in the BITF there is an assumption that council Home Economists provide feedback to them, which will assist in improving the quality of the products to meet the needs and specifications of the customers, which hopefully will led to maximised market share and sales. The question therefore that this study seeks to address is, "Does exhibiting at the Botswana International Trade Fair benefit the informal small scale clothing producers"? The study is intended to inform policy makers in the Department of Social Services and program implementers at the urban and district councils about the possible approaches to be used in order to accelerate economical benefits of the BITF on the informal small scale clothing producers. It will also accord the small scale clothing producers with possible ways to benefit from BITF.

## **1.6 Statement of the problem**

Trade Fairs are events that provide manufacturers and service providers with opportunities to promote their products and services in an effort to garner a larger market share and increase in sales. The informal small scale clothing producers seem to have had insignificant benefits from participating in the trade fair due to lack of financial resources as well as lack of understanding on the reasons for participation besides only selling during the event. Trade Fair provides an avenue for interacting with potential customers and promotion of competition in business.

The study seeks to identify impacts brought about by the participation of the informal small scale clothing producers in the Botswana International Trade Fair. It also seeks to provide recommendations on the development of or improvements on the structures and approaches to address the gap existing between the producers and the customer that make it impossible to achieve the initial objectives of the producers in the production of marketable clothes and participation in the trade fair.

### **1.6.1 The research problem**

The question is: Does exhibiting at the Botswana International Trade Fair benefit informal small scale clothing producers who are supported by the council Home Economists? To address this question, the producers' knowledge about the trade fair will be looked into, as well as preparations before exhibition by both producers and Home Economists, the changes in business practices, product quality and general perceptions about impacts of the trade fairs on these small businesses.

### **1.6.2 Sub problems**

To address the problem, the study will design questionnaires for informal small scale clothing producers, council Home Economists and independent small scale

clothing exhibitors at the trade fair. These will provide answers to the questions developed from the following sub problems.

**Sub-problem one:** How accurate is the informal small-scale clothing producers' knowledge regarding the objectives of the Botswana International Trade Fair, and their expectations of the trade fair as a marketing tool? Do they realise their expectations in relation to benefits derived from participating?

**Sub problem two:** How accurate is the council Home Economists' knowledge and perceptions of BITF; how does BITF impact on the preparations for exhibitions and on informal small scale clothing producers; how do Home Economists interpret the impacts in relation to their future actions and communication strategies between them and the producer groups and individuals?

**Sub problem three:** How accurate is independent small scale clothing exhibitors' knowledge about the BITF, its impacts and their perceptions regarding the use of trade fair as a marketing and promotional tool?

**Sub problem four:** Are there any similarities or differences between the informal small scale clothing producers, the council Home Economists and the independent small scale clothing exhibitors on perceptions regarding benefits or constraints of participating at BITF? Furthermore how does the general informal small scale clothing producers' functioning and the BITF prize winner compare in relation to production techniques and strategies? Are there any links between winning and the growth in business as a benefit resulting from participation at BITF?

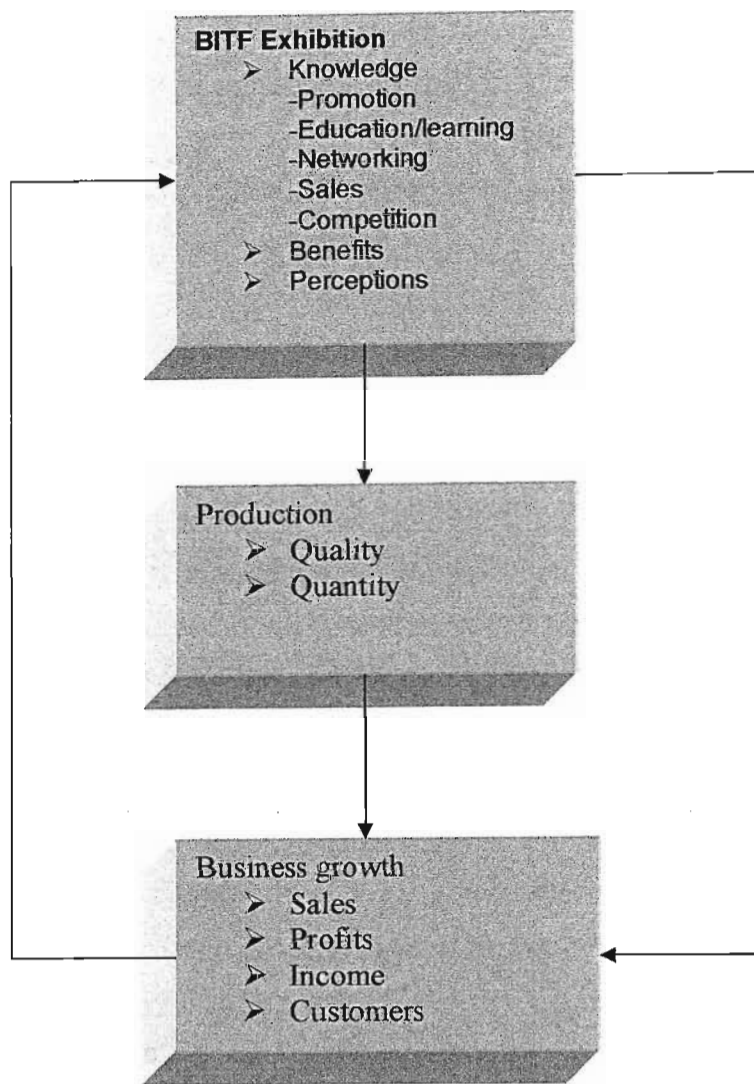
## **1.7 The conceptual framework for the study**

Businesses that participate in the trade fairs use trade fairs as investment opportunities and expect positive returns accrued from exhibitions. The success

and benefit of businesses which participate in the trade fairs are measured by their overall performance, which is usually based on the outcome following the trade fair (Hansen 2004). Outcomes following the trade fair could be the amount of sales, production, number of customers acquired and the profits realised. Performance is shown by changes in businesses after, as opposed to before they utilised the trade fair.

The performance of the informal small scale clothing producers is based on their perceptions on the impact of BITF. The impact of BITF on the producers is dependent on their knowledge of the trade fair, their perceptions on benefits and worthiness of it (trade fair) to be used in future. Exhibition at the trade fair provides the informal small scale clothing producers with opportunities for promotion, sales, networking, and learning. Therefore, BITF is expected to positively impact on the producers' businesses. The impact envisaged is through growth in business, increase in income and profits, increase in quantity produced, improvement in product quality. Growth in business is a resultant change brought about by the increase in sales and more profits accrued. Increase in sales impact on the levels of income for employees.

Exhibition also exposes the products and renders them to be seen by a larger number of the trade fair visitors. A positive impact and visible benefits would cause informal small scale clothing producers to continue exhibiting at the trade fair as more promotions earn more customers for the businesses. Figure 1.1 provides a relationship between the exhibition and the two features of business being production and business growth as perceived by the informal small scale clothing producers, council Home Economists and independent small scale clothing exhibitions. To establish the impact of BITF on informal small scale clothing producers, interviews, survey questionnaires, and focus group discussion were used for data collection and SPSS was used for analysis of quantitative data.



**Figure 1.1: Conceptual Framework for the study**

### **1.8 Definition of terms and concepts used in this study**

The informal small scale clothing producers in this study are micro and small enterprises (MSEs) by nature and fall into categories of both informal and formal businesses. The rationale here is that they employ fewer than ten people each, provide no social security for the employees and owners form part of the

employees. Therefore, for the purpose of this study the informal businesses will be used in reference to the micro and small enterprises.

#### **Micro and informal small scale clothing producers**

- In this study refers to clothing producers who operate with one to nine employees including the owner, who uses the service of the government employees for guidance. These will be referred to, in the study, as clothing producers.

#### **Informal small scale business**

- Refer to unregistered businesses with fewer than five employees; operating from residential premises; council provided stall; or temporary shelter. The term will be used interchangeably with micro and small scale business or enterprises (MSEs) since most of these operate as informal businesses.

#### **Micro business and small business**

- Micro businesses are businesses which employ less than six people while small businesses are those businesses which employ between six and forty nine people (Mkocha 2005).

#### **Independent small scale clothing exhibitors**

- These are micro and informal small scale clothing producers who exhibit at the Botswana International Trade Fair either through their own individual arrangements or assistance by other offices in exception of the council Home Economists. These will further be referred to in this study as independent exhibitors.

#### **Council Home Economists**

- They are trained extension Home Economists (diploma or bachelors degree holders) working for the urban or district councils

and involved in extension work. These will later be referred in this study as the Home Economists.

#### **District/town/city council**

- These are administrative bodies responsible for discharging services at the local level. They are autonomous bodies established by Local Government Act.

#### **“P” denotes Pula**

- Botswana currency. P1.00 is equivalent to R1.15 (RSA)

#### **Quality of products**

- Quality is what the consumer perceives and also what could be seen and measured (Tsiotsou 2006). Therefore, quality referred to here is perceived quality for example perceived adherence to sizes, patterns and materials as prescribed in the handicraft catalogue.

#### **Training**

- Training refers to skill or knowledge given to an individual over a given period (Mkocha 2005). Training in this study is not only that which is certificated, but includes on-the-job-training (training provided to workers at their places of work for correct execution of tasks).

#### **Councils (district/town/city)**

- These are institutions established under the District Council Act Chapter.40:01 and the township Act Chapter 40:02 for securing and promotion of health, order and good government of the areas for which they are established (Botswana Government 2007b). The councils implement the policies and programs at their levels of operation.

**Trade fair visitor**

- A person who visits the trade fair to view what is exhibited (to obtain information), and with an intention to make purchases during the event or later.

**Exhibitor**

- An individual or business representative who displays products and or provides information about the service rendered at the trade fair. In this study an exhibitor is a person directly participating at BITF by way of displaying own products.

**Phaeyana/ mothikga**

- Traditional leather skirts worn by women

**Motseto**

- Traditional men's leather trunks.

**Makgabe**

- Traditional fringed kilts worn by girls who have not reached puberty. It could be made from twisted threads or beads.

**1.9 Parameters of the study**

The study confined itself to the informal small scale clothing producers who exhibited at the BITF during the period between 2000 and 2006. The research was limited to those clothing producers who were assisted by council Home Economists employed by Ministry of Local Government (based within urban and district councils). This excluded producers and exhibitors who were engaged in non-clothing production and only focused on those who had participated at least three times in the BITF. Bearing in mind that there were Home Economists in the councils and in other government departments, these officers did not participate

in this study. Additional to the informal small scale clothing producers, the study limited itself to only those Home Economists working for the councils and who were in extension service. Council Home Economists in this study were expected to have been in contact with informal small scale clothing producers, who formed the focus of this study. No generalisations will be made from the data collected in the eastern part of the country to other regions. The study focused only on Botswana International Trade Fair and not mini, district or regional shows. The study neither inquired about the market segment nor the type of customers who bought the products. Calibre of training and the quality of products were not analysed in this study. Responses related specifically to the perceptions of those involved in participating and exhibiting products at BITF.

#### **1.10 Assumptions**

The assumption made was that all council Home Economists worked under the same conditions and procedures. The other assumption was that the council Home Economists' work under similar conditions and had only slight variations in impact on the producer groups. It also assumed that the selection criterion for the participating informal small scale clothing producers was similar for all the council Home Economists. The assumption also was that the Home Economists knew how to read and write in the local language (Setswana).

It was assumed that not all informal small scale clothing producers were able to read or write in English. In order to cater for this assumption, face – to - face interviews were conducted in Setswana. The last assumption was that participation of producers as groups or individuals would not influence the outcome of the study.

### **1.11 Summary and arrangement of the thesis**

The research is arranged in six chapters. Chapter one presented the introduction, which covered the importance of the study. Chapter two will present a review of the relevant literature. Chapter three will provide a description of the area of study and the councils Home Economists roles in relation to the clothing producers, the role of the Department of Social Services and the operations of the Botswana International Trade Fair. Chapter four will describe the methodology used in the study for sampling and data collection and analysis. Chapter five will present the results of the study and the discussions. Lastly chapter six will concentrate on the summary of the study, conclusions and recommendations for improvement.

## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

#### 2.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses general information about the small scale and informal businesses, and their value to the economy. It then explains the relationship these businesses have with the government and the private sector in terms of the support required for them to meaningfully contribute to national economy. Trade fairs in general will be discussed, as well as their marketing strategies and benefits. The economic situation of Botswana will also be discussed to give an overview of the literature in relation to the study (See figure 2.1).

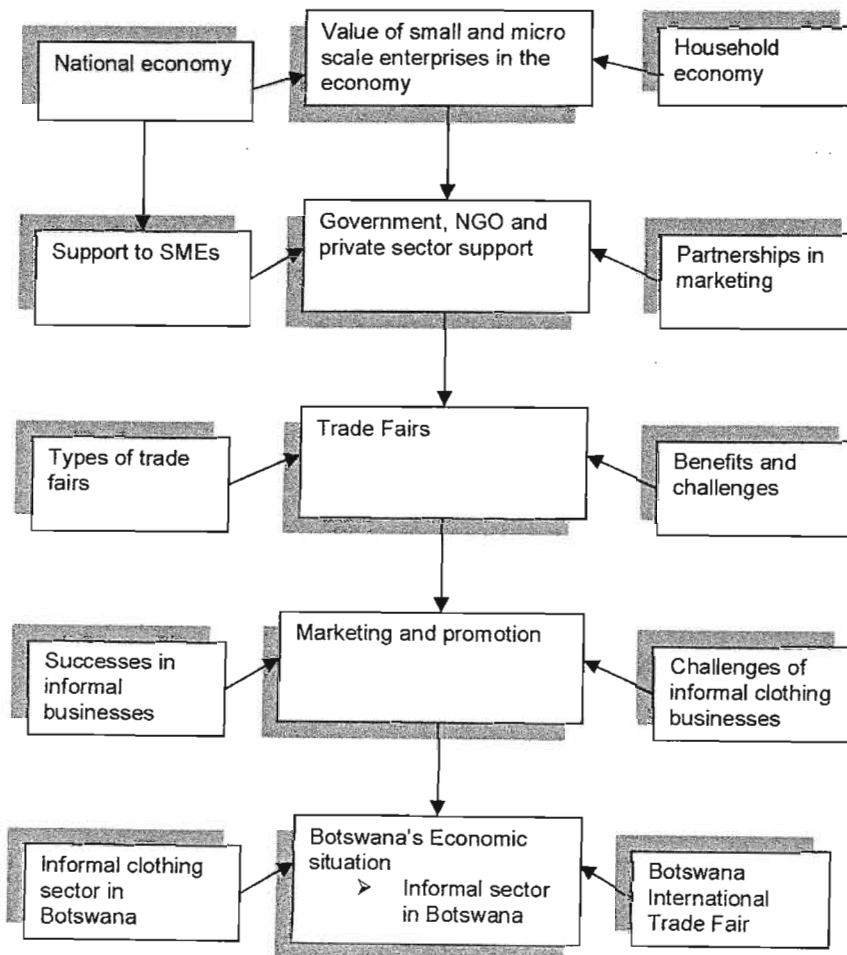


Figure 2.1: Conceptual framework for review of literature

## **2.1 Small scale businesses and the informal economy**

There has been a considerable interest in discussions on small scale businesses and the informal economy (the arena for this study). This is mainly attributed to the fact that the informal economy has been an engine of growth in most countries, developed and underdeveloped. This then follows that a country's economic development is achieved through both micro and macro-economic activities. Gaskill (2001) clearly indicates that informal businesses have a positive impact on the economy through creation of new jobs and employment opportunities, high usage of technology, increasing gross national sales as well as technology innovation. The impact is evident at micro levels as more families benefit from employment in both cities and rural environments.

Micro and small enterprises (MSEs) contribute to the national economy through creation and provision of employment to the people with "few employment opportunities" (Ahson & Aslam 2003:6). Most of the people in the micro and small scale businesses are those who were unable to find employment in the formal structures often because of lack of marketable skills. MSEs are a source for skill development and employ the largest number of people in most countries (Rogerson 2004; Curran and Blackburn 2000). These MSE's have provided their employees with training to eventually venture in to their own businesses after they stopped working for their employers. Governments support the MSEs through setting up structures for skill development; development and implementation of policies and programmes; provision of infrastructure; regulatory and monitoring bodies; and financial subsidies. Despite support that is accorded the MSEs by governments, their growth still does not show desirable improvements, in both developed and developing countries such as low market penetration by these businesses (Rogerson 2004; Curran & Blackburn 2000).

Trade fairs are designed as marketing and promotion channels where MSEs owners meet with their competitors to share and acquire more information, meet customers, and network. Trade fairs are defined by the product or activity they

are involved in, and are not without challenges. Trade fair performance is based on set objectives; number of customer reached and how many of these customers purchased the service or products after the trade fair ended. Lack of knowledge about the role of trade fairs and lack of exhibitor's objectives for participation has been cited by most studies as a hindrance to benefiting from the trade fairs (Munuera & Ruiz 1999; Rosson & Seringhaus 1995).

In countries such as Malawi, Philippines and Brazil, MSEs managed to form clusters or cooperatives in order to purchase, produce and market their products (Mkocha 2005 citing Masten & Kandoole 1996; Schmitz 1999; Roper 1997; Tan 1992). Working in groups could help MSE's to reduce cost of production, increase production and penetrate markets beyond their boundaries. Low priced goods from Asian countries have become a threat to the survival of MSEs especially in African countries (African Development Bank 2005). MSEs are characterised by more semi skilled employees and very few employees with high qualifications. Trade fairs are used as marketing strategies to complement other promotional efforts by small and micro businesses; therefore, their effectiveness in MSEs still needs further investigations (Munuera & Ruiz 1999).

Like other African countries, Botswana's economic development depends on the activities of MSEs. In Botswana, the informal sector is the third largest industry after government and private sectors, and accounts for a considerable share of employees (Botswana Government 1996). Botswana has designed policies for the development of micro and small businesses which seek to provide financial, promotion and technical support (African Development Bank 2005). The Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises Policy of 1999 established CEDA to provide financial support and business training to beneficiaries, while the Small Business Act of 2003 established LEA in 2005 for business guidance and development.

BITF provides MSEs and other businesses an opportunity to market their products and services, as well as learn and network with other businesses from

other places. Manufactures, which include clothing producers, mostly form the majority of the exhibitors during BITF. Performance of exhibitors at BITF is dependent on achieving their objectives for exhibiting. Knowledge about the trade fair, decline in the number of exhibitors and inability to meet objectives could be challenges for both organising and participation at the trade fair. Government support in Botswana is available in most aspects for MSEs, especially in policy, finance, promotion and technical; and yet the small scale clothing businesses seem not to grow in size.

The advent of the term “informal economy” came about between 1950 and 1960. This came about as a result of growth in unemployment figures particularly in undeveloped countries by then. In Africa for example, Kenya was one of the first in 1972 to choose the use of the term “informal sector” since unemployment in the country was already addressed through small unregistered business economies (Chen *et al* 2004; Centeno & Portes 2003). The informal sector has been in existence for quite a considerable time and has a long history of employment creation and economic benefits.

Chen *et al* (2004) indicate that the informal economy comprises of informal enterprises (small, unregistered enterprises) and wage employment in the informal sector (employees with no social security from employers). Informal businesses are small scale, often not registered, not paying taxes and having no provision for the welfare of their employees (Mkocha 2005; Lund & Skinner 2003; Sandaratne 2001). The definition of informal businesses could either be based on the number of employees, manager’s responsibilities or the amount of resources in the enterprise. However, WEIGO (2001:1) cited by Lund and Skinner (2003) states that internationally there is a move away from a more enterprise based definition of informal employment to an employment based definition of informal work.

Micro enterprises employ five or less people and small enterprises employ between six and 49 employees (Hinton *et al* 2006; Mkocha 2005). These small businesses invest very little amount of finances into their initial operations (Mkocha 2005). Owners of most micro and small businesses play multiple roles such that they are owners, managers, and employees (Carree *et al* 2002; Kenny and Dyson 1989). Furthermore an employee in these businesses could still have multiple roles, that is, the employee could be a producer, an accountant, manager and a secretary. The smallness of the enterprises sometimes compels them to be frugal in the use of the meager resources they possess. The definition of micro businesses fall within the scope of the informal sector (when using the number of employees in the definition), and some of the informal sector businesses could as well be regarded as small businesses. Therefore it would be proper to say that micro and some small businesses fall within the description for informal sector, since in most cases they share the same characteristics.

Sandaradne (2001) on the other hand contends that the definition of informal sector should not only be based on the registration or legal status, but rather on the character and nature of businesses. The definition of informal sector could then be fashioned according to operational systems of a particular country, along with the critical aspects of the employee size and reasons for its existence.

According to ILO (2002b), at its 90<sup>th</sup> meeting of General Conference of the International Labour Organization in 2002, the informal economy is characterised by:-

- 1) Vulnerability of its workforce and poverty. Employees in this sector possess low educational levels and are unable to compete for jobs in the formal sector. Most of the businesses are survivalist.
- 2) Operations outside the legal framework, while they are recognized as legitimate businesses. They do not pay any taxes nor are they registered. Although this is a disadvantage on the business, non payment of taxes

deprives the government of accruing national revenue for use in national development (King 2001).

- 3) Employees also include owners of the businesses. The sector has most employees as businesses owners since they have been driven into the business by lack of employment and the need to generate income.
- 4) Their specialty in meeting the needs of the poor people through low priced services and goods. Production of goods and provision of services in the informal sector are mainly labour intensive and the use of unskilled to semi skilled workers results in cheaper products or services.
- 5) Innovativeness and creativity. Although not being engaged in research and development to meet the needs of their customers, most of the informal businesses in this sector have good potential for entrepreneurship.
- 6) Flexible work arrangements. Working hours in the informal sector are not as stringent as in the formal sector. The relationship between workers and employees is tantamount to a family one.
- 7) Operating in very small areas and in residences which are often without security measures. Lack of finance due to limited profits may result in businesses operating in homes and small unsecured areas.
- 8) Lack of social security for the employees. There is usually no insurance cover nor any pension for the employees in the informal sector since most of the businesses may not be making enough profits to cover extra costs such as social protection and also that they are not "legally recognized "as they are not registered , therefore no obligation to meet legal requirements for employee benefits.

King (2001) has however discovered another wing of the informal sector. In his study on informal economies in Africa, he reveals that these are not only made up of people who are unemployed and have few skills or training, but they are in actual fact professionals on a mission to augment their salaries. Informal work in this case is a second job.

Although small businesses encompass those businesses operating with fewer or no employees other than the owner operator; they start, operate and grow at different levels. Ahson and Aslam (2003) explain the four stages of business growth as; stage one being when the owner runs the business herself, stage two being when other people are employed to assist the owner, stage three is when one employee is made to supervise others and the fourth stage is when the business has multiple departments with different supervisors. Most of the informal clothing producers fall into the first two stages of business growth, with the first stage having more entrepreneurs, as could be seen that very seldom do these businesses increase the number of employees within a year. Ahson and Aslam (2003) in their study of shoemakers in Lahore say that small scale shoe manufacturers are mostly still in the first stage.

## **2.2 Value of micro and small scale enterprises (MSEs) in the economy**

The micro and small business economy works in many ways to help diversify the country's economy; support the larger businesses; and boost household economies. These businesses are gaining recognition in most countries as great contributors to the overall economy. Most of the unskilled and unemployable people are absorbed by the small scale businesses.

### **2.2.1 National economy**

The informal sector which comprises both micro and small businesses is the base for economic development (Nwankwo 2000). Small and informal businesses are usually a starting point of any economy. They emerge to address the needs of the neighbourhoods they operate in and serve limited demands (Ahson & Aslam 2003), thereby closing the gap, which could not be filled by larger businesses. Meeting the needs of the localities is characterised by the fact that these businesses offer cheaper priced goods and services. They are usually found in residential premises where they do not incur huge rentals or pay no rent at all resulting in savings. Savings are therefore passed on the customers since not much was used in the provision of services or production of products.

Palmi (2006) citing the World Bank Development Report further indicates that the contribution by informal sector other than those involved in agricultural employment is 78 percent for Africa while globally it accounts for 35 percent of the GDP (Ascoly 2004 cited by Palmi 2006). Chen *et al* (2004) supports this by stating that the magnitude of the informal sector non-agricultural employment in sub Saharan Africa is about 72 percent. This indicates that, apart from the agricultural activities and with the support from the government, the informal economy has the potential to sustain a country's economy. Small businesses contribute largely to the amount of exports from manufactured products such as in Pakistan with 80 percent and Philippines with 90 percent (Dhungana 2003).

The small businesses contribute to the reduction of unemployment since they employ more people and mostly do not have many employment requirements, such as being strict on qualifications and medical requirements prior to starting employment or stringent work ethics. On a larger scale, the African continent represents an employment growth average of about 52 percent (Nwankwo 2000). Temtime *et al* (2004) state that they create a substantive job opportunities since they use relatively labour intensive technologies, and that they employ more people per unit of investment compared to large businesses. Thurik and Wenneker (2004) also assert the economic contributions of small scale businesses through provision of employment and income. On the other hand Lund and Skinner (2003), say that over 10 percent of those working in the informal employment are in manufacturing, thus a high usage of human labour for production. They further state that unlike large businesses that normally tend to produce an elite number of high-income earners, small businesses contribute to income generation and distribution. This is because small businesses employ "a significantly large number of relatively low income earners", resulting in income earnings being spread among a large group of beneficiaries, and employment creation becomes evident in rural areas as well where informal businesses are seen (Temtime *et al* 2004:564).

The informal economy as mentioned by Lund and Skinner (2003) is increasingly the dominant form of work in developing countries. These authors further said that between 25-30 percent of South Africans, who were presently working, operated in the informal economy. Gaskill (2001) citing the United States Bureau of Labour Statistics estimated that small business sector will account for approximately 60 percent of new jobs created between 1994 and 2005. They manage to absorb a larger percentage of the workforce as they comprise of many small units providing employment and income to employees of small scale manufacturing industries (Sethuraman 1981).

Informal economy reduces rural-urban migration therefore contribute to the development of the rural areas (Aspaas 1998). The presence of the informal and small scale businesses, especially in the rural areas contribute to the development of such areas through employment creation, skill development, service provision to cater for and support these businesses and communities they exist in. The proximity of the small businesses to the families and other productive activities accord women, in particular to easily deal with businesses and family responsibilities.

### **2.2.2 Household economy**

As more people are employed in the small businesses, households tend to experience a high potential to purchase goods and services for consumption. Consumption patterns of households with employed members change as they have a regular income. The economy of the household has a direct bearing on the country since the ability to purchase goods and services creates more demand on these (goods and services), hence an increase in production. Increased production of goods and services may therefore lead to more labour needed for production resulting in a rise in employment figures. Dhungana (2003; 12), for example, states that in less developed countries the informal sector employs "around 80 percent of the entire industrial work force of a country". Ahson and Aslam (2003) indicate that income generated from

employment contributes to enhanced economic growth of the country and lead to the reduction of poverty levels. Furthermore, Ahson and Aslam (2003) say that small scale businesses could serve as important institutions for provision of skills and knowledge for enhancement of capacity and improved living standards of the people. Most unskilled people acquire their few technical skills on the job through experience.

Although informal businesses provide employment to many people, most of these wages fall below the taxable income bracket, they have not registered and their employees do not enjoy any social welfare provisions such as insurances and terminal benefits. Most importantly they exist in order to meet household needs and are mostly family-owned businesses (Sandaratne 2001). Lund and Skinner (2003) state that in South Africa, during 2001, two thirds of the people in the informal sector who reported earning income received R1000.00, which was far less than half of the tax threshold R2500.00 per month.

### **2.3 Role of government, non-governmental organisations and private sector in MSEs**

The growth of a country's economy is dependent on the economic activities within it. Government and private sector support is necessary for sustainability of micro and small businesses (Muraya 2006). Support from these could be garnered individually or in partnership between sectors. The support needed by small businesses, depends on the situation and the stages businesses find themselves in. The support that is needed could come in the form of finance, technical information, favourable policies, technology and education, production materials, marketing, and therefore needs should be related to the available support.

#### **2.3.1 Support to micro and small scale enterprises**

An initial step to understanding the support that small scale businesses need is to know of their existence. Development of an up to date data base for the small

businesses could provide knowledge on the extent of their existence, the problems they encounter as well as design methods for providing the type of assistance needed (Dufour 1992). Small businesses have different problems, which need to be studied and understood first in order to address them effectively such as financial, technical and educational, and material (Temtime *et al* 2004). The success of a business enterprise, like the small and micro enterprises in manufacturing is dependent on the availability of resources such as finance, technical information, favourable policies, equipments, skilled manpower, and production materials (African Development Bank 2005; Ahson & Aslam 2003; Dhungana 2003). In order to plan for support to these businesses, government and the private sector need to understand the challenges that face such businesses and hinder them from forging ahead rather than making assumptions (Pimenova and van der Vorst 2004; Nauwelaers and Wintjes 2002).

➤ Enabling and facilitating environment

The main role played by government in the small businesses is that of enabler and a facilitator (Thurik & Wenneker 2004; Ahson & Aslam 2003). Governments around the globe have come to the realisation that “a healthy and balanced development of both small and large enterprises is desirable for socioeconomic development” (Bhalla 1992:13). In providing support to the small businesses, government has to ensure that infrastructural development is in place to provide good environment for business and enable accessibility to both services and materials, as well as access to the markets (Dhungana 2003; Nwankwo 2000).

To facilitate access to resources and the markets, government ensures that there is good road network to connect the businesses with suppliers and buyers. Communication network exist as a result of government development plans and policies for information dissemination and gathering. Basic infrastructure needed for the success of small scale businesses, would be transport, energy supply, and educational facilities which form a base for skill development. Such infrastructure to be accessible to the small businesses is dependent on

government developed policies relevant to communication, education and development in general (Ganzhorn 1992).

The assistance provided by NGOs usually depends on their policies and objectives. Non Governmental Organisations provide assistance to the small businesses by considering already available support that these businesses have access to. Most of the valuable financial support available to small businesses is that which is owned and controlled by the businesses themselves since they facilitate growth in business rather than making profits from service provided (Johnson & Rogaly 1997).

#### ➤ Finance

Some governments have facilitated financial assistance to the small businesses through subsidised and low interest loans as well as tax breaks (Marcum 1992). He however, states that despite efforts by the government to provide favourable policies for the development of both small and larger enterprises; the latter, in most instances possess more political influence which they may use to sway policies to favour them more than the small businesses.

There has been a response in assistance provided by NGOs especially to the poor and women in businesses. An example is in India where women have had access to micro credit through the NGOs operating as Micro Finance Institutions (MFI) and closing the gap left by financial institution such as banks which find such businesses to be risky (Premchander 2003). The Grameen Bank in Bangladesh has availed opportunities to poor women to access unsecured loans for poverty alleviation ventures (Lalkaka & Ping 1992). Additionally, NGOs provide advocacy for small businesses such as protection and promotion of their rights to operate at residential places or on the streets (Palmi 2006).

Private sector support has also been visible in some countries whereby the larger businesses (manufacturing) took the responsibility of securing and sustaining

their country's economy. Dufour (1992) mentions that, some larger firms in Alberta, Canada set aside \$10 million for the establishment of new small and medium firms to safe guard against job losses and market changes.

Jointly, government and the private sector have provided support to the small businesses as in the case of the established SME Promotion Fund in Thailand, where they both contributed to the fund. The small businesses in this instance have access to acquiring funding from the Fund as either groups or individuals (Dhungana 2003).

➤ Training and education

Partnership in support is also seen in situations where both the government and NGOs provide educational support to the small businesses as a way of improving technical skills needed in businesses. Training programmes are set out by different sectors in order to bridge the skills gap realised in small-scale entrepreneurs. In South Africa, government has set out Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETA) under Skills Development Act of 1998, funded through the skills levy, which is paid by all employers. Mentorship is also established by the organisations whose aim is to assist in the enhancement of entrepreneurs' business strategies. Educational opportunities such as technical skills training are offered to the small scale businesses in order to alleviate the unemployment situation through self employment (Lund & Skinner 2003).

The success and performance of the small business is dependent on the support available from both the government and the private sector. Incubators, as referred to by Dufour (1992) provide an environment for establishing and nurturing small businesses where these small businesses share resources (facilities and guidance) provided by the state. In some developed countries such as the United States of America, small businesses have enjoyed technical support through research and development, while in other developed countries it has only been accessed by only the bigger businesses (Marcum 1992).

➤ Technical information

Private institutions play a crucial role in the development of small and informal businesses. In some instances they provide consultancy services to small businesses, through drawing up of funding proposals, and preparation of financial reports (Ratnam 1992; Ze-wen *et al* 1992). This support comes as a realisation from the government and the private sector that the small businesses do not have adequate skilled manpower to conduct research and development. Therefore external services address the inadequacies in these small businesses. Temtime *et al* (2004) refers to the University of Botswana Business Clinic (under the Faculty of Business Studies) as an organisation whose aim, among others, is to assist small business entrepreneurs to seek financial assistance through preparation of financial reports and carrying out feasibility studies on their behalf.

➤ Policies

Government set out policies for developing the small scale business through education, provision of finance as well as technical support. The state ensures that policies are in place, which guides the direction of small businesses in terms of market, pricing and protection from external forces. An example of such a policy is the 1991 Business Act of South Africa, which provided deregulation of business activities, as well as removal of regulations which interfered with activities of informal businesses (Lund & Skinner 2003). Following this legislation, an amendment (Businesses Act of 1993) in favour of the informal businesses was made to ensure their continued operations without being prejudiced. Ahson and Aslam (2003) mentioned that while governments develop guiding and regulatory policies, acknowledgement should be made to the fact that emerging national markets bring about challenges which may affect the products (output) from the small businesses. Therefore, the policies should be the ones which encourage growth and nurturing of the small businesses, such that bigger businesses are not benefitting at the expense of the smaller ones, as well as import policies which disadvantage the local businesses (Marcum 1992).

Setting up bodies within the government system could be one way of ensuring that small businesses are provided with relevant and sufficient support in different areas where there is need. In the Philippines for example, Tan (1992) states that Market Encounter Program (MEP), under the Ministry of Trade and Industry, was established to provide small businesses with an opportunity to work closely together and market regional products. The program included buying and selling interactions accompanied by training and exhibition of products made from local materials. Tan (1992:74) outlines the aims of MEP as:-

- Identify and develop in each region specific products with large export potential;
- Assist producers in product design, quality control, raw materials selection and sourcing, and ways to upgrade products;
- Forge collaborative relationship between regional producers and established, reliable export traders in urban centers;
- Promote through exhibits, publications, and other methods new or improved products resulting from development or adaptation, and
- Tap new export markets.

According to Tan (1992), MEP exposed the producers to the buyers, which made producers understand types of products needed and how they need to be produced (shape, materials and sizes). Recognizing the economic value of small businesses, government commitment in the promotion became more evident in Thailand through the enactment of SME Promotion Act of 2000, with an establishment of SME Promotion Committee chaired by the Prime Minister (Dhungana 2003).

#### ➤ Equipment (technology)

Due to the fact that small businesses experience financial difficulties, it is necessary that government facilitates support through provision of equipments. This has not been seen to be forthright. Rather small scale businesses have

been able to secure their needed machinery from financial assistance offered by government.

In India there are agencies established to provide technology assistance. One such agency is National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC), which provides small businesses with equipments on hire purchase. The agency additionally provides advanced technical training to the users of the equipments to enable smooth operation and improved productivity (Ratnam 1992).

In other developing countries such as Ecuador and Rwanda, preparations for the use of modern technology equipments (mostly bought outside the country as new or locally as second hand) was usually through gaining experience from on-the-job training. The use of such technology sometimes came as a prescription from subcontracting bigger businesses in an effort to ensure that quality is maintained as was the case of India metal workers (Bhalla 1992).

Small businesses also provided support to others in the same businesses. The Indian metal workers rented out their equipments to other small businesses, in order to meet the demands of production (Bhalla 1992).

#### ➤ Marketing and access to resources

Government support is mainly given in terms of marketing and access to resources. Trade fairs are one way that governments provide marketing support to the small businesses. Through the Trade Department Authority of India, government has been able to provide small industries with opportunities to promote their products during the trade fair (Ratnam 1992).

Clusters have also offered small scale businesses opportunities for linkages between their customers (end users of products and service) and suppliers, which in turn stimulated learning and innovation in small businesses. Assistance becomes easier as these clusters share resources such as information and

technology provided by government through training and technical support (Mytelka & Farinelli 2000). Small businesses also receive marketing assistance from agencies established to support them such as NSIC of India (Ratnam 1992). Ratnam further mentioned that every area (state) has a replica of such an agency, providing assistance at local level. Within these local corporations are marketing boards which assist the businesses in their areas in marketing their products and services. The arrangement decentralised the marketing support from NSIC, and further made it possible to understand the problems of small businesses (Ratnam 1992).

While it may appear that government is in support of the small businesses and appreciated their contribution to national economy, it is however difficult for other small businesses to access such support because of where they operate from, not having established networks within the systems (who knows who), and lack of understanding of the business requirements (Palmi 2006).

### **2.3.2 Partnership in securing markets for small and micro enterprises**

Support for small businesses as mentioned in section 2.2 come from government, non governmental organisations and the private sector. The big businesses form partnerships in marketing products from the small businesses. This is usually done through subcontracting the small businesses to produce for big businesses, while the big businesses produce machinery and raw materials for small businesses (Ahson & Aslam 2003). Big businesses have greater financial strength to seek contracts within and outside the country. Such big businesses usually extend contracts to small businesses in order to maintain the established relationships they have with the customers. In such cases, the small businesses produce products or render services which could not be done by the big businesses using their own production resources. Subcontracting allows the bigger businesses to economise on their resources at the same time sustaining jobs in the small and informal business (Jamil & Said 1992). Subcontracting also

acts as a cushion for economic changes experienced or likely to be experienced by the bigger businesses (Hopkins 2006).

Micro and small businesses in the informal sectors also form close working relationships among themselves in production (networks or clusters) through capitalising on the strengths possessed by others, or sub contracting extra work to others with capabilities and resources (Roper 1997). This arrangement tends to bring about benefits to the micro and small businesses in terms of the ability to compete with others from their localities or regions and sharing costs of production, eventually sustaining their businesses.

Another area in which governments provide support to the informal and small scale businesses is in marketing. Mkocha 2005 citing Masten and Kandoole's (1996) study on SMMEs support systems in Malawi pointed out that government provided the small scale businesses with avenues for marketing of products such as through promotion of cooperative and improvement in government purchasing structures. Support to small businesses is also evident through facilitation of clusters formation and market of products. Such is a case in Brazil as mentioned by Schmitz (1999) in his study on the collective efficiency and increasing returns. Biannual trade fairs are arranged to provide a marketing platform for local Brazilian shoe clusters where local products are exposed to foreign buyers. This type of support leads to more production through speed as clusters work jointly in production and sharing resources as well as improving production skills for production of better quality products.

Chen (2005) cited by Palmi (2006:2) states that there is a "linkage between informal and formal business, and that the activities of informal sector could contribute to the development of a country's formal economy". The informal sector produces goods for the formal sector as was observed by Devey *et al* (2006) citing Ince (2003). He made an observation that informal clothing producers procure production materials from the formal sector, while at the same

time supply the formal sector with end products which could be found in the shops owned by businesses in the formal sector.

## **2.4 Trade fairs**

Small and big businesses have a task of promoting their products and services through various and affordable means. Trade Fairs are seen as a strategy to promote products and services, and provide information to both the exhibitors and the visitors. Munuera and Ruiz (1999) state that trade fairs are an important element of the promotional strategy for industrial products and are a source of information for managers of those companies that attend the fairs. Trade Fairs are generally organised according to the scope they cover. These could be related to type of activities or their coverage. Iyanda *et al* (2005: 54) state that "fair can be organised on either general or special interest basis, national, regional or international scope".

### **2.4.1 Types of trade fairs**

Trade fairs have existed since 16<sup>th</sup> century as a start of international trade when Europeans traders brought in goods in wagons for selling (Skov 2005, citing Allix 1922:542). Trade fairs were used primarily for export purposes. They have served in communicating company products and services through exhibits assuming a role of advertisement and displays (Beier & Damböck undated). Businesses deal in quite a variety of products and services, which require different types of marketing strategies. Participation at these fairs is determined by the relevance and management of the shows (Munuera & Ruiz 1999 citing Bonoma 1993; Bello & Barczak 1990; and Kerin & Cron 1987). Iyanda *et al* (2005:54) explain that trade fairs deal with manufacturing, industrial and consumer products and services. The first two category of trade are distinguished between the last since exhibitors are usually manufacturers or distributors, whereas the latter is mainly selling of products (readily available) and services (Beier & Damböck undated).

Agricultural Trade Fairs are some of the fairs utilised by producers and consumers of agricultural related products. Promotion of agricultural machinery and products take place during such events. It is a means of showcasing new technology in agriculture and provision of information to both visitors and exhibitors. Attendance to such trade fair is restricted to only those who are invited (Beier & Damböck undated).

Business Fairs are utilised by both small and big businesses in order to provide information to potential customers on what their businesses offer, obtain information on their competitors as well as marketing of new products. Companies dealing in a specific industry exhibit their products as a way of demonstrating a new product or a service (Beier & Damböck undated). Such trade fairs do not have visitors' restrictions.

Food Fairs provide visitors with an array of newly introduced food products to be launched in the market, including food production and catering equipments. This type of trade fair is targeted and attendance is restricted to the businesses which deal in sales of food such as restaurants, hotels, motels, bed and breakfast outlets, and supermarkets (Fairground Holdings 2007).

Fashion Fairs are held to introduce new clothes lines, new seasonal colours, new designs as well as new fibres and textiles for the clothes in seasons. Fashion fairs are held for a few days in a year and bring together different producers of clothing around the world. They differ according to who they intent to attract. Some exhibit designer clothes for buyers from retail businesses. Attendance to these fairs is usually fashion merchandisers from different companies and is exclusive to these merchandisers. Others encompass a wider group of retailers (speciality clothing retailers and ordinary clothing shops). Fashion fairs also exhibit new fibres and textiles to the clothing producers such as *Première Vision* which is held in Paris. Exhibitions of accessories and other special clothing items also make up fashion fairs (Skov 2006).

Fashion fairs are further defined by the type of product or the clothing line they exhibit such as women's wear, children's wear or lingerie. It is also stated that "fashion fair is a platform that enables multiple types of meetings, all of which have a place within the market" (Skov 2006:770). These she said provides initial encounters for trade whereby business relationships are made; building existing business relationships through establishment of networks and learning through observation occurs. The purpose of this study is therefore to establish if there is any lasting impact made by the participation of clothing producers at the trade fair.

Consumer Fairs provide the exhibitors with an opportunity to market and sell their products and services. On the other side, the fairs provide the visitors with a chance to select the products and services from a wider pool of suppliers within one place. This could be viewed by the visitors to as a one stop centre for both products and services. Exhibitors to this kind of fair are retailers, manufacturers and service companies. This is open to the public and its main aim is to conduct direct selling of goods and services (Beier & Damböck undated).

Mixed Fairs combines exhibitions for business owners or possible customers (referred to as traders) and open exhibitions for the public. The traders' exhibition is set apart from the rest of the fair and labelled as trade days where business owners meet with exhibitors to discuss business. These trade fairs bring together different types of activities under one umbrella (Beier & Damböck undated).

#### **2.4.2 Benefits of Trade Fairs**

Studies conducted earlier indicate that trade fairs are held based on the exhibitor's objectives and to some extent on what the visitors' needs are (Beier & Damböck undated). Munuera and Ruiz (1999:22) state that "the success of the trade fair depends not only on the exhibitors, but also to a large extent on the visitors" and marketing of the event. The authors continue to say that the main

objectives of attending fairs are to see new products lines, make new contact with potential suppliers, seek new ideas and conduct market research.

**Generation of income:** In comparison to other communication media and marketing tool, trade fairs have been mostly preferred by the exhibiting companies in Germany (Beier & Damböck undated). Trade fairs are organised as a business to generate an income and use marketing strategies which attract more exhibitors for sustaining the business (Munuera & Ruiz 1999). To achieve this, trade fairs have to be marketed efficiently and effectively in order to create the needed awareness on the businesses, such as basing on their exclusivity in service (Rinallo & Golfetto 2006). *Première Vision*, as mentioned by Rinallo and Golfetto restricts access to exhibitors emphasising quality of products and innovativeness of fabric designers. Information about trade fairs reach would be exhibitors through both written and verbal communication. The trade fair organisers publicise events of the trade fair mostly to the previous exhibitors with reliance from their records of participation from past shows. Other interested exhibitors acquire information through advertisement such as print and electronic media. The most common and useful method of communication for the first time exhibitors is through learning from other people (word of mouth) (Rosson & Seringhaus 1995).

It is important for the trade fair organisers to know why they are planning the event and who they intend to attract for exhibitions. Clear objectives of the trade fair are important for the trade fair organisers, the exhibitors and the visitors (potential customers) (Munuera & Ruiz 1999). The organisers need to design marketing strategies to attract relevant exhibitors and visitors; the exhibitors to align their objectives with their expectations and with the objectives of organizers; and the visitors to select who has what they are looking for at the trade fair.

Trade fairs are used to advertise services and products rendered by businesses, promote company products and image, or conduct research on the competitors

or new products. Trade fairs serve as a marketing tool. They offer manufacturers "an opportunity to display and demonstrate products that are often difficult to move and are complex in design and operation" (Munuera & Ruiz 1999:20). Trade Fairs offer manufacturers or service providers a chance to meet customers directly on a one to one basis, and allow direct encounters with potential customers. They are complementary to continuous sales efforts as they stimulate interest in buyers (Smith *et al* 2004). Trade fairs save the exhibitors marketing and promotional funds on one hand and on the other hand potential customers save from travelling from place to place to look for merchandise.

**Investment:** Trade fairs are used as part of future investment for exhibitors (Hansen 2002). Funds utilised in the preparation and participation at the trade fairs increase over the years for the repeat exhibitors. Returns from sales of products and services exhibited are mostly realized long after the trade fair event (Beier & Damböck undated). Munuera and Ruiz (1999) citing Stipp (1992), state that between 1985 and 1992 investment in the trade fair exhibits for the US companies grew at an average rate of 10 percent. Sales for exhibiting businesses are usually higher than for those who generally do not exhibit in trade fair as buyer are usually stimulated by the exhibition. As exhibitors enjoys the benefits attached to participating at trade fairs, the customers decision time is reduced since information on the product is readily available, a wider selection of products and services to choose from has been put in one place (Smith *et al* 2004), thus reducing "transaction costs" (Beier & Damböck undated:44).

**Education:** Exhibitions through trade fairs provide a learning experience to exhibitors since products and services are enhanced for future attraction of more customers and competition with other producers and service providers. Herbig *et al* (1997) says that promotional messages reach a larger number of trade fair visitors. Communication during the trade fair happens within one specific locations set for trade fair events and exhibits. Therefore, these trade fairs tend to reach larger numbers of customers who would not have been reached if the

trade fair did not provide the opportunity. For example, Herbig *et al* (1997), mentioned that Hanover Fair, which is the world's largest usually have visitors exceeding 500, 000 in numbers.

**Customers:** Promotion of products at the trade fair increases chances of attracting more customers both during exhibition and after the trade fair (Munuera & Ruiz 1999). Trade fairs are a source of information to help customers to make best choices and the exhibitors manage to acquire more customers (Rinallo & Borghini 2003). Trade fairs provide an opportunity for the customers to interact with exhibitors on a closer level, affording them a chance to learn more about exhibited products and services, and arouse interest to purchase (Munuera & Ruiz 1999).

**Sales:** Benefits of the trade fair become evident through sales. Sales activities that lead to purchase are carried out during the trade fair and after the trade fair has ended. The sales activities include introduction of new product, selling at the trade fair and new product testing (Kerin & Cron cited by Hansen 2004:3). Sales therefore increase as a result of networks established at the fair (Beier & Damböck undated).

**Promotion:** The trade fairs accord businesses opportunities to introduce new products and services to a larger group of people at one setting, and also an opportunity for improvement of the image of business. Exploration of new markets and establishment of new linkages take place during the trade fair including provision of an opportunity for businesses to widen their scope in business (Manuera & Ruiz 1999). Promotion of products exposes them to more people who see products and obtain appropriate information to help in decision making as they acquire more information on the type of service provided. The focus of this study is to find out how beneficial a trade fair is to the informal small scale clothing producers.

### **2.4.3 Challenges of Trade Fairs**

Acquiring exhibition space could be a hassle to small businesses especially that booths are expensive and strategic space costs more. High booth prices could hinder exhibitors in participating at the trade fair, resulting with fewer numbers of exhibitors, and insufficient promotion of products and services and networking. Cost of travelling to trade fairs could also be another issue which could discourage exhibitors in participation (Iyanda *et al* 2005; Herbig *et al* 1997).

Insufficient advertising of the trade fair event has adverse effect on the success of the trade fair. Advertising trade fairs gives exhibitors a chance to select the appropriate trade fair to exhibit at and prepare products and information to suit the type of visitors expected (Munuera & Ruiz 1999).

Poorly organised trade fairs could lead to exhibitors not to be seen, thus affecting their promotional efforts (Herbig *et al* 1997). Ambiguous objectives may fail to attract the right exhibitors and visitors to the trade fair, resulting in financial loss on the organisers and exhibitors because of reduced participation and customers. Reduction in the activities that complement information attained from trade fairs may discourage participation of some exhibitors (Beier and Damböck undated).

Although trade fairs serve to promote the exhibitors' products and services through a wider market, their benefits in relation to business growth seem not visible, hence there is a need for a study to establish any gains by businesses exhibiting at such trade fairs.

## **2.5 Marketing and Promotion of micro and small scale clothing businesses.**

The clothing industry as indicated by Crick and Katsikeas (1995) still appears to be one of the largest and most important manufacturing sectors in the United Kingdom. This industry is the main source of employment of unskilled and semi

skilled people. According to data compiled in 1993 by the British Clothing Association as cited by Crick and Katsikeas (1995), the clothing industry produced goods worth 6.2 million Pounds and employed approximately 210 000 people. In countries such as Malawi, and Brazil, MSEs managed to form clusters or cooperatives in order to produce and market their product (Mkocha 2005; Schmitz 1999). Marketing and promotion has not been smooth for these businesses.

#### **2.5.1 Successes of micro and small scale clothing businesses**

The small scale clothing businesses like other small business have made a breakthrough in employment creation in both rural and urban centres, especially for women. They have also been able to absorb the employees with unemployable skills as they are more labour intensive, and offered skill enhancement opportunities to others (Palmi 2006; Ahson & Aslam 2003).

These businesses have managed to penetrate both local and international market such as in Hong Kong. Securing contracts to supply government has not been easy for small scale businesses, but those in the clothing sector have managed through registration (Palmi 2006; Ahson & Aslam 2003). Survival of these clothing businesses has also been made possible by frugal use of resources such as maintaining a certain number of employees, or carrying out multiple roles (Ahson & Aslam 2003).

Small scale clothing businesses have established links with larger enterprises in the supply of finished goods and have been able to survive competition as result of this arrangement. Creativity and innovation is common with these informal small scale clothing producers, although their work is easily copied by others (Palmi 2006; Ahson and Aslam 2003).

### **2.5.2 Challenges of micro and small scale clothing businesses**

The micro and small-scale businesses are not without challenges. International trade has opened avenues of growth for other businesses while narrowing prospects of growth for the others, especially small clothing businesses in developing countries. Although the industry is viewed as one of the most important ones; continued competition between locally produced products and the low cost products from China especially, rendered most small businesses to either remain small or close down (African Development Bank 2005). The closing down of businesses has a negative effect on the households. Merten (2005) cited by Palmi (2006) indicate that twenty-four textile industries in South Africa were forced to close down in 2004 because of an increase (73 percent recorded in 2003) in the amount of imported clothing from China, resulting in about 17,000 people losing their jobs. Not only were the employees affected, but their dependents and the national economy were also affected.

Although there seems to be support from various institutions towards the small scale businesses, they are not without challenges. Lack of clarity on the policies may exclude the small businesses, only to be enjoyed by the bigger businesses. Political influences could render the designed policies inaccessible to the small scale businesses. The common challenges faced by these small businesses are: money, markets, management, and manpower as outlined by Dufour (1992). IN addition, competition from low priced products and infrastructure also play a role.

**Finance:** Access to finance in many countries is a constraint that faces small business growth and their sustainability (Dhungana 2003). Besides governments offering subsidized funding or grants, most financial institutions consider the micro and small businesses as business risks (Masten & Kandoole 2000). The majority of time, and capital invested into such businesses is very little. Lack of registration prevents the small businesses from being in a position to enter into legal contract with financial institutions.

**Markets:** The SMEs are faced with strong competition from around the globe. Although their production techniques are mostly labour based, competition with bigger businesses along prices of goods and services including markets, fail them (Ahson & Aslam 2003). The bigger businesses have adequate resources to purchase production materials in bulk (which allows discounts) and mass production, all these resulting in low cost of production and lower prices. In the clothing businesses, markets for the locally produced goods could be shifted towards purchase of imports especially from Asia and second hand clothing (King 2001). In Sub Saharan Africa for example, competition in markets have been made difficult by structural adjustment programme, through an influx of finished goods and raw materials against local products (Wambugu 2002).

**Management and human resources:** Most of the micro and small businesses owners and employees do not possess marketable business skills hence, their high failure rate (Mkocha 2005). Skilled manpower is almost always unavailable and inadequate and this includes extension service for technical expertise (Ratnam 1992:211). Efficiency in production calls for compliance in the use of technology and available finance for acquiring the machinery. Lack of capital for purchasing needed modern technology and providing attractive wages for maintaining skilled manpower may result in production being affected and closure of businesses due to competition by the bigger businesses that can afford these aspects (Dhungana 2003). Although finance may be available, lack of business training and mentoring would work against the success of these businesses (African Development Bank 2005).

**Low priced product competition:** The other challenge is that designs from other countries are copied by some of the eastern countries and because of cheap labour costs, final products become cheaper compared to the local products (Palmi 2006). Cheap production costs results in the Far East products having a competitive advantage over other products in the same line in developing countries.

**Infrastructural access:** Due to lack of favourable policies for small businesses in most developing countries, these businesses have difficulties in accessing the necessary infrastructure. Lack of infrastructure thwarts their efforts to acquire production materials, modern and fast technology, communicate and market their products and services (Dhungana 2003). Lack of available land and delays in allocation of land for business development is a great hindrance to small scale businesses (African Development Bank 2005).

## **2.6 The economic situation in Botswana and the informal sector**

Botswana has been heavily reliant on the export of diamonds as a source of revenue for government to drive economic development. Mining industry was reported to have contributed to 34.7 percent of GDP in 2003/2004 fiscal year, while agriculture accounted for less than three percent of GDP. Tourism industry was reported to be the second largest exporter with a four percent contribution to GDP. Manufacturing sector has also declined from 5.7 percent in 1970s to 3.7 percent during 2003/2004. Small micro and medium enterprises (SMMEs) were estimated to account for between 30 and 45 percent of GDP (African Development Bank 2005; Mkocha 2005 citing Government of Botswana 1998).

In the small and medium enterprises category, manufacturing combined with education accounts for 7.8 percent of employees in this category, which is very little compared to other industries. There has been an insignificant change in the manufacturing sector as shown by a few range of industries such as textiles and garments, beef, leather, brewery and products for information technology (Hinton *et al* 2006; African Development Bank 2005).

Botswana's development is charted through the country's National Development Plans (NDP) which span on a five year period. The plans guide the country on the efficient and effective use of resources for economic and social development. The economic activities of the country are therefore based on what is contained in the plan following the availability of resources from the revenue, which is in

turn allocated to the ministries. The revenue accrued from the export of diamonds and other products provides resources for infrastructural development such as education and training, roads and telecommunications, and health facilities (Botswana Government 2003b).

### **2.6.1 The informal sector in Botswana**

From the 2001 population census, 589 782 people were reported to be economically active. The estimate from Small Business Promotion Agency was that 56 300 SMEs are operating in Botswana. In Botswana micro businesses are defined as businesses with five or less number of employees with an annual turnover of less than P60 000 (\$ 11 000). Small businesses are defined as those which have between six and twenty five employees, with an annual turnover of between P60 000 (\$ 11 000) and P1500 000 (\$270 000) (Hinton *et al* 2006; Botswana National Productivity Center 1996).

The urban areas are the places where most of the informal business activities take place and where the businesses are mostly located within owner's households (59 percent). Out of the 38 286 informal businesses surveyed in 2005, 9 percent of them have fixed operating places and 18 percent did not have fixed locations. Although it has been seen that the informal businesses are the main employers globally, in Botswana, a large number (91.3 percent) of the employed in this sector are the owners, referred to as self employed and are mostly females (Botswana Government 2005a; BNPC 1996).

Botswana like other countries has also realised the important role played by the informal sector and small businesses. The businesses are engines of economic growth. The small businesses generate employment and contribute to economic diversification. Additionally, the small business are viewed as wealth creators through provision of income, contributors to exports and opening of avenues for more economic activities within the country (African Development Bank 2005; BNPC 1996). According to the BNPC report of 1996, informal sector employed

239 400, showing an increase on female employment (from 39 percent to 46 percent) while male employment declined from 61 percent to 54 percent.

In realising the importance of these small businesses, the Government of Botswana has instituted measures in the country by which poverty could be addressed at household level. These measures were designed to benefit people both in urban and rural areas. Financial Assistance Policy (FAP), which is a grant scheme, was introduced in 1982 whereby applicants were given funds in terms of grants as a way to encourage employment creation and diversification of the economy. Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency (CEDA) later followed with the same objective of providing loans to the entrepreneurs. Most of the informal sector businesses have either been financed by owners (68 percent) or through government FAP grant scheme (19 percent). Some have been financed through international donors' grants for developmental purposes such as British Embassy. The private sector provides financial assistance to the small businesses through financial institutions or revolving fund established under NGO and loans from banks. Such loans usually have specified purposes attached to them (Botswana Government 2005a; Temtime *et al* 2004).

Recently, the government developed some legislation which serves to increase growth and participation of businesses in development. Such legislation is Small Business Act of 2003, which established yet other bodies that ensure growth and sustainability of SMEs. These are Small Business Council (SBC) and Local Enterprise Authority (LEA). LEA is responsible for:

- Assisting SMEs through development of business plans and undertaking feasibility studies before operation;
- Guiding the businesses to grow from one level to the next higher level through application of funding, and
- Improving communication between support structures and SMEs and coordination of support structures. (Hinton *et al* 2006).

Despite the positive role played by the small businesses, they are not without problems. High failure rates of the small businesses are a worrying situation in the country as more people lose employment. Lack of land for establishment of business premises continues to be a hindrance to the growth and development of small businesses. Insufficient infrastructural developments such as telephone connections and postal boxes impede communication between small businesses and their networks and support services. Small business are exposed to the same laws in the same manner as the big business such as requirements for registration, which in most cases result in these small businesses operating outside the framework of the laws (Hinton *et al* 2006; Botswana National Productivity Centre 1996).

#### **2.6.2 Situation of informal clothing business sector in Botswana**

In Botswana, the informal sector is growing faster than the formal sector. According to the Botswana Government (2005c), it is the third largest industry in the country with about 35 percent of the employees. Botswana has a record of 55 033 operating enterprises as reported in the Industrial Statistics of 2005. Out of these, 6 095 are small businesses which have 0-4 employees and 330 of these are classified under clothing which includes textile, clothing and jewellery. The Informal Sector Survey carried out in 2005 revealed that 23, 454 enterprises were effectively analysed as informal businesses (Botswana Government 2005a).

These informal clothing businesses face similar challenges in marketing and competition in the same manner as other developing countries. The open trade accord resulting from the Multi Fibre Agreement in 2004 has resulted in an influx of low priced clothing from Asian countries. Botswana's informal clothing producers are unable to meet the total demand for clothing, due to lack of production capacity, resulting in exported amounts being far less than the imports. The quality of the clothing products still could not compete with those

products from other countries which sell clothing in Botswana (African Development Bank 2005).

The informal sector businesses here are defined as enterprises which are not registered, with 5 or less employees, having informal account or none at all, having undistinguishable expenditure from that of the household and temporary, mobile or operating from owner's home (Botswana Government 2005a). Formalising this sector is a difficult task for entrepreneurs because structures for company registration are centralized, thus mostly found in the city, making it inaccessible to many who operate in areas far from the capital city. The majority of informal businesses owners are women (who are resource poor and have limited working capital) and may be the reason that this sector has very few skilled employees. These female business owners are mostly found in informal clothing production because of their feeling of social responsibility (Ntseane 2004).

### **2.6.3 The Botswana International Trade Fair and the micro and small scale enterprises**

The trade fair poses as the main event whereby most informal sectors promote their products and generate income in a short period of time. Trade fair in Botswana came about in 1968 when it was Gaborone Agricultural Show, and with the main aim of promoting agricultural products (Mmegi Monitor 2004). Gaborone Agricultural Show was later transformed into Gaborone International Trade Fair. The Botswana International Trade Fair was introduced in 1986 to provide entrepreneurs with an opportunity to showcase their products and services; find markets locally and externally. BITF is a support measure to businesses in Botswana, from micro to large scale, and both formal and informal. Government through the Fairground Holdings found it appropriate to provide a conducive environment for businesses within the country to meet, share and network among themselves as well as with international businesses (Fairground holdings 2007).

To a large extent, trade fair in Botswana does not follow specialisation as alluded to in section 2.3.1. It is rather a mixed fair where consumer fair, agricultural fair and industrial fair are all taking place in one event and is open to the public, with special days set for trade (Beier and Damböck undated). The exception to this is BITEX, which specialises in information technology and FOBEX, which specialises in food exhibitions (Fairground holdings 2007).

The informal sector businesses participating in this event range from manufacturing, construction to services. In the manufacturing, clothing industries also have a share of representation. Lyanda *et al* (2005) found out that from 1999-2001, a larger percentage (65 percent) of the exhibitors were local businesses. Within the same period, they also found out manufactures had a greater share (44 percent) of exhibition. The fair provides businesses with a chance to learn from others who are doing well in the business, to find out who their competitors are within the country and also see the new trends in the clothing industry as well as an opportunity of selling products.

This study aims at analysing the impact of Botswana International Trade Fair on the exhibitors. The basis of the study is that BITF has had a positive impact on the livelihood of the exhibitors who participated continuously in trade fair over a period of three years. The impact of BITF on the informal small scale clothing producers seem not to be at par with assistance rendered.

## **2.7 Summary**

Chapter two discussed the informal sector and micro and small business and its value in the economy. Furthermore, it identified the support structures in place for the micro and small businesses; the trade fairs, their benefits and challenges; lastly the informal small scale clothing businesses in Botswana as well as Botswana International Trade Fair. Micro and small businesses contribute greatly to the economic development of a country and that they fall within the ambit of informal sector. It also highlighted that MSEs in Botswana has

contributed through job creation. Botswana as indicated by Hinton *et al* (2006) and Temtime *et al* (2004) provides micro and small scale businesses with financial, technical, training and promotional support.

Although there is some significance in the role of these micro and small businesses, lack of available land, insufficient infrastructure and biased requirements for businesses (favouring bigger over small businesses) hamper total contribution and growth of the MSEs. The role of trade fairs in micro and small businesses has been found to be promotion, education, information sharing, competition and sales. Furthermore BITF has provided the micro and informal small scale clothing producers with an avenue to share information, to learn, market and promote their products. The suggested indicators of trade benefits include the generation of income especially for the trade fair organisation, long term investments, education of clothing producers, acquisition of customers and expansion of customer base, sales and product promotion.

These aspects provide the basis for collecting data later in this study.

The next chapter will provide a description of the area of study, the linkages between the government, the council Home Economists and the clothing producers, and the operations of the Botswana International Trade Fair.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **THE AREA OF STUDY**

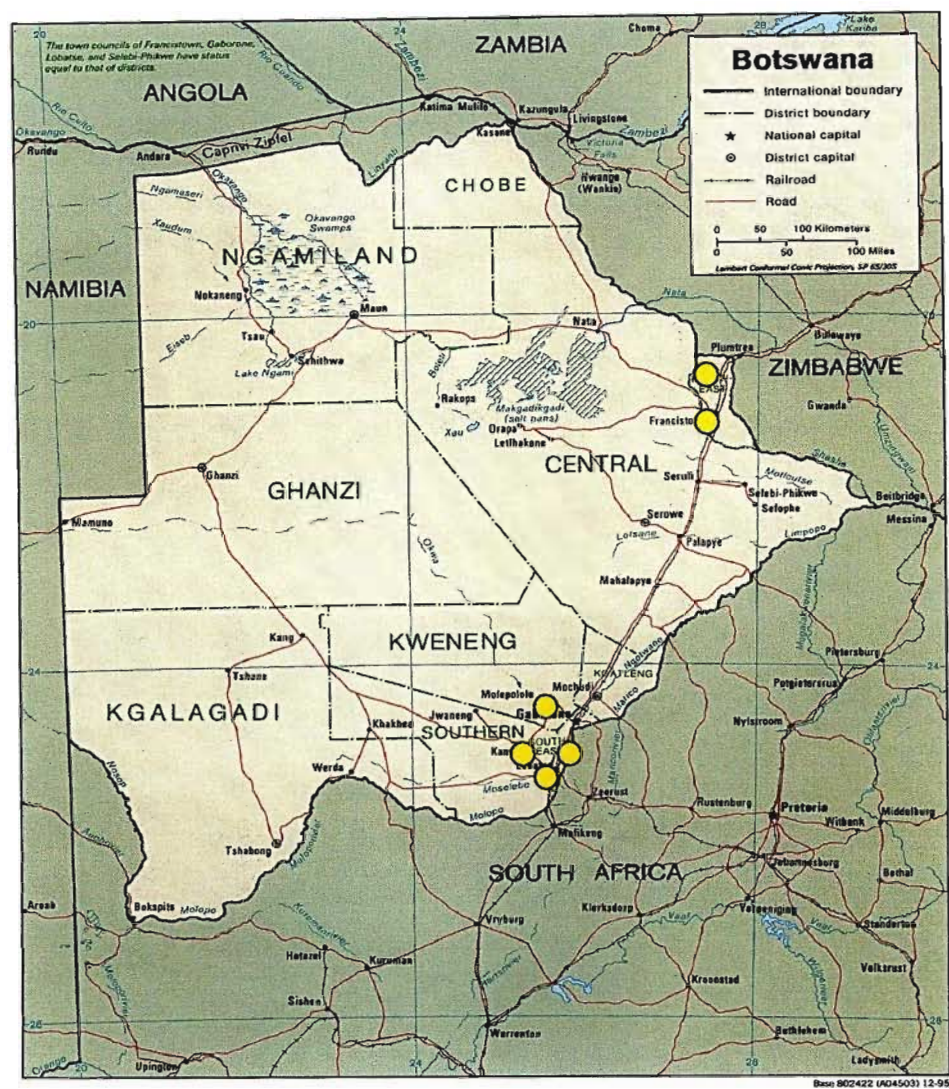
#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the area in which this study was conducted. It explains the geographical location, the administrative framework, the climatic conditions, and the socioeconomic situation of the country. The chapter will further discuss the link between the council Home Economists and the informal small scale clothing producers in terms of council Home Economists' work and government support to the producers. Lastly, the operations of the Botswana International Trade Fair will also be explained in the chapter.

#### **3.1 The location**

The study was conducted in Botswana where the problem of possible insignificant financial benefits from BITF by informal small scale clothing producers was identified. Participation of the clothing producers had been going on for some years, whereby worthiness of participation at the trade fair became questionable. The study was carried out in the areas of Francistown, Lobatse, Kweneng District (Molepolole) Southern District (Kanye), South East District (Ramotswa and Mogobane) and North East District (Themashanga), which are all in the eastern part of the country (See Figure 3:1). The study data were collected from the informal small scale clothing producers in the two urban settings (Francistown and Lobatse) and five rural settings (Molepolole, Ramotswa, Kanye and Themashanga). Francistown is located 436 km north of the capital city Gaborone. Themashanga and Francistown are in the north eastern side of the country, with Themashanga being over 30 km the north of Francistown. The other four areas are in the south eastern part of the country. Ramotswa and Mogobane are 34 km south of Gaborone and Lobatse is about 72

km south of Gaborone. Kanye is 90 km south west of Gaborone, while Molepolole is 51km west of Gaborone (Botswana Government 2000).



**Key:** ● Places where the study was conducted

**Figure 3.1: Map of Botswana showing the study areas**

(Source: [http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/Africa/Botswana\\_pol195.jpg](http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/Africa/Botswana_pol195.jpg) )

Botswana is a landlocked country, which is situated in the centre of the Southern Africa. It shares borders with South Africa on the south and eastern side, Zimbabwe on the north eastern side, and Namibia on the north and western side. Botswana is approximately the same size as Kenya and France and is 582 00

square kilometres in size (Botswana Government 2003b). The country is approximately 1000 metres above sea level with the Tropic of Capricorn dividing it into north and south.

The country is relatively flat. The eastern side is characterized by undulating hills, rivers and valleys and fertile soils. These features provide favourable climatic conditions for habitation and arable farming. Most of the eastern part is densely populated (about 80% of the population) while the western part is sparsely populated. The western part consists mainly of Kgalagadi desert which occupies most of the land area (Botswana Government 2003b). The eastern part of the Botswana was selected for this study because of the greater potential for business success due to population, infrastructural developments and the large number of informal small scale clothing producers present.

### **3.2 The climatic conditions**

Botswana experiences high temperatures in summer and low temperatures in winter. The average winter temperatures, range between 1°C to 5°C in the southern areas while in the northern part the range is between 5°C to 7°C. In the eastern areas, summer temperatures range between 21 °C and 23°C; and in the northern part, temperatures range between 23°C and 25°C. As a result of the country being landlocked, the country experiences high temperatures and low rainfall with very little influence from oceanic pressures (Botswana Government 2003b).

The average amount of rainfall the country receives is 450mm (Boitumelo, 1993). The temperatures are contributory to the amount of rainfall and the types of vegetation found in the areas. High amounts of rainfall are experienced in the far north (Chobe District) and vegetation found in this area is thick tall forest.

The south western areas especially Kgalagadi, get low rainfall and the soils are poor with low shrubs and savanna type vegetation, therefore there is little potential for farming to continue to sustain the lives of the people due to a decline in rainfall (Botswana Government 2003b). Reliance on agriculture as the only source of livelihood has since shifted to establishment of small businesses in urban areas as well as in the villages in order to provide incomes for families.

### **3.3 The socio economic situation**

The country has been dependent on agriculture for livelihood. It has produced beef, which became the backbone of the economy through export earnings. Later with the discovery of diamonds and other minerals, the country relied on minerals as the main source of revenue in addition to agriculture. Currently, as indicated in NDP 9, minerals account for more than fifty percent (50%) of total government revenue (Botswana Government 2003b). For Botswana to sustain the good economic situation there is a need to shift from the reliance on minerals and agriculture and embark on diversification of the economy. Small scale producers such as the ones in this study have heeded the call for diversification of the economy through engaging in economic activities such as clothing production.

The improvement in the revenue situation, as a result of export of minerals and beef, enabled the government to provide additional social services such as health and education facilities as well as infrastructural developments and communication services. Although the government has been doing well economically, the population has been growing steadily with an average growth rate of 2.4 percent during the last plan period (1991-2001), resulting with a population of 1 680 683 as per the population census of 2001 (CSO, 2001 cited by Botswana Government 2003a). The growth is noticeable in urban areas and big villages especially in the south eastern part of the country (Botswana Government 2003b). This has had an adverse effect on the country's resource

base, thus putting a strain especially in the natural resources such as land. This could lead to less suitable land being used for farming, increased residential and industrial construction, and reduction in the availability of potable water considering the recurrence of drought the country has experienced in over ten years. The spells of drought have also caused rural urban migration forcing people to compete for resources while in the urban areas searching for employment opportunities.

Even though the country's economic growth has been good, poverty is still a major challenge to Botswana. The rural areas are reported to be the most affected, especially Ghanzi and Kgalagadi districts in the western parts of the country. The percentage of the population living below the poverty datum line is said to be 30 percent (African Development Bank 2005). The ICPD report of 2003 indicates that "the impact of population on poverty is strongest at micro level" (Botswana Government 2003a:5). Engagement in small scale businesses has provided the people with opportunities to avert poverty, therefore potential benefits of BITF could open up avenues for expansion in businesses through promotions, competition and learning.

Botswana has universal access to basic education. This has been made possible by the number of schools, especially secondary schools (233 senior secondary schools) which are spread throughout the country (Botswana Government 2006b). The enrollment ratio for primary schools was reported in 2000 to be 97%, while the early childhood education is still lagging behind with an estimated 9% of the children in pre-primary years having access to early childhood education (Botswana Government 2003a; 2003b). Currently the literacy rate has grown from 10% in 1966 to 90% in 2006, increasing the number of people who can at least read and write in the national language. Women often lack education and this limits them in finding employment opportunities in the formal sector. Establishing small businesses such as clothing production helps them to earn a living. BITF could therefore be one opportunity for the informal

small scale clothing producers to interact with other businesses to encourage economic development.

Botswana's population grows steadily as the economy grows. This is evidenced by the growth in the total labour force during the ten year period between 1995/96 and 2005/06 by 48% while on the other hand total employment grew by 59%. The latter represents an annual average growth of 4.7 %. The growth contributed to a decline in unemployment from 21.5% to 17.6% within the same period (Botswana Government, 2007c). The informal small scale clothing producers in this study form part of the labour force in the country as well as contributors to employment creation.

The HIV and AIDS scourge has become a challenge to the country's development. This has greatly affected the productive labour force as it is prevalent among the 15-49 year age group, and women are mostly affected. More government resources are channelled to address the problem through provision of health care, cost of training and replacement of personnel, as well care of the orphans and the sick through the orphan care and home based care programmes (Botswana Government 2003b). The pandemic has also taken toll on the household resources due to increased medical care of the sick. In response to HIV and AIDS problems, government has developed the National HIV/AIDS Policy and the National HIV/AIDS Strategic Plan to have a multi-sectoral approach to the challenges of the HIV and AIDS. The response initiatives are a responsibility of a national coordinating body (NACA), which facilitates and coordinates the implementation of the sectoral intervention strategies (Botswana Government 2003b). The effects of the HIV and AIDS pandemic have also added urgency to the need for economic diversification. Households are therefore driven towards providing economic support to their affected and infected families, who often have few relevant skills for the job market. Therefore clothing producers offer an opportunity for implementation of government initiatives encouraging employment creation.

### **3.4 Government funding sources to small businesses**

Since most small scale businesses in Botswana struggle to raise funds, and also since financial institutions view them as risky to do business with, government established policies for guiding the administration of such business together with introduction of funding to assist small businesses. The main objective of the government was to encourage employment creation and industrial development. Financial Assistance Policy (FAP) was one of the funding programmes which helped finance most of the people to establish small and micro-business in the country including the majority of the clothing producers in this study. Integrated Field Services (IFS) was a unit within the Ministry of Trade and Industry which administered and monitored the FAP programme, hence coming in contact with clothing producers which were using the programme. In 2001, Botswana government introduced CEDA to replace FAP, for provision of funding and business training for applicants of loans in order to prepare for managing their businesses and directing their growth and development (African Development Bank 2005).

### **3.5 The linkages between the Home Economists and the clothing producers**

The producers in this study received support for their business operations and promotion from the government through administrative structures set up in the district and urban areas. The structures include the two levels of government, which are the national and local. Home Economics act as a channel for acquiring the services described below.

#### **3.5.1 The Home Economics Extension programme**

The Home Economics Extension programme at the national level, Ministry of Local Government, initiates policy development for implementation by the Councils. These are set to be uniformly applied to all the communities for

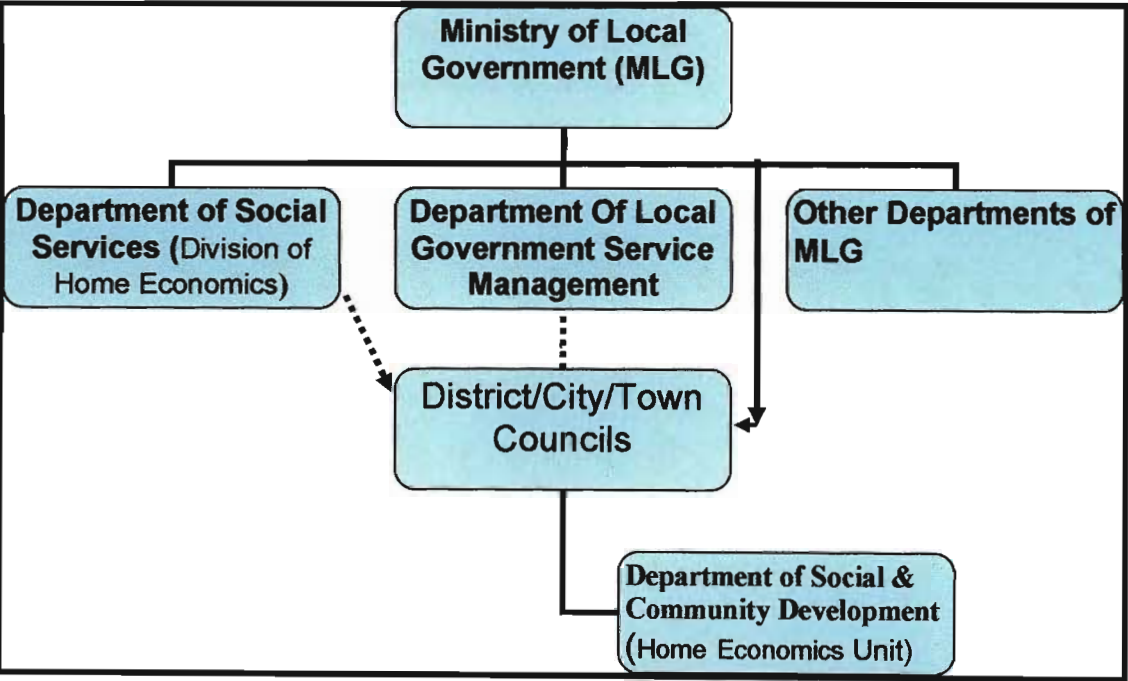
development purposes to reduce dependency, creating employment and improve the nutrition situation in the country (SIAPAC 1990).

The Home Economics extension programme at the council level is responsible for the implementation of policies and programmes developed by the Department of Social Services at the Ministry of Local Government. These programmes are intended to give guidance for development of the communities, especially for self sufficiency and empowerment. The objectives of this program are mainly to promote rural development, impart skills and promotion of economic empowerment activities to the communities as well as family counselling (SIAPAC 1990). The Home Economic extension officers at the council level are responsible for towns, cities and district they are assigned to cover. Adequate delivery of their services is mostly hampered by the fact that manpower is insufficient while the area to be covered is beyond their capacity.

### **3.5.2 Ministry of Local Government**

Ministry of Local Government is responsible for the Home Economics programme that is relevant to this study. Service delivery in Botswana is carried out through two levels of administrative structures, being the national level (commonly referred to as Central Government) and Local Authorities. Level one, the central government, comprises of government ministries and departments responsible for policy formulation and monitoring and supervision. Level two, which is the Local Authorities, comprise of different regional and district structures that are responsible for the implementation of programmes and policies since they operate at the level where they are close to the communities (Picard 1979). Town/City/ District Councils are responsible for services rendered through the Home Economists, hence the permission requested by the researcher to work with these Home Economists. The Local Authority level is where council Home Economists in this study are based. Local government, as Ife (2002) pointed out, provides an appropriate environment for community workers like the Home Economists in this study.

There are ten district councils, four town councils and two city councils in Botswana. At level two, district, town and city councils are administrative centres in the areas where the Home Economists implementing the programme (as described) are located. Supervision of programmes by council Home Economists in the councils is a responsibility of the Ministry of Local Government through Department of Social Services for policy development and guidance, and district/urban councils for administration (Figure 3:2). This study concentrated on producers in six district and town councils, and their Home Economists.



**Figure 3.2: Two tier supervision of Council Home Economists by Department of Social Services and Councils**

**Key for arrows used in the diagram**

- .....➔ Supervision on policy and programme implementation
- ➔ Linkage through administrative supervision on administration of programmes

**3.5.3 The general role and services of Home Economists**

The Home Economists in the study are employees of district and town councils, recruited by the Department of Local Government Service Management, and are

responsible for economic and social development programs within the jurisdiction of the respective councils. These officers implement policies and programs developed by the central government departments under the guidance and monitoring of the Department of Social Services through the Home Economics Division. The role of the Home Economist in the Department of Social Services is to provide professional advice and guidance on policies and programmes; and develop strategies for effective implementation of programmes by the local authorities. Included in these services is the promotion of economic empowerment of disadvantaged communities by acquiring exhibition space at BITF for marketing of clothing producers' products and providing opportunities for other marketing activities (See Appendix A). The Home Economists provide skills development to the clothing producers in the form of training, to help create employment and encourage independence and income generation.

#### **3.5.4 Role and services of the Home Economists in relation to clothing producers**

The Home Economists' job includes mobilisation of the people, including the clothing producers in the areas of operation. These were especially people who had shown an interest in utilising the skills they possessed and an interest to acquire more production and business skills with guidance from Home Economists. The services provided centred around delivery of policies and programs from the Ministry of Local Government (SIAPAC 1990).

In addition to the provision of promotional services to individual producers, the Home Economists disseminate information on Home Economics programmes to the communities which enables the people to seek relevant assistance from the programme. The dissemination of information is done through workshops organized for identified communities. The Home Economists also provide training for the small scale entrepreneurs in identified business-related areas to either provide basis for operating a business or addressing the knowledge and skill gaps in their management of business. Additionally the Home Economists

arrange for testing of small scale entrepreneurs with national testing department (Madirelo Training and Testing Centre-MTTC) for trade testing for apprenticeship to perfect their skills in clothing production and other crafts. This usually results in awarding a certificate to successful examinee, and this certificate could be used in job seeking or application for funding as a proof for possessing a recognised skill. These duties combine to form the Home Economics programme as relevant to this study (See Appendix B).

The other duties which are performed by the Home Economists are coordination of Early Childhood Care and Development programme and coordination of national days such as International Women's Day. These duties force the Home Economists to divide time between the duties and provision of assistance to the clothing producers. This mostly results in the Home Economists having less time for follow up on the clothing producers. The informal small scale clothing producers in this study used the national days such as women's day for promotion of their products (See Appendix B).

To ensure that the producers' products obtain more exposure to the market, the Home Economists made arrangements for promotion of the products and represent the producers at the local (district or mini) shows and ultimately the Botswana International Trade Fair (See Appendix B). The mini and district shows were usually conducted to select the best products for BITF which would attract potential customers as well as add an element of competition to alert producers that competition exists in business. Judging of the article for selection of the best products is performed independently and not under council Home Economists' influence.

As part of the preparations towards participation at BITF, Home Economists prepare a handicrafts catalogue to assist producers to follow the set rules and specifications. This would enable producers to follow customers' specifications in future. The handicrafts catalogue is a guiding tool on descriptions and

specifications of clothing items as well as other items for exhibition. It is designed by the Home Economists on behalf of the producers and it is reviewed every two years to include new products or remove those which may be no longer appealing to most people (See Appendix C).

At the BITF, the Home Economists serve as booth personnel for all the products from the clothing producers which are exhibited under the Department of Social Services stall. The two week long exhibition sees exchange of information on the products between the trade fair visitors and the Home Economists. All the transactions, information and knowledge about the new products and the customer are handled by the Home Economists on behalf of the clothing producers. At the end of the trade fair, the Home Economists relay messages to their respective producers. These additional responsibilities for the Home Economists leave them with limited time to concentrate on the promotion of the producers' businesses, let alone establishing the degree of effectiveness of the BITF exhibition on the producers; thus the need for this study.

Ministry of Local Government has 37 Home Economists working in the councils. Each council has at least one trained Home Economist with either diploma or degree qualification, equipped enough to work with the communities in implementing and coordinating the Home Economics programmes. The developed policies and programmes are government's effort to provide required services to the communities in various parts of the country. The Home Economists therefore interpret relevant policies and programs to the clothing producers for their benefit such as funding policies and completion of financial request forms. The informal small scale clothing producers utilise services provided by the council Home Economists in an attempt to gain more skills for improving their products and businesses, and gain more through participation at the BITF.

At the BITF, there are also independent exhibitors who are not supported by Home Economists. They exhibit their products themselves or employ staff for the duration of the show. Explanations of products to the trade fair visitors are these exhibitors responsibility. There were no linkages between this sample of independent exhibitors and the Home Economists since they made their own independent arrangements for exhibiting at BITF.

### **3.5.3 Other Home Economists in government service**

Botswana has Home Economists in other Ministries separate from those in the Ministry of Local Government. Home Economists in other ministries have different portfolios from that of council Home Economists. The Ministry of Education houses Home Economists subject teachers in secondary school and Home Economists in the Non-Formal Education programme who are responsible for income generation projects of literacy groups (SIAPAC 1990). These Home Economists do not form part of this study.

## **3.6 The operations and arrangement of BITF**

The operations of the Botswana International Trade Fair came about in 1968 when it was referred to as Gaborone Agricultural Show (Mmegi Monitor 2004). This event is organized by the Fairground Holdings Limited established. The responsibilities of the company were among others, to organize and manage the events during the trade fair (Fairground Holdings 2007). The objectives of BITF are stated as:-

- Promote investment opportunities in Botswana
- Showcase products and exportable services in Botswana
- Promote trade between local and international companies
- Attract and provide a networking environment for local and international buyers
- Facilitate business linkages between regional and international participants (Lyanda *et al* 2005: 58; Ministry of Trade and Industry 2005).

Botswana International Trade Fair is advertised through the local print media, television and radio, and electronically through internet for the businesses which are interested to market their products and services in Botswana. Advertisements for BITF are also targeted towards the general public who may wish to see what businesses offer and possibly make purchases during the trade fair or later. Companies and individuals who wish to participate make their intentions known through filling application forms to specify what they will be promoting and the amount of space they require and where they would like to locate their exhibitions.

Exhibitions are held both inside and outside halls, and the exhibitor selects the location of their stall (on either of the premises). The location is charged based on whether it is strategic (especially corner stalls) to be seen by most visitors. The charge for utilising the exhibition stalls is decided on square metres to be occupied. The charge (in the Ditshupo Hall where the producers and other government assisted exhibitors usually display their products) is P315.00 per square metre for any location and additional ten percent charge for the stall in a strategic location. The normal stall size is 3metres x 3metres (P2835.00). The independent small scale exhibitors in the study rented cheaper stall in the marquee which P251.00 per square metre with a 9 m<sup>2</sup> stall being P2259.00 (Fairground Holdings 2007; Skov 2006) (See Appendix. D).\*

Entrance into the BITF grounds is only through possession of entry tickets. The exhibitors have to purchase tickets that allow for access during the event, one ticket issued allow access to one person (three tickets for exhibitors are issued per stall rented to be used by stall attendants, and additional ones could be purchased if needed). Exhibitors' vehicles also have separate access stickers for the duration of the event. The trade fair visitors on the other hand have to purchase daily entrance tickets for access to the event, and these are different from the tickets issued to exhibitors (Fairground Holdings 2007).

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\* At the time of writing Botswana International Trade Fair had changed to Botswana Consumer Fair

Government-aided stalls, which act as exhibition space provided for by government departments to exhibit the products from the groups and individuals they assist, are paid for by government. Government also pays for the entrance tickets for all officers who exhibit products from the people they work with and the officer's vehicles. The Home Economists exhibit the producers' products in these stalls, which are located inside the exhibition hall. These stalls are too costly for most small and micro-businesses, which form part of the producers working with the Home Economists (as was mentioned by producers during data collection). The Department of Social Services secures the exhibition stalls by paying for them to be used for all the products from the producers who are working with the Home Economists. The Department of Social Services regularly selects a stall situated at a corner and directly facing the entrance which usually has a good flow of traffic (Skov 2006).

All the stalls exhibiting at BITF are also subject to competition, which is based on the presentation of the products, ability of the booth personnel to answer questions in relation to the exhibits and the theme for the year. Home Economists provide answers to the questions since they are the ones attending to the stall during the trade fair. Judging of the exhibition stalls during the trade fair is done by independent people arranged by BITF organisers. The Home Economists are also not involved in judging of products from all exhibitions held before trade fair, such as mini or district shows, but it is done by independent people.

According to a key informant from the Department of Social Services, the trade fair provides a chance for the exhibitors and the visitors to interact at business level. To provide a true chance for the exhibitors to market their product, the trade fair is organized in such a way that the first three days after the official opening of the trade fair are reserved for trade visitors. These days accord exhibitors to invite whomever they wish to view what they offer and develop

business networks. Entrance to the trade fair by invitees is made free to make it easy for them; therefore it is a good opportunity for the products to be seen by many people who are interested in doing business with informal small scale clothing producers (such as those in this research).

Having given a description of the area of study, the government structures for Home Economists and their responsibilities, and a description of the functioning of the BITF, the next chapter will describe the methodologies employed in collecting and analysing data for this study.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **4.0 INTRODUCTION**

The aim of the study was to establish the impact of the Botswana International Trade Fair on the informal small scale clothing producers who exhibit annually through representation of the council Home Economists. The impact was established through examining the data collected through interviews, survey questionnaires, focus group discussions and case studies.

This chapter describes the research design, sampling and methods used in data collection from the participants in the research, as well as analysis of the findings to find meanings and values used to establish to impact that the trade fair has on the producers. The description of sampling and methodology followed will be reported following a sequence of clothing producers, the Home Economists and the independent exhibitors.

The study focused on clothing producers who participated at BITF from selected urban areas and villages of Botswana. These were areas, which had the services of a Home Economist for at least six years and clothing producers who had indirectly participated at the Botswana International Trade Fair at least three times between 2001 and 2006. The clothing producers in the study were those who had been exposed to the same type of services provided by the Home Economists such as assistance with transportation, promotion and marketing, visits to render professional advice and empowerment programmes. They also had participated either in some skills training provided by the Home Economists or had received some form of advice and support from other government officials. The participation of the clothing producers at the trade fair had been through the representation of the Home Economists. The Home Economists identified the producers during training or regular home visits, engaged the producers in local

competition usually arranged through a district show or mini shows, whereby the best items were selected to be taken to BITF for further competition, exhibition and promotion.

The variables examined in this study included the demographics of the clothing producers, the clothing producers' knowledge and perceptions about BITF, their objectives for participating at the trade fair, business growth as well as changes realised from participation.

#### **4.1 Research design**

The purpose of the study was to establish if the Botswana International Trade Fair benefited the clothing producers through exhibitions. The study employed mainly qualitative and some quantitative approaches to data collection to gain in-depth information on the four identified sub problems. The identified sub problems were as follows:-

**Sub-problem one:** How accurate is the informal small-scale clothing producers' knowledge regarding the objectives of the Botswana International Trade Fair, and their expectations of the trade fair as a marketing tool? Do they realise their expectations in relation to benefits derived from participating?

**Sub problem two:** How accurate is the council Home Economists' knowledge and perceptions of BITF; how does BITF impact on the preparations for exhibitions and on informal small scale clothing producers; how do Home Economists interpret the impacts in relation to their future actions and communication strategies between them and the producer groups and individuals?

**Sub problem three:** How accurate is independent small scale clothing exhibitors' knowledge about the BITF, its impacts and their perceptions regarding the use of trade fair as a marketing and promotional tool?

**Sub problem four:** Are there any similarities or differences between the informal small scale clothing producers, top performer, the council Home Economists and the independent small scale clothing exhibitors on perceptions regarding benefits or constraints of participating at BITF? Furthermore how does the general clothing producers' functioning and the BITF prize winner compare in relation to production techniques and strategies? Are there any links between winning and the growth in business as a benefit resulting from participation at BITF?

Data were collected from informal small scale clothing producers, top performer, council Home Economists and independent small scale clothing exhibitors through: interviews, survey questionnaires, focus group discussions and case studies (See Table 4.1). Data was collected between December 2006 and April 2007.

**Table 4.1: Design of the study**

Sub problems	Sample	Sampling	Data collection Tools
Sub problem 1	17 Informal small scale clothing producers Top performer	Purposive sampling	*Interviews,  *in-depth interview
Sub problem 2	15 Council Home Economists	Purposive sampling	*Survey questionnaires, *Focus group discussions
Sub problem 3	2 Independent small scale clothing exhibitors	Convenience sampling	Survey questionnaires, In-depth interview
Sub problem 4 comparison	*Informal small scale clothing producers, * top performer *Council Home Economists *Independent small scale clothing exhibitors		*Interviews, *Survey questionnaires, *Focus group discussions

Eighteen clothing producers were identified from the list of previous BITF participants and seventeen were found and agreed to be interviewed. The clothing producers were interviewed between December 2006 and January 2007. Data from the Home Economists and the independent exhibitors were collected between December 2006 and April 2007 including follow up interviews with the independent exhibitors for construction of case studies. The samples for both the clothing producers and the Home Economists were small hence the inclusion of all those who met the criteria for participation in the research. The reason for such a small sample was that participants at the BITF are not only clothing producers, but include other producers in other areas such as foods, furniture making and crafts (pottery, basketry and soft furnishings). The Home Economists participation at the BITF was mostly dependent on the availability of products, from the producers, to be taken to the BITF. Qualitative approaches are usually applied in small samples and relevant in case studies as indicated by Punch (2004).

Sub problem one was designed to address the study from the perspective of the clothing producers, sub problem two was directly responsible for the perceptions of the Home Economists. The independent exhibitors were addressed through sub problem three to determine their knowledge and perceptions of BITF. The fourth sub problem was to compare the perceptions of the three samples and finally compare the operations of the clothing producers to those of the winner of most prizes.

At least two data collection tools were used with each sample except for the independent exhibitors (which only used the survey method). The rationale for using more than one method was to validate data through the responses obtained from the research participants. This is referred to as triangulation (Mkocha 2005 citing Remenyi 1998; Guion 2002).

The study was conducted in Botswana and the four sub problems outlined were used as a guide to obtain information from respondents. Participants in this study were identified from the eastern part of the country represented by two urban centres and four peri-urban areas. The areas are within the urban councils of Francistown and Lobatse and district councils of South East, Southern, North East and Kweneng. The sampled clothing producers were specifically from Ramotswa, Mogobane, Kanye, Themashanga, Molepolole, Francistown and Lobatse. The Home Economists' sample on the other hand, was from Ramotswa, Molepolole, Tsabong, Goodhope, Kanye, Molepolole, Jwaneng, Lobatse, Palapye, Mochudi, Francistown, and Masunga (Table 4.2). The eastern part of the country was readily accessible to the researcher and the selected villages and urban centres had clothing producers who had participated in the BITF for a longer time between the studied period of 2001 and 2006. These areas, like others around the country, have a good network of roads and communication systems; therefore it was easy for the researcher to keep to the data collection schedule.

**Table 4.2: Places visited and number of interviewees**

District/Urban Council	Village/ Town	No. of informal small scale clothing producers interviewed	No. of council Home Economist interviewed	The independent small scale clothing exhibitors
Kweneng	Molepolole	5	1	
Lobatse	Lobatse	3	2	
South East	Ramotswa	2	1	
	Mogobane	1		
Southern	Kanye	2	1	
	Goodhope		1	
Francistown	Francistown	3	1	1
North east	Masunga		2	
	Themashanga	1		
Kgatleng	Mochudi		1	
Central	Palapye		2	
Jwaneng	Jwaneng		2	
Kgalagadi	Tsabong		1	
Gaborone	Gaborone			1
<b>Total</b>		17	15	2

The sampled Home Economists had a larger number of participants at BITF annually than the rest of the Home Economist not included in the sample. This sample of Home Economists were all similar in their work activities, and choosing the eastern part of the country meant that there was less inter-officer variation to have influenced the results differentially. Where the Home Economists were transferred out of their areas prior to the study, follow ups were made to in order not to deviate from the initial criteria for selection.

The independent exhibitors sample, whose information built the case studies for the research comprised of two exhibitors who exhibited at BITF in 2006 and were from Francistown and Gaborone.

## **4.2 Population and sample design**

The first population studied was composed of clothing producers who participated at BITF through sending their products for exhibition, and the second population was the Home Economists who worked with the clothing producer on training, guidance and other assistance for marketing products. The independent exhibitors also formed part of a population under study and these were identified among general exhibitors at the 2006 BITF.

### **4.2.1 Population**

A list of informal small scale clothing producers who had participated in the BITF and a list of the Home Economists were obtained from the office of the Department of Social Services and formed the sampling frames. Potential research participants in the study were selected purposively from the two lists.

Letters requesting for permission to undertake a study in the selected areas, within the specified first two samples (clothing producers and Home Economist samples), were sent to the Town/ City and District Councils in the respective areas where the Home Economists were based and to the Department of Social

Services before the study commenced. The Department of Social Services facilitated arrangements for focus group discussions with the Home Economists (See Appendix E). Councils facilitated the identification of the clothing producers (See Appendix F).

The BITF, as an annual event attracts all kinds of business people, and also a variety of informal small scale clothing producers. Two independent exhibitors were identified during the 2006 BITF to construct case studies for the research, for bringing about a different perspective and perceptions of the impact of the trade on informal small scale clothing producers. One producer (a winner) from the Home Economist supported clothing producers who had won most prizes in the last trade fair was identified from a list of BITF prize winner's records in the Department of Social Services. This winner was interviewed to gain in-depth understanding of whether there was a relationship between prize winning and benefits from exhibiting.

#### **4.2.2 Sample Design**

➤ Informal small scale clothing producer sample:

An average of 18 informal small scale clothing producers had exhibited at the trade fair between 2001 and 2006 and most of them had contact with the Home Economists. These were purposively selected from a list of producers who were involved in the production of clothing and accessories, and also participated in the previous trade fairs (See Table 4.3). These were drawn from a list of 34 clothing producers who had participated in past trade fairs between 2001 and 2006. All the respondents in the clothing producer sample were sole owners of the businesses except for one which was operated by a group. The group representative was nominated by group members to represent their views through participating in an interview.

➤ Council Home Economists' sample:

In the purposively selected sample of practicing the Home Economists, fifteen (83.3%) responded in the survey questionnaire. Three (16.6%) Home Economists did not return the questionnaire (See Table 4.3). The Home Economists were identified from a list of 37 practicing council Home Economists within the country. These Home Economists had worked in the eastern part of the country, in the areas which participated in the trade fair exhibitions and had represented the clothing producers at least three times between 2001 and 2006.

➤ Independent small scale clothing exhibitors sample:

A third sample consisted of 10 independent small scale exhibitors who displayed clothing items during the 2006 trade fair but were not part of the Home Economists' training schemes. These independent exhibitors were conveniently sampled during the trade fair and agreed to be interviewed. Follow-ups were made on this sample and only two returned their completed survey questionnaire (See Table 4.3). The reasons given by the other eight who did not return the questionnaire were that they were too busy with production and could not afford time taken away from their work schedules. Telephonic arrangements were made with these two exhibitors for further clarifications and more information on their operations in order to obtain good understanding for building case studies.

**Table 4.3: Summary of sample responses**

Sample	Target number	Sample size	Percentage
Informal small scale clothing producers	18	17	94.4
The winner of most competition prizes (case study)	1	1	100
Council Home Economists	18	15	83.3
Independent small scale clothing exhibitors (case studies)	10	2	20

➤ A case study – Top performer:

One case study was conducted with the winner of most prizes during the 2006 trade fair, among the exhibitors represented by the Home Economists. This clothing producer fulfilled the criteria set for selection of respondents in the study of having previously participated in the BITF. This producer was interviewed to understand how winning prizes had affected her business, especially in relation to production, customers and marketing and what had contributed to winning the prizes (See Table 4.3).

#### **4.2.3 Sampling techniques**

The sampling techniques applied in this study were purposive sampling, which included all the samples which met the criteria set for the research participants especially the clothing producers and the Home Economists. The other technique used was the convenience sampling, which provided access to the sample for the independent exhibitors for a different perspective on BITF.

➤ Purposive sampling

The sample of the clothing producers in the study had the same characteristics as required for selection. The sample, although small, was representative enough to yield the results that reflect the views of the population from which it was drawn (50 % sample from 34 in the population).

Another purposive sample of the Home Economists consisted of officers who had similar exposure in terms of training, work environment and assistance offered to producers. This sample therefore was representative of a larger population of the Home Economists from which it was obtained (15 Home Economist from a population of 37). Purposive sampling is described as a non-probability sampling in which a sample obtained may be regarded as representative of the relevant population to be studied (Huysamen 1994). Singleton (1988:153) cited by de Vos *et al* (2002) referred to purposive sampling as a technique in which a sample is composed of elements that contain the most characteristics, representative of

typical attributes of the population. In this study, typical attributes were identified as the length of involvement in the BITF by both the clothing producers and the Home Economists, and also the geographic location of the identified purposive samples.

➤ Convenience sample

Independent small scale clothing exhibitors were conveniently sampled from those who were found exhibiting at the 2006 BITF. The respondents in this sample were later asked to complete the questionnaire. The objective of including this sample was to obtain comparative information on the study through the perceptions of the readily available exhibitors in a similar situation as the selected clothing producers. The main criterion used in the identification of this sample was the involvement in the production of clothing at a small scale and self-representation at the trade fair (as opposed to representation by Home Economists). Such convenience sampling is defined as "the most convenient collection of subjects that are available for research purposes" (Huysamen 1994:44). De Vos *et al* (2002) citing Bailey (1994:94), Gabor (1993:162), Mc Burney (2001:246) and Nachmias and Nachmias (1981:430) mention that the respondents in the study are usually readily available, easy to find and can provide the relevant information.

### **4.3 Data Collection**

Before data collection started, the researcher introduced herself to the respondents, either in a group or individually. This was done through a letter addressed to participants that stated the purpose of the study, its benefit to the researcher, the government (represented by the Department of Social Services) as a sponsor and the participants. The letter was accompanied by a consent form which allowed the participants to indicate their willingness to participate in the study through appending their signatures (See Appendix G). Prior arrangements and familiarity of the respondent with the research can contribute

positively to the interviewer-interviewee relationship, thus ultimately spill over to the quality, reliability and validity of data collected from the interview (Punch 2004).

Qualitative approaches were used to gain information and understanding about the respondents' perceptions and knowledge. Punch (2004) refers to qualitative approach as an attempt to capture data on peoples' perceptions through attentiveness of the researcher. Qualitative approaches and purposive sampling were the cornerstone of this study. These are in line with Miles and Huberman (1994) citing Kutzel (1992); and Morse (1989) state that qualitative approaches are usually used with purposive samples and in most cases deal with small samples of people.

Quantitative approaches were also used to gather sufficient data, which helped to indicate the extent of the impact realised from BITF. The participants' benefits were explained through the use of indicators such as marketing practices, business growth, income changes and the quality of products.

Data for the study were generated through the use of survey questionnaires which comprised open ended questions and focus group discussions, which employed in depth interviews in order to obtain as much information from the respondents as possible through their varied responses. Open ended questions are very useful when exploring a variable, obtaining an idea of possible responses from the research participants (de Vos *et al* 2002).

This study employed interviews, survey questionnaires with a checklist embedded into the questions, a case study, and focus group discussions as means of collecting data from respondents. Structured questionnaire, closed-ended questions as well as open ended questions were used for data collection. The methods used allowed face to face interactions with the respondents. These enabled the researcher to pose extended questions on emerging topics and also

seek further clarification on responses provided. Moreover, face to face interaction provided an opportunity for observing participants' non verbal communication.

#### **4.3.1 Interviews**

There has not been much research on international trade fairs, especially dealing with informal small scale clothing producers' perceptions on the usefulness of the trade fair; therefore there was very little literature available to be used for the study. The questions were therefore originally created for the study. The questionnaire for the clothing producers was designed to gather information on perceptions, marketing strategies, income changes, quality of products and the growth of business. To gather information on perceptions and overall impact of BITF, one-on-one interviews were administered to the clothing producers. The questionnaire included a 5- point Likert Scale section for capturing perceptions (See Appendix H). According to Frechtling *et al* (1997), interviews allow recording the views of the respondents. Kvale (In Sewell, 2001:1) cited by de Vos *et al* (2002) defines interviews as attempts to understand the world from the participants point of view as well as to unfold the meaning of people's experiences and to uncover their lived world prior to scientific explanations. According to de Vos *et al* (2002:298), citing Seidman (1998), interviews are a dominant mode of data or information collection in qualitative research. The study thus helped to unearth the impact that BITF has had on the informal small scale clothing producers in Botswana through probing, open ended questions and discussions.

The questionnaire comprised open-ended questions and close ended questions. Some questions were unstructured to give the respondents latitude to provide relevant answers to their situations while others were structured to provide an array of choices to select from. These two forms of questions allowed the respondents to reveal their situations, expectations and experiences in relation to their businesses and participation at the trade fair (Frechtling *et al* (1997). The

interviews were conducted by the researcher herself except where respondents knew how to read and write, when they self administered the questionnaire with the assistance of the researcher. The clothing producers were encouraged to communicate freely on their knowledge and understanding as well as to reflect back on what their production and skill base appeared like in relation to quality of the products, the employment status and the financial position of their businesses. The interviews were conducted at the producers' business premises and this accorded the researcher an opportunity to informally view the operations, machinery and the items produced by the clothing producers. The setting also provided the clothing producers with a familiar environment which was not intimidating. De Vos *et al* (2002:298) describe the unstructured one on one interview as an in-depth interview as well as conversation with a purpose or an interactional situation. Interviewing was therefore the most appropriate method of collecting information from the sample of clothing producers.

#### **4.3.2 Survey Questionnaire**

One survey questionnaire was used to gather information on perceptions from the Home Economists. This assisted in the provision of factual information from the Home Economist, through questions relating to demographic information, knowledge about the trade fair, attitudes and opinions about the trade fair benefits. The Home Economists' survey questionnaire contained questions that enabled extraction of information on their perceptions of BITF in relation to the quality of products exhibited, producers' business growth, and the general impact BITF had on the producers. The perceptions of the Home Economists on the BITF's impact on the clothing producers were measured using a 5 - point Likert scale. The Home Economists self-administered the survey questionnaire independently (See Appendix I). The New Dictionary of Social Work (1995:51) cited by de Vos *et al* (2002) defines questionnaires to be a set of questions on a form that is completed by the respondents in respect of a research project. Surveys as mentioned by Punch (2004) present questionnaires that seek factual information and a measure of attitudes and beliefs with the use of rating scales.

The other survey was conducted on the independent small scale clothing exhibitors. The survey questionnaire for this sample of independent exhibitors was developed. The questionnaire was further translated into Setswana for ease of understanding and comfort in divulging the information on their perceptions on BITF and its relevance to their businesses. Translation was checked for meaning with a neutral person. The independent exhibitors were only assisted in filling in the questionnaire where there was need even though the questionnaire was in vernacular (See Appendix J (i)). This sample was included to provide a different view and perceptions about the BITF by a group that was not represented by the Home Economists in exhibitions at the trade fair.

The independent exhibitors were subjected to a similar questionnaire as those of the clothing producers with minor variations to help extract as much data as possible to build on the perceptions about the fair. These were derived through the questions about their incomes, educational levels, how they view the BITF and its impact on them (See Appendix J (ii)). The questions were structured to cater for the independent exhibitors' self representation at the trade fair, thus having relevance to divulge any information relevant to their situation. The survey had structured questions designed to capture demographic information from the respondents and their reflections as to the BITF impact.

Survey is referred to as a means to obtain information from respondents in relation to personal particulars, beliefs and attitudes about an issue under investigation (Huysamen 1994:128). A survey is also defined as a standard method of collecting information, whose purpose is to generate information in a systematic fashion by presenting informants with questions in a similar manner, recording their responses in a methodical way (Hall & Hall 1996).

To get the perceptions of all three groups of respondents about the trade fair, a checklist was used for all the participants in the study. These were incorporated into the survey and interview questionnaires that were administered to the

participants. De Vos *et al* (2002) describes a checklist as a certain type of questionnaire consisting of a series of items of which the respondents are requested to indicate, which are most applicable to him/her or describe the situation. The respondents were asked to select statements that best described how they viewed the trade fair, and how the trade fair had affected their businesses in terms of production, profits, employees, quality of products and number of customers. This was done using a 5-point Likert scale for perceptions on benefits, 1 representing the lowest and the highest represented by 5. Perceptions on further participation and worthiness of BITF used a 4-point scale, with lowest being represented by 1 and highest being represented by 4. The ratings were designed for the appropriate questions in the study.

#### **4.3.3 Case study**

A case study of the most recent top performer at BITF was conducted to establish the impact that the trade fair had on her business during the period under study (2001-2006). This top performer had exhibited at the 2006 trade fair through representation by a council Home Economist and had been trained or assisted by this Home Economist. Information was extracted through unstructured interview and the available documents and materials from the area office and Department of Social Services. Two other case studies were formulated using data generated from interviews with two independent exhibitors. This was used to establish what impact has BITF made on them. De Vos *et al* (2002) assert that the main purpose of the unstructured interview is to gain in-depth understanding of peoples' experiences and what these experiences mean to them. According to Creswell (1998; 61) cited by de Vos *et al* (2000:275), "a case study is an exploration or an in-depth analysis of a single or multiple case over a period of time". Hall and Hall (1996) point out that a case study reveals the impact of a situation on people from their own perspective. The case studies revealed what the top performer and the two independent exhibitors did, how they gained the knowledge of BITF, how the BITF contributed to their success and what effect BITF had on their businesses.

#### **4.3.4 Focus group discussions**

Focus group discussions were used with the Home Economists to obtain more information through the generation of ideas and discussions between participants in the study. Twelve Home Economists participated in the group discussions on December 7, 2006 at the Fairground Holdings' conference room, which was away from the Home Economists' work places, allowing them freedom to respond neutrally without influences as mentioned by Powell and Single (1996) (See Appendix K (a) and (b)). The Home Economists participating in the group discussions were contacted through the Department of Social Services and were officers who had participated at the BITF for at least three years as specified in the criteria for participation.

Focus group discussions took place after a workshop for the Home Economists, organised by the Department of Social Services. This workshop served as an opportunity for the researcher to meet all the Home Economists participating in the study at one time and in one place. Other advantages provided by the workshop were to utilise the chance whereby District, Town and City Councils had released the Home Economists from their busy schedules for the end of year workshop; and having a venue already organised and paid for by the Department of Social Services. These Home Economists were experienced in the exhibitions and were from councils which regularly participated at the BITF.

The Home Economists were requested to participate by signing the consent form; the details of the form were explained to them and were handed out for further reading and understanding. They were informed that their participation was voluntary and they were not bound by any circumstance to participate and were free to decline or withdraw without giving reasons. Upon agreeing, they were asked to freely participate in discussions of the issues presented and questions asked (See Appendix G).

Also, a request to use audio visual equipment and camera was made to the group participants and they agreed to the request. The group was made up of both males and females, varied educational levels. Participation in the group discussion was done free of any incentives (Gaskill 2001).

The researcher used guiding questions and served as a moderator in the discussions to steer the conversation towards the topic and avoid derailment and time wasting (See Appendix L). The proceedings of the discussions were recorded manually (notes) and through audio visual aid (video camera) by a volunteer who was not participating in the group discussion after requesting for permission (Powell & Single 1996). The discussions took the form of an unstructured interview, therefore were in-depth, and follow-up questions were posed on the responses to gain clarity and understanding of what actually goes on when officers engage in their duties to assist the clothing producers. Probing cues used by the researcher during the discussion were such as "what do you think of that?", "explain more on that" "tell us more". This did not only provided insight, but also allowed additions and more comments from others as well as provided an opportunity for participants to learn from or check themselves against others.

Focus group discussion has been described as "a research methodology useful for exploratory investigations where little research has been conducted in the area under investigation so as to obtain general information about a particular subject area and in generating impressions" (Gaskill 2001:3 citing Stewart & Shamdasani 1990). He further mentioned that focus group discussion as a qualitative research method provided an opportunity for collecting quality data in exploring a topic that has not been researched before, through the researcher interacting with the research participants in order to extract information known by the participants. Focus group discussion has also been defined as "a carefully planned discussion designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive, non threatening environment" (Kruger quoted in Kingry *et al*

1990:124, cited by de Vos *et al* 2002:306). Focus group discussion also added an action research component, in that, the Home Economists reflected on their operational practices and how they could be improved.

#### **4.4 Data analysis**

For qualitative analysis, which included data generated from interviews and focus group discussions; common themes were extracted from responses, as well as influential factors to a situation such as business growth and marketing strategies, to establish relationships and comparisons. De Vos *et al* (2002) state that analysis of data compares similar themes and with a view to relate to differences between individuals and groups. Collected data were arranged into groups basing on commons meanings of the responses to form themes for condensing the responses while keeping the original responses for referrals and discussions. No names of research participants were used, but rather codes were used to link responses with respondents to obtain meanings and explanations. This is referred by Punch (2004) as data reduction. Punch (2004:203) further states that "the objective of data reduction is to reduce data without the significant loss of information". Lastly, data was interpreted through the use of charts, conclusions drawn from these.

Data from survey questionnaires was analysed quantitatively using the Statistical Programme for Social Scientists (SPSS) for descriptive statistics using frequencies of response rates and to find the relationships and comparisons between variables through correlations, central tendency, and standard deviation. Punch (2004:113) states "quantitative research involves measurements of a number of variables and usually across a sample". The measures were used on all the samples to get the central tendency and the variation in the data collected.

In order to obtain meaningful analysis from the scores on producers' perception of benefits from participating at the trade fair, the ratings were reversed for all but one question. The score on the statements initially ranged from strongly agree (1) to strongly disagree (5). These were reversed to have the lowest score (1) represent disagreement on the perceived benefits, while the highest score (5) represented agreement with the statement that indeed benefits existed through participation at the trade fair. Only one statement which said "BITF does not provide me with an opportunity for additional customers" was not changed since it was negative compared to the rest of the statements.

Furthermore the scale was recoded to consolidate the responses to give more meaning to the total score as depicted by the total score from the positive ratings. Thus the new rating became as follows: -

- 1 and 2 were consolidated into one rating to read as 1 for disagree,
- 2 was changed to indicate do not know, while
- 4 and 5 were consolidated to read as 3 to indicate agree (See Table 4.4)

**Table 4.4: Reversal and condensation of the perception scores**

Description of score	Initial rating	Reversed rating	Condensed new rating
Strongly agree	1	5	3
Agree	2	4	3
Do not know	3	3	2
Disagree	4	2	1
Strongly disagree	5	1	1

**4.5    Validity and Reliability**

To ascertain that the questionnaires were understood by the study samples, a questionnaire was given to sample of students to complete to test for reliability in gathering the required data. Where there were problems encountered in filling out the questionnaire, they were duly addressed to make it easier for the study respondents to complete questionnaire with ease and extract the required information for the research. The questionnaire was also translated by a

Setswana speaker from English to Setswana to ascertain the same intended meaning and checked back again into English. Although the three groups may have administered questions slightly differently, consistency in a group was observed for standardised responses. Reliability as explained by Leedy and Ormrod (2005) is achieved when accurate results (data) are obtained consistently using the same data collection tool.

In order to have uniformity in the study, clothing producers were interviewed and guided (where clothing producers self-administered the questionnaire). This arrangement was meant to have same interpretation and clarifications of questions to the clothing producers. The Home Economists independently completed the survey questions and this also ensured individuality. The independent exhibitors completed the survey questionnaire with the help of the researcher while the top performer was interviewed face-to-face. To establish validity, data from different sources was used and also different data collection methods were applied. Guion (2002) refers to these types of approaches to collecting data as triangulation and specifically called data triangulation and methodological triangulation respectively.

#### **4.6 Summary**

This chapter discussed the methodology used for the research. The aim of the study was to establish the impact BITF had on the businesses of the small scale clothing producers. The sub problems were addressed using both qualitative and quantitative approaches in research. Furthermore the majority of the clothing producers (17 or 94.4%) and Home Economists (15 or 83.3%) responded to the interviews and survey questionnaire respectively, while only two independent exhibitors returned the survey questionnaire. One top performer at the 2006 BITF was interviewed.

The next chapter presents the results of the study, and further discusses the implications of these findings on the study.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

#### **5.0 INTRODUCTION**

The aim of this study was to determine whether exhibiting at the Botswana International Trade Fair (BITF) benefitted informal small scale clothing manufacturers who are supported by council Home Economists. This chapter presents the results of the study conducted on three different sampled groups and three single in-depth cases. As already reflected in chapter three, the results reveal the outcomes of the interviews, surveys and the group discussions held with the respondents. The chapter is arranged according to the main themes which emerged from both the studied literature and data collected.

This chapter begins by providing an overview of the studied clothing producers' characteristics, followed by the characteristics of the Home Economists and the independent exhibitors. It will further provide results from interviews, surveys and discussions held with research participants. The discussions of the results are also structured around the themes which were extracted from the responses provided by all the research participants during data collection. The producers' responses, derived from the Likert scale used in data collection, provided a basis on which the discussion on their perceptions of benefits of BITF will be made. It will further provide insights as to whether the four research sub problems listed below, have fully been addressed. The arrangement of the chapter follows the sequence of firstly the producers' results and discussions, then the Home Economists and lastly independent exhibitors.

#### **5.1 Sub problem one**

Sections 5.2 to 5.9 present results and discussions in an attempt to address questions from sub problem one which are "how accurate is the informal small-

scale clothing producers' knowledge regarding the objectives of the Botswana International Trade Fair, and their expectations of the trade fair as a marketing tool? Do they realise their expectations in relation to benefits derived from participating? “.

A case study (with the winner) will also provide response to the sub problem. To address this sub problem, additional information was logically grouped into BITF experience; and BITF perceived benefits to the clothing producers through profits, number of customers and marketing. Further more the study revealed common themes which guided the presentation of the results. These were;

- Promotion of products by the producers
- Quality of products
- Production level
- Preparation for BITF by the producers

A further sub division of themes (forming sub sections) was done to extract information for building up the themes.

## **5.2 Description of the respondents.**

The respondents in this study were divided into three categories in order to address the first three sub problems. The first group of respondents were seventeen clothing producers. The clothing producers responded to questions which sought to answer sub problem one. These were clothing producers involved in small scale production of clothing. They participated in the trade fair through the Home Economists in their areas of production. Some of the clothing producers were working with more than one Home Economist, as either supervisors or field officers. The findings from these clothing producers are found in sections from 5.2 to 5.9 below. The winner of most prizes was not required to meet the same criteria for participation as clothing producers, but required to have won more prizes than other entrants in the competition during the 2006 BITF.

Fifteen Home Economists responded to the survey questions. Eight of these Home Economists were those who worked with the sampled clothing producers who participated at BITF, while seven of the Home Economists did not have producers participating in the study, but met the criteria for selection. In some areas there were more than one Home Economist working with one clothing producer. Therefore it is important to realise that some results, especially under sub section 5.12.4 below, would appear to have few Home Economists working with the producers compared to the studied sample of Home Economists. For example, out of the fifteen Home Economists who participated in the research, eight had at least one sampled clothing producer they were working with in their areas. The other seven, although having met the criteria of having participated in the trade fair for at least three years, did not have a clothing producer who participated in the study and meeting the set criteria for the study. The results from the Home Economists provided information to answer questions for sub problem two. These results are found in section 5.11 to 5.14.

The third sub problem was directed at the independent exhibitors. Two independent exhibitors were interviewed to obtain their perceptions on the impact and benefits they derived from directly participating at BITF. These independent exhibitors were operating individually and made their own arrangements for participation at the trade fair. The responses from these independent exhibitors were used for formulating case studies for the research. The findings of these respondents are found on section 5.15.

### **5.3 Characteristics of the clothing producers**

The clothing producers were selected from the eastern part of Botswana represented by seven towns and villages. Seventeen clothing producers responded to the interviews. The clothing producers were all those who were assisted by the Home Economists in exhibiting their products at BITF. Characteristics of the clothing producers include gender, ownership, their ages,

education level, the length of the operation of the business, types of clothing produced, and number of employees.

### **5.3.1 Gender of clothing producers**

The responses of the clothing producers were mostly skewed towards one particular sex. All (17) the clothing producers interviewed were females, except for one (1) who was a male. Most of the products in these clothing businesses were ladies garments, children's wear then followed by the men's wear. Women here were the majority of the business owners conducting their businesses within the home and concentrating especially on "traditional women's businesses" of sewing household clothing. Although not part of the method used in this study, observations made revealed that the producers also employed mostly women in their businesses.

Starting a business, such as these small scale clothing businesses, seemed not to require an owner to possess any "marketable" skill as long there were enough funds to buy the necessary materials and equipments. Most of the women owners in this study reported to have been trained in clothing production and no business management skills were indicated. These small businesses became a means of survival and an alternative for employment for most women (25 who participated in the study including the group) who were unemployed because of a general lack of skills. Literature states that some clothing businesses result from a shift from formal employment to starting a business for self actualisation and fulfilment to the women (Ntseane 2004; Carree *et al* 2002, Merrette & Gruidl 2000; Loscocco 1991). Earning an income for most women has become a compelling reason for engagement in small scale informal businesses (ILO 2002b; Budlender *et al* 2001 citing Perbedy and Crush 1998; Owusu & Samatar 1997). The findings are however contrary to what was found by Ageba and Amha (2004) in their study where the majority of micro and small business owners were males. Here the literacy rate for women is lower than that of men and they are heads of households with very little income to finance bigger

businesses. Additionally, women engage in small clothing businesses to cater for their household clothing needs, as well as choosing businesses that could make them stay nearer their home since these businesses are mostly operating from residences. Informal businesses have become a source of income for women in the Southern Africa.

### **5.3.2 Ownership of business**

Out of the seventeen interviewed 16 (94.1%) were individual owners of the business with an exception of one clothing producer group which was made up of eight women. As indicated by the high percentage of sole owners of these small scale clothing businesses, most clothing producers preferred to operate individual businesses to avoid conflicts resulting from group management. The need for one to be his/her own supervisor and employer is what may have driven most of the clothing producers in this study as well as the idea of providing employment to other people in the community. The financial opportunities provided to the people by government through grants (FAP) between 1981 and 2000 made it possible for individuals to own businesses. This is especially related to the fact that the value of the grant provided an inducement of an additional fifteen percent for women-owned projects (Owusu & Samatar 1997). Carree *et al* (2004) supports this by indicating that ownership by individuals (rather than groups) increases the numbers of those people who are self employed. Sole ownership of businesses by women was also reported by Ntseane (2004) as prevalent when driven by the social domestic responsibilities that they are faced with. Most of the entrepreneurs she interviewed were women who were forced by difficult circumstances to earn an income and employ other women who may have been through the same path or are unemployed due to lack of marketable skills.

The only clothing producer group started with twenty women who later dropped out leaving eight family members to continue in the business. The group of eight women that was interviewed through a representative indicated that they

contributed a joining fee of P500.00 each as a fund raising method for the business to start operating. This group operated with an executive, which was composed all the members holding positions. These were the chairperson, vice chairperson, treasurer, secretary, vice secretary, publicity secretary and two additional members. They reported that working in a group was easier for them since they were related, and they operated as a family business since they were few, could make quick business decisions and shared common values as also pointed out by Colli *et al* (2003) and Dreux (1990).

This group reported to have also received some support from other family members who did not belong to the production group, for example a donation of a computer to be used in the business operations. Family relationship seemed to have been the reason the group was still together even after other members left the group. They understood what brought them into business, thus continuing to operate in order to achieve their objective of self employment and income generation. The commitment brought about by investing some of their own money into the business seemed to have been beneficial. The motivation demonstrated by this group was also reported by Ligthelm (2004) when the owners of businesses know their aims and are eager to achieve them.

Ownership of a business by a group provided benefits such as access to funding from donors and government programmes such as in Botswana as well as permitting pooling personal resources for business start-up. In order for funding to benefit many people, individuals were encouraged to form groups so as to access funding. This was also observed in the study of Indian firms by Manos *et al* (2007) that firms owned by a group were more likely to enjoy accessibility to funding. In Botswana, government and donor agencies have grants for assisting groups as the funds do not only benefit one person but a community. It is assumed that funding individuals through grants is more likely to be abused.

### **5.3.3 Average age of clothing producers**

The clothing producers were mainly active people and were still very productive. Their ages ranged from 37 to 60 years. The majority of clothing producers (10) fell within the age range of 40 - 50 years; while five (5) were older (between 51-60 years) and very few (2) were younger (between 37-39 years). The average age of clothing producers recorded was 48 years. These clothing producers had been in operation for a number of years and had either gained experience from training in clothing production by government officials or through watching someone producing clothing. Family responsibilities and the need for extra income are important during these child raising years (Ntseane 2004) since women in these years still have children dependent on them. This was also reported in the study conducted by Kroon *et al* (1999) citing Longenecker *et al* (1997:13) that entry into small business at a later age was often accompanied by previously acquired relevant experience.

### **5.3.4 Level of education**

Most clothing producers (10) had primary school education while only seven (7) had secondary school education. No one had any tertiary level education. Most people with only primary school education find it difficult to obtain employment due to limited skills for the available jobs in the market. A study by Ikoja – Odongo and Ocholla (2004) and Lund and Skinner (2003) have shown that informal small business owners often have limited education (either primary or secondary). Self employment in this case becomes the only option for people with limited education to realise their potential in contributing meaningfully to their families and communities.

Five clothing producers seem to have been driven to engage in business because of their knowledge of producing clothing acquired through work experience and informal training, and in order to earn a living. Generally women operating small scale businesses have low levels of education as also confirmed in a study by Ntseane (2004) due to women dropping out of school. Self

employment, as evidenced in this current study, seemed to have provided opportunities for absorbing unskilled employees. This augurs well as a response to the government's initiative to encourage employment creation within the country (Ahson & Aslam 2003).

Lack of financial capital caused clothing producers in this study, who are mainly women, to embark on "traditional women's businesses", seemingly because women tend to feel more confident in gender influenced occupations, and that products could still be used to satisfy other needs of family members. Women also do not have access to financial capital for businesses and tend to concentrate on "traditional jobs for women" which are mostly operating from homes to produce for the poorer market (Lund & Skinner 2006; Stevenson & St-Onge 2005).

#### **5.3.5 Average length of business operation**

Thirteen (13) clothing producers had businesses which had been operating for periods between 3 – 10 years and four (4) had been in operation longer than 11 years. The average number of years a business had been operating was 7.9 years. This corresponds with the study by Ntseane (2004) who found that the participants in her study had been in business for about eight years. The clothing producers in this study were well established despite the fact that most small businesses fall out in the first five years of operation (African Development Bank 2005; BNPC 1996). Competition from foreign companies force small scale clothing businesses out of business due to their low priced clothing (Palmi 2006). In this study, much of the running costs of the business had been limited through the reduction of the number of employees to avoid experiencing decline in profits. Another reason for a sustainability of these businesses was attributed to the quality of clothes produced. The continued capability to meet the demands of the customers helped to sustain the businesses (Ligthelm 2004).

Retief and De Klerk (2003) refer to quality based on manufacturing of products (conformity to specifications and standards) such as clothing producers' adherence to the catalogue. Furthermore they find quality to have relevance to the customers' expectations such as in the physical features of the garment (which includes the design and construction), the appearance of the garment to the customer (performance for satisfying the needs, as well as appropriateness for use) and durability (keeping the original attractive form after being laundered).

In this study, quality was referred to as a combination of appropriate sizes of products, fashionable colours, use of appropriate stitching, trimmings and finishings, and use of current styles. Quality could also be defined in two ways. Firstly, quality could be defined as perceptions by the consumer referred to as perceived quality. Secondly, it could be defined in terms of its measurability, which is referred to as objective quality (Tsiotsou 2006). Therefore, quality referred to here is perceived quality, for example perceived adherence to specifications stated in the catalogue.

### **5.3.6 Type of clothing produced**

The clothing producers in this study were found to be involved in the clothing items made from different materials and for different people. The most common types of clothing observed were ladies', children's and men's. Ladies clothes included dresses, skirts, lingerie, wedding dresses, blouses, hats and cardigans. These dresses, skirts and ladies' two pieces/suits included those produced using traditional seshweshwe or leteitshi fabric. Children's' clothes on the other hand were school uniforms (track suits, shirts, dresses, skirts, shorts, trousers, jerseys), pyjamas, hats, casual and fashionable wear. The clothes made for men were shirts, suits and trousers. These were reported to be difficult to produce, especially suits. Accessories produced were bangles, necklaces, earrings, rings, and head bands. These were made from leather, bones and beads. Other clothing producers were into production of leather shoes. These shoes were produced from leather which was traditionally tanned at home. The traditional

clothes were mainly men's trunks (motseto), beaded kilts (makgabe) and leather skirts (phaeyana or mothikga). These were basically items for cultural activities, such as supply to traditional dance troops and also for preservation of culture and, decoration such as in makgabe. Additionally, the clothing producers made curtains, comforters, quilts, cot covers and cushions. Appendices K (c) and K (d) show the types of clothing made by the producers in this study.

### **5.3.7 Number of employees per clothing producer**

These clothing producers 11 (64.7%) now employed mostly 1-2 employees including the business owner. Because most owners started with three to four employees, this indicates a decline over time (See Table 5.1).

A small number of employees is manageable in terms of providing wages and supervision by manager-cum-operator. However, the reduction in the number of employees could be related to the end of the government financial grant (FAP) monitoring period as twelve of the clothing producers obtained a government grant for initiating their businesses. The review of FAP revealed that most businesses inflated their initial employment figures in order to benefit from the grant, thereby exhausting amounts disbursed to them. The grant applicants received a subsidy for payment to employees and the amount was disbursed according to the number of employees per business. Monitoring came to an end after five years (Botswana Government 2003b; Anon 1997). Limited funds especially because of poor planning at the beginning and possibly failure to anticipate future business problems could lead to insufficient funds for maintaining or increasing the number of employees (Ahson & Aslam 2003, SIAPAC 1990 citing Smith *et al* 1988).

An increasing number of clothing producers contributes towards growth in the employment data for the country. These few clothing producers combine to boost the employment numbers in this clothing sector, such that the higher the number of small producers, the higher the chances of increased numbers of employees.

This growth in employment data does not only relate to the clothing industry, but applies to other small scale industries in the country. To emphasize this point further, Omore *et al* (2004) in their study on small scale dairy marketing and processing, found that dairy businesses in Kenya (milk traders and processors) employed fewer people (about 2) each on average. This was, however, considered as the number of jobs created per 100 litres of milk as compared to the number of jobs created per producer in this study. Although the figure is small, the overall total number of employees from all the businesses was larger. This meant that the employees were spread widely among the small dairy businesses. The example reflects that the greater the number of milk traders and milk processors, the higher the number of employees in the dairy businesses as a whole. This may well be applicable to the clothing industry.

**Table 5.1: Number of the employees in the small scale clothing businesses (n=17)**

Number of employees	Current number of employees (including self)		Starting number of employees in the business (including self)	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
1-2	11	64.7	7	41.2
3-4	3	17.6	6	35.3
>4	3	17.6	4	23.5
Total	17	100.0	17	100.0

#### **5.4 Promotion of the products by the clothing producers.**

The clothing producers interviewed exhibited at the BITF through the representation of the Home Economists. Although they exhibited at the BITF annually, they still had to continue with their business operations, thus producing and selling outside the trade fair activity. No clothing producers attended the trade fair on their own, only Home Economists attended on their behalf.

##### **5.4.1 Knowledge about the BITF**

The clothing producers were found to have diverse ideas of what the Botswana International Trade Fair was and what it existed for. The results revealed that

one clothing producer knew the BITF to be an activity that catered for more than one function (multiple responses to the question on knowledge). Most of the clothing producers (7) reported that they knew BITF as an educational event, while five saw it as a promotional event. An additional five clothing producers knew it to be an event for competition and three reported knowing it to be a sales event (See Table 5.2).

**Table 5.2: Knowledge about BITF (n=17)**

Knowledge	Frequencies(Yes)	Percentages
Educational event	7	41.2
Promotional event	5	29.4
Competition event	5	29.4
Sales event	3	17.6

The following are some of the responses given by the clothing producers: *“it is educational and provides a chance for sharing ideas”*; *“it is for the promotion of different products and provides an opportunity to learn from others”* and *“it is for the promotion of products and competition”*. It is evident that the clothing producers understood that the trade fair was not an event where selling takes place, but rather an event where networks for future sales are made as well as sharing of information. However, most clothing producers had a limited view of what the BITF existed for. The findings from this study were confirmed by Skov (2004) in her analysis of the role of trade fairs where she stated that trade fairs serve many purposes such as trade fairs are used for networking with other businesses, trade, knowledge creation between the exhibitors and the visitors, and information dissemination.

#### **5.4.2 Promotion of products**

The clothing producers mentioned that prior to the exhibition at the trade fair; they were engaged in promoting their products at their production premises. Ten (10 or 59%) of the clothing producers indicated to have personally communicated with their customers and those potential customers who they happened to have met before their products were taken to the trade fair. The mode of

communication used was only through word of mouth either face to face or through telephone conversations. During the trade fair, 10 or 59% of the clothing producers also reported that they relied on word of mouth communication in encouraging people to visit the trade fair to see their products exhibited under the auspices of Department of Social Services. This is reflected through such responses as *"I talk to my customers because talking gives me a chance to get feed back to improve quality"* (See Table 5.3).

**Table 5.3: Ways of informing customers about products exhibited at BITF (n=17)**

<b>Communication strategy during the BITF</b>	<b>Frequency(Yes)</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Word of mouth	10	58.8
Never promoted	3	17.7
Advertisement	1	5.9
Business cards	1	5.9
Other	2	11.8
Total	17	100.0
<b>Communication strategy prior to BITF</b>		
Word of mouth	10	17.6
None	3	58.8
Other	4	23.5
Total	17	100.0

The other promotional method reported by the clothing producers, which was not common to many, was advertising in the media. This was however reported by only one clothing producer. Three or 18% of the clothing producers reported to have not done any promotion at all. This could be an indication that they relied on the Home Economists to promote their products through the trade fair. This observation is similar to what was found by Crick and Katsikeas (1995:16) that almost half of the respondents in their study relied on government departments for marketing information. It has to be made clear that the clothing producers' only contribution in the exhibition was production of items for promotion (for the three who did not employ any other promotional method). The other logistics such as transport, and stall rentals for exhibition were borne by the Department

of Social Services, hence the reliance on the Home Economists to promote products.

The study revealed that most clothing producers lacked knowledge about promoting their products. Word of mouth alone was not sufficient to attract customers to their products either at the production site or by directing them to BITF to view their products. Information about exhibition at BITF was only shared between the clothing producers and known customers at the place of production. Seemingly word of mouth could be the only source of information to first time customers, as also reported by Rosson and Seringhaus (1995).

In order for the trade fair to benefit the clothing producers, promotional activities have to surface at all levels, that is before, during and after the trade fair. The study shows that clothing producers missed out on the "during the trade fair promotion" as they did not personally represent themselves during the exhibition resulting in not making any relationships with the "existing and potential customers" to solidify the relationship with the existing customer and establish relationships with potential customers, as was supported by the study conducted by Herbig *et al* (1997:374). Self-representation could have allowed them to meet customers directly, promote their products through explanations to customers, make further contacts and obtain first hand feedback from customers in the form of gestures and verbal communication. This representational role played by the Home Economists may cultivate dependency, resulting in disempowering the clothing producers as reported by Ife (2002).

#### **5.4.3 Clothing producers' objectives for participating at the BITF**

When asked about their reasons for participating in the trade fair, four clothing producers indicated that they participated because they wanted to market their products. Others (4) also indicated that they participated in order to learn and gain experience in business. Competition and sales as objectives were each mentioned by only two (2) producers (See Table 5.4). Others indicated that they

use the trade fair to “ascertain their ability to compete”, and “I want people to know that there is someone who produces sewn items and who produces to serve the nation”. Other clothing producers mentioned multiple objectives such as “I want to sell my products, market my products and improve my standard as I’ll be competing with others”.

The results of the study indicate that the clothing producers’ interest in participating at BITF was to gain as many customers as they could through providing information about their products to their current and the potential customers. Promotion as an objective for participation at the trade fair as this study found out, was supported by results from a similar study conducted by lyanda *et al* (2005), which indicated that visitors to the trade fair are usually interested in acquiring knowledge about the new products and buying what is promoted. The clothing producers learnt through feedback from the Home Economists who represented them at the BITF. To the clothing producers, BITF was not a place to sell their products (contrary to the findings from the study by lyanda *et al* 2005), but for promoting what they produced. It is important for the clothing producers to set objectives which are in line with what the trade fair visitors intend to achieve through attending the trade fair (Seringhaus & Rosson undated).

**Table 5.4: Reasons for participating in the BITF (n=17)**

Reasons	Frequency (Yes)	Percent
Learning and experience	4	23.5
Marketing/promotion	4	23.5
Sales	2	11.8
Competition	2	11.8
Other	5	29.4
Total	17	100.0

#### **5.4.4 Promotional strategies used by the producers other than at the BITF**

Most of the clothing producers (5 or 29%) reported travelling to sell their products, which they said resulted in more people ordering their products. They also reported that moving about with the products gave them a chance to explain

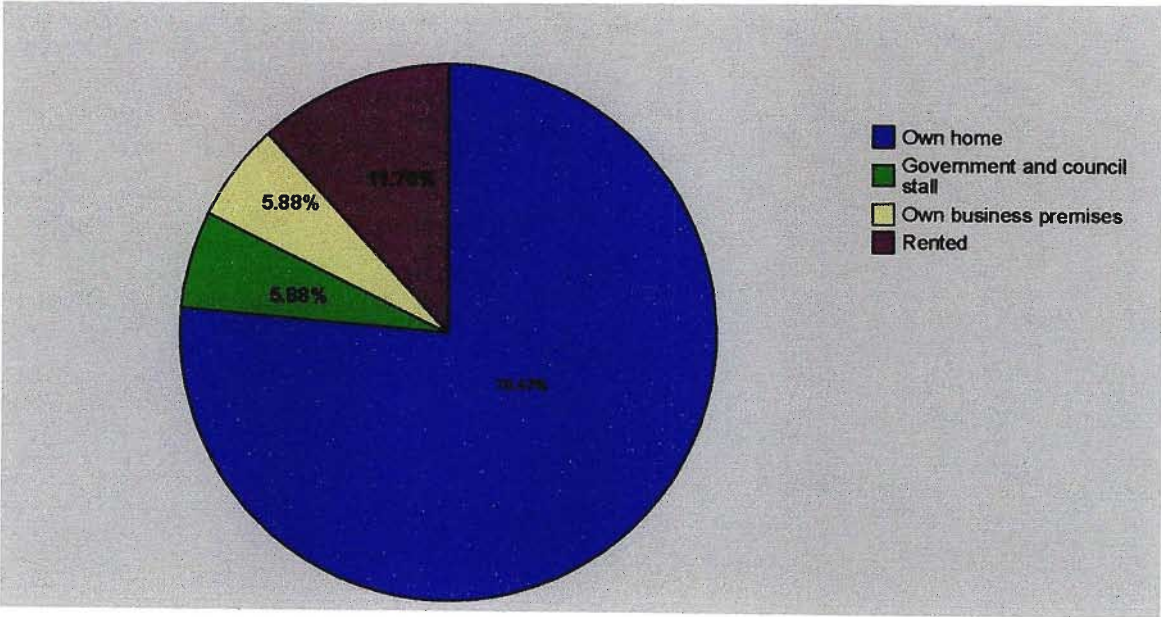
how their products were produced and how they were used. This, they said, included getting direct feedback from customers and potential buyers on what other products they would prefer to buy. From this the clothing producers learnt to produce according what the customers desired.

The clothing producers employed different methods of promoting their products. Some did their promotions locally where their businesses were based while others extended the promotion to other towns and villages. The common thing shared by those clothing producers who moved about with their products on promotional missions was that they all indicated an intention to relocate their businesses from where they currently operated. Moving about with the products was an indication that the clothing producers wanted their products to be seen by more people. This was additionally supported by the reason for intention to relocate businesses which was cited by eight clothing producers as exposure to more customers.

Only three clothing producers had sign boards at their places of production while another (1) hung clothes outside in front of the business, and one advertised in the newspaper. The clothing producer who hung clothes in front of the business premises said *"this gets me more customers since people are able to see what is being sold"*. It could be realised that even though the clothing producers may have wanted to attract customers besides those who were far from the production area, a sign board, depending on the size and clarity of the message, could also attract local people's attention. Some of the sign boards were not very visible from far; therefore information provided about what the business was engaged in was inadequate. This may have resulted in not attracting customers for the businesses. Promotion of products was not viewed as an investment, and fewer resources were used in undertaking it. Promotion of products is referred to by Danahar and Rust (1997) as investment when realising that the amount of money used in advertising earns the businesses greater financial returns.

**5.4.5 Exposure of business**

To find out how much the clothing producers have benefited from the trade fair, they were asked questions relating to the growth of their businesses. As most (13) of the businesses were operating from homes, they were asked whether they intended to relocate their business from where they were at the time of study to some other locations (See Figure 5.1). Thirteen out of seventeen clothing producers agreed that they intend to relocate their businesses. The main reason cited was to expose the businesses to more customers. For example moving the business from hidden business premises (those they were operating from, especially from the clothing producer residences) to places frequented by people or to areas where other similar businesses were located as also stated by Lund and Skinner (2003). While this would work for many clothing producers, there was one clothing producer who felt that relocating would not be favourable to her business since operating at home provides security for the business. Others felt that relocating would provide better image for the business, and more space for machinery, materials and display of finished goods.



**Figure 5.1: Places of production (n=17)**

The relocation would be a way to accord the business an “appropriate business status” away from household, family and social obligations as was mentioned by the clothing producers. Although the majority wanted to relocate for exposure, the general preference (6 or 35%) was to work from home because of security and ease of interlacing home chores with working in the business as well as expanding the businesses (Midgley 2006; Ageba & Amha 2004;).

Market access seems to be a problem to most of the clothing producers interviewed. Accessing markets depends on the capabilities of the clothing producers, that is, the production skills that clothing producers and other employees have and how well the business is known by the consumers (the popularity of the business). The skills possessed by the clothing producers contributed immensely to the quality of products made available to the consumers (Biénabe & Sautier undated). Relocation to areas which are more exposed to possible customers can only bear fruits for the clothing producers if the products meet the demands of the consumers in terms of quality, pricing and availability (supply).

## **5.5 The quality of products**

Quality of products appeared to be the main value that clothing producers were interested in through participating in the trade fair as well as engaging in the business of clothing production. This was realised by their responses when they were asked about their objectives for participation and the contribution that BITF has made to their businesses. Such remarks as “*participating to improve quality of products*” and “*participation has contributed to ability to detect poor quality or perfection in products*” were made by four clothing producers during the interview relating to the experience they gained.

### **5.5.1 Training received**

Most of the clothing producers had received training of some kind either from the Home Economists, other government officials or privately. Twelve (71%) of the producers had received training in clothing production. Those who indicated to have had no training (5 or 29%), mentioned that they acquired training through informal training such as in observing others and work experience while they were working in a clothing business elsewhere before establishing their own businesses. Although some clothing producers felt that they did not receive training, on-the job guided practical experience (which does not have a specific term) has to be viewed as training.

Training has been a necessity in these clothing businesses especially those which were funded through the government grant (FAP), as mentioned in the study to have been the main source of funding to start operating businesses for twelve of the clothing producers. This grant required applicants to have had some skill (production or management) in the business they applied for. To support this, seven clothing producers indicated that they had been financed purely by government through this program, while five had been financed by both the government (FAP) and their own personal contributions. An additional five reported to have purely used their own finances. Overall it could be concluded that all the clothing producers had some form of training offered to them irrespective of how it was delivered. On the-job-training had been seen to be a most important form of training. Mkocha (2005:78) describes on the job training as training that is carried out with the workers at their places of work and “involves provision of knowledge, skills, and attitudes for correct execution of tasks”. It could also incorporate traditional methods of production (Ahson & Aslam 2003). Training also could be made specific to an identified need such as perfecting production (Ife 2002).

Very few clothing producers related the training they had to the level of their preparedness to participate at the BITF. Five mentioned that training prepared

them to produce better quality products, while another five of the clothing producers reported no relationship between training received and preparedness to participate at the trade fair. Four mentioned that it prepared them for the production of clothes (and not business management). Only two indicated that training prepared them to be able to address customer needs. Only one reported that training received assisted in improving business (See Table 5.5).

**Table 5.5: Training in relation to participation (n=17)**

Type of training	Frequency (Yes)	Percent
No training received	5	29.4
Produce quality products	5	29.4
Clothing production	4	23.5
Address customers' needs	2	11.8
Improve business	1	5.9
Total	17	100.0

The clothing producers mentioned that they had some training and that they were mostly financed through the government grant (FAP), which required training before accessing funding. However, their responses negated what they said, when asked about the type of assistance they received from government officials. All indicated to have been assisted by the government officials. Only three reported to have received training, as assistance from government official, while 14 did not feel that they had received any assistance in the form of training from the government officials. Apparently, the clothing producers did not see government assistance as including training as indicated by the three (18%) of the clothing producers who only recognized formal training as assistance from government. Assistance that the clothing producers mostly cited to have received from government officials was promotion of products (11 or 64.7%), followed by funding (10 or 58.8%) and lastly transport (9 or 52.9%) as shown in Table 5.6. Promotion and marketing of products as assistance from government to the small scale businesses, was also confirmed by African Development Bank (2005); Temtime *et al* (2004); and Katsikeas & Crick (1995).

**Table 5.6: Assistance by government officials (n=17)**

Assistance	Number of responses	Frequency (yes)	Percentage
Promotion	17	11	64.7
Funding	17	10	58.8
Transport	17	9	52.9
Training	17	3	17.65

### **5.5.2 The clothing producers' frequency of exhibiting at the BITF**

The clothing producers in the study were those who had participated in the BITF for at least three times between the years 2001 to 2006. Almost half of the clothing producers (9) had their products exhibited at the trade fair for three years and eight clothing producers had exhibited their products for more than four years. The maximum number of times a clothing producer participated in the trade fair was five years. The number of times exhibits were sent to the trade fair, through representation by the Home Economists, was expected to have a great impact in the quality of products as clothing producers mentioned that participation managed to reveal the level of the quality of their products since they perceived improvement in quality as being a reason for their participation. The Chi square test supported this in that there was a significant correlation ( $p=0.010$ ) between "changes brought about by participation at the trade fair" and "the number of times exhibits were sent to the trade fair" (See Appendix M Table M.1).

This implies that the more a clothing producer participated at the trade fair, the higher the likelihood that there was to be positive changes. The frequency of participation made the clothing producers realise changes such as increase in production, gaining customers and improvement in quality of products. These changes seemed positive for the clothing producers, especially with those who had exhibited for four years or more. Less participation was more likely to reflect no positive changes (See Table 5.7).

**Table 5.7: Relationship between frequency of exhibition and changes realised (n=17)**

Number of times exhibits were sent to BITF	Changes brought by attending the BITF				
	none	increased production	gained more customers	improved product quality	Total
4-5	0	3	3	2	8
1-3	4	0	0	5	9
Total	4	3	3	7	17

Chi square test  $p=0.010$

Learning from other exhibitors as was mentioned by clothing producers in the study could have positively contributed to the improved quality of products through repeated exhibitions. Repeated exhibitions exposed the products to more critiques. Customers' (trade fair visitors') feed back and judges' comments from competition items helped in the improvement of quality. Exhibitions provide an opportunity to learn and share information on products (Rosson and & Seringhaus 1995).

**5.5.3 Changes experienced by producers from participating at BITF**

Even though the clothing producers were represented by the Home Economists at the trade fair, the producers indicated that there were changes as a result of their indirect participation. The responses received were more business related, which were in line with production, gaining of customers and quality of products. This then could imply that BITF had a positive impact on their businesses.

In responding to the question "what changes has attending the trade fair brought to your business?", seven (7) clothing producers said that participating at the trade fair has helped them to improve the quality of their products. It was not surprising that the clothing producers mentioned improvement in quality of products since the clothing producers had mentioned that participation was a way to see if they were producing quality products. Quality of products was expected to increase customers. To find out if quality of products could indeed attract more customers which may not necessarily force clothing producers to relocate

their businesses, a correlation test was performed on the variables for quality and relocation of business premises. Conversely the Chi square test showed no significant correlation ( $p=0.404$ ) between an “improved quality of products due to exhibition” and “the clothing producers’ intention to relocate the business” to a more visible site for the customers to access products (See Appendix M Table M.2).

An equal number of clothing producers (three each) reported that participation helped them gain more customers and increase production. Potential customers could have been stimulated by exhibits at the trade fair. What seemed to be lacking was follow up on the customers by the clothing producers, while the potential customers could still remember what they saw and experienced at the trade fair (Rosson & Seringhaus 1995). Besides providing clothing producers with an opportunity to sell their products, BITF exposed the producers’ products; opened up avenues for markets and networks with other businesses (Iyanda *et al* 2006). Four indicated that participation did not have any impact on their businesses (See Table 5.8).

**Table 5.8:Changes brought by participating at the BITF (n=17)**

Changes	Frequency (Yes)	Percent
Improved product quality	7	41.2
None	4	23.5
Increased production	3	17.6
Gained more customers	3	17.6
Total	17	100.0

These four clothing producers appeared to be all females, have mostly primary education (three), mostly had operated businesses for four years (three), rated their businesses as micro (three); all had not participated at the trade fair beyond three years and all operated from home. Contrary to what the four respondents said about the lack of impact brought about by participation at the trade fair, they all agreed to statement “since exhibiting at BITF, I have increased production”. It

could then be assumed that despite what they said about the changes brought by participation at BITF, there certainly was a change experienced.

Participation at BITF had also made the clothing producers understand the need to expose their business to as many people as they possibly could, hence the intention to relocate to more accessible and visible places. Improvement in the quality of products produced could have led to an increase in the number of customers. However the Chi square ( $p=0.107$ ) test revealed there was no significant correlation between "improvement in quality of products" and "gaining more customers because of participating at BITF", but rather only a tendency for a relationship to exist between these variables (See Appendix M Table M.3).

The other resultant change observed related to a decline in the number of employees in the business between the period the business started and the time the study was conducted ( See Table 5.1). This could be viewed (on the other hand) as a negative change brought about by participation at BITF when the trade fair is considered on its own, without considering what may have been the reasons for a decline in employee numbers. Efficiency in the use of the resources could also be attributed to causing the decline in the number of employees as mentioned by Ahson and Aslam (2003). The reasons for the decrease in the number of the employees were unexpected and not part of the investigation in this study.

Growth in the business could also be reflected by the intention to expand to accommodate machinery, increased employee numbers or increased production. However, the Chi square test ( $p=0.929$ ) showed no significant correlation whatsoever between "intention to expand business" and "assets bought in the last two years". Yet the number of production equipments bought within two years could signal efforts by the clothing producers to expand their businesses (See Appendix M Table M.4). This phenomenon (growth in business through purchase of assets/ machinery) is confirmed by Smith *et al* (2004) in a study they

conducted whereby there was significance found in participants having purchased at least one machine during that period. On the contrary, the Pearson' Chi square test ( $p=0.539$ ) showed no significant correlation between "current number of employees" and "the intention to expand the business" (See Appendix M Table M.5). This could mean that the growth of the business was not dependent on the change in the number of employees; however, it could be triggered by other factors such as production and profits.

An intention to expand the business could also be attributed to participation at the trade fair. In order to continue with the business of clothing production, fifteen (88.2%) clothing producers reported that they intended to expand their businesses. Three (17.6%) clothing producers clothing cited an increase in the number of workers as the reason for expansion. Another three (17.6%) mentioned expansion of working space and two reported addition of new products as reasons for the expansion of businesses. The expansion of business through equipments; through production; and through a combination of expansion to working space and increase in the number of workers were each reported by one clothing producer. The five (29.4%) clothing producers who reported no intention to expand their businesses mentioned inadequate finance as a limiting factor and lack of reliable customers. The deduction made from these five responses could be that there was no growth in their businesses which warranted the need for any form of expansion.

Although finance was mentioned as limiting factor, it does not match with what Botswana government provides to the SMMEs. The government has employment creation and diversification of the economy as some of its priorities. Therefore the government has set out measures for SMMEs such as the clothing producers to access funding for setting up and upgrading their businesses (African Development Bank 2005). However, the amounts may be perceived as insufficient.

## 5.6 Production level

Another indication of growth in the clothing producers' businesses was the level of production during the period studied. The production level was further identified as including products produced (supply), customers (demand) and sales, assets (machinery) in the business and labour in the business.

### 5.6.1 Products produced

The types of products the clothing producers were involved in included mostly ladies wear, children's wear and men's wear. Ladies and children's clothing were reported to be produced by 14 (82.4%) clothing producers each, 11 (64.7%) mentioned that they were engaged in the production of men's clothes. Five (29%) were producing accessories and only two clothing producers were involved in the production of leather products, especially shoes. Traditional clothing was produced by two clothing producers who were mainly concentrating on the leather trunks (motseto) and leather skirts (phaeyana/mothikga) and beaded kilts (makgabe). It has to be noted that most clothing producers were engaged in the business producing more than one clothing item, therefore some were found to be engaged in production of ladies, children's, men's wear and accessories. Seven (41.2%) clothing producers produced additional articles outside the clothes lines (that were the focus of this study). These were mainly mentioned as soft furnishings such as cushions, comforters, and curtaining; sculptures, and leather vases (See Table 5.9).

**Table 5.9: Type of clothing products produced (n=17)**

Type of clothing products produced	Frequency (Yes)	Percent
Ladies	14	82.4
Children's	14	82.4
Men's	11	64.7
Accessories	5	29.4
Shoes	2	11.2
Traditional	2	11.2
Other	7	41.2

Ladies and children's wear appeared to be leading products. The reason could be that ladies styles change from season to season, thus creating continuous need for new styles repeatedly (Ahson & Aslam 2003). Children on the other hand grow out of their sizes; therefore have to be replaced through new purchases for clothes. This then creates a lucrative market for clothing lines for these two groups.

The quantity of production could be said to have increased since fifteen clothing producers reported to have developed a new product in the past two years. A majority of the clothing producers (8 or 47%) reported to have started introducing a new product out of their own creativity, thus increasing the number of products produced by these clothing producers as a group. A very small figure (4 or 23.5%) cited developing a new product because of the demand by customers.

Diversification of products by the clothing producers, rather than specialisation on the original product line which could lead to improved quality, was a common feature as found by Wambugu (2002). Introduction of a new product by the clothing producers could be linked to growth in the producers' businesses in terms of profits. This observation was also confirmed by Freel (2000) in realizing an existing link between innovation and increase in sales.

Eight (47%) of clothing producers stated that they relied on their own creativity to satisfy their market, disregarding the role that customers play in influencing production. It has to be realised that product innovation without the influence from customers' information is more likely to fail the business. On the other hand, Ogawa and Piller (2006) citing Henkel & von Hippel (2005) indicate that reliable customer information about what customers want and like, contributes positively to the success of new products. Product innovation is an indication of a response towards the needs of customers. The period within which a product is introduced influences growth in business. Hansen *et al* (2002: 10) emphasise that "a firm is said to be innovative if it has made a significant improvement of

existing products or started production of a new product in the past two years". This explanation is also shared by Roper (1997) when he found out that a two year period was enough to detect innovativeness of a small manufacturing business.

The clothing producers nevertheless seemed to rely on feedback from customers for improving the quality of their products. Clothing producers also did seem to have made a forecast on the future needs of their customers through observation and feedback but only relating to quality, not design as was recommended by Rinallo and Golfetto (2006).

### **5.6.2 Customers and sales**

Business growth is defined in terms of the number of customers and the sales realised from the promotion efforts (Hansen *et al* 2004). Clothing producers revealed that some of the benefits they attained from the BITF were gaining new customers. This was agreed by three clothing producers as shown in Table 5.8 above and ten who agreed (agree and strongly agree) with the statement under benefits which said " I have gained customers due to the exhibitions I participated in" (BPC#6). Ten clothing producers strengthened the impact realised from participating at the trade fair and indicated through negating the statement that "BITF does not provide opportunity for additional customers" (BPC#3). The statements in the questionnaire asked the clothing producers to select between "agree, strongly agree, do not know, disagree and strongly disagree" to indicate how the clothing producers perceived the impact of the trade fair in terms of benefits (See Table 5.10).

Trade fairs are a source of information to the visitors (customers). Therefore in order for the clothing producers to benefit from gaining customers, information transmitted has to be that which is needed by the customers. It is however worth noting that it would be improper for the researcher to say that the information relayed by the Home Economists on behalf of the clothing producers was not that

which was needed by the customers. There is a possibility that relayed messages about the products may somehow be distorted. To ensure that customers receive the relevant information from the clothing producers, some producers suggested that it could be better if they represented their own products at the future trade fairs. Clothing producers believed that representing their products would allow them to better explain to potential customers in details what they are exhibiting and how to use the products. For example one clothing producer said *"I wish we could be the ones taking our products to the trade fair so that we learn from other exhibitors how they manage to produce better quality than I. I also want to know what the customers want"*. Other clothing producers decry the feed-back from council Home Economists saying *"Home Economists should make sure that they brief us at the end of every trade fair about the sales and the market"*.

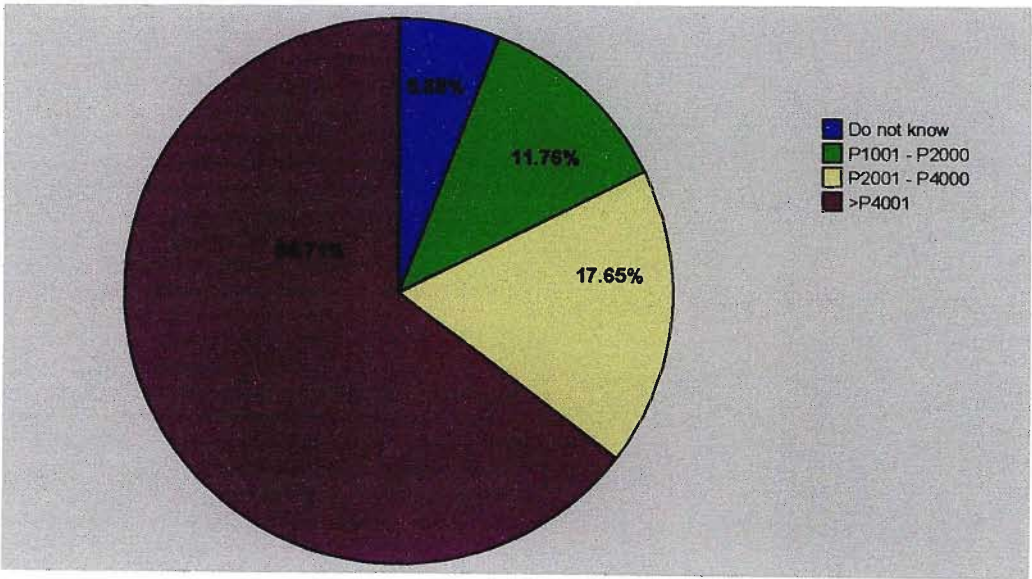
**Table 5.10: Effects of BITF on customer growth (n=17)**

<b>Customers gained through the exhibition (BPC 6)</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Strongly agree	3	17.6
Agree	7	41.2
Do not know	2	11.8
Disagree	3	17.6
Strongly disagree	2	11.8
Total	17	100.0
<b>No opportunity for additional customers from BITF (BPC 3)</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Strongly agree	1	5.9
Agree	4	23.5
Do not know	2	11.8
Disagree	7	41.2
Strongly disagree	3	17.6
Total	17	100.0

The place where the business was located also had a bearing on growth. As observed earlier that the majority of the businesses were operating from the homes and large numbers of clothing producers had indicated the intention to relocate (See Appendix K (e)). Businesses operating from outside the home have a greater tendency to grow compared to those that operate within the

homes (Hansen *et al* 2002). This result may be connected to the fact that the businesses (in Hansen's study) were mostly placed within areas where other businesses operate, hence a constant flow of customers increasing the likelihood of products seen by many. As a result of products being seen, it could eventually lead to sales being effected.

The profits in relation to a business could be used to determine growth in a business. Most clothing producers (11) indicated that they had recorded an annual profit of more than P4001.00. Three clothing producers reported to have made an average annual profit of between P2001.00 – P4000.00, while two reported to have made profit of between P1001.00 – P2000.00 in the last two years (See Figure 5.2). Most of the clothing producers seem to have made profit, considering that their businesses were very small, profits roughly were estimated and that there could have fear of disclosing accurate financial information. Clothing producers reported making an average annual profit ranging between P9 600.00 and P15 000.00.



**Figure 5.2: Average annual profit made in the last two years (n=17)**

Average profit reported to be made by the clothing producers in the last two years seem to be insignificant based on the fact that most of these producers had operated for an average period almost eight years. Report on the low profits may be assigned to two reasons. Firstly, it could be that clothing producers did not divulge the real profits as a way of tax evasion. The second reason could be that there is competition from Asian businesses dealing with similar products, especially those from China which flooded the market (Palmi 2006; African Development Bank 2005; Ahson & Aslam 2003; Crick and Katsikeas 1995) as recognised by both the clothing producers and independent exhibitors.

Although most small business were characterised by lack of record keeping, the clothing producers participating in this study did not refer to any records to reveal the exact annual profit made in the past years. It was however encouraging to realise that clothing producers had an understanding of how to calculate profit and prices. The question that asked the about average amount of profit clothing producers made in the last two years was explained through such comments from clothing producers to ascertain what the question wanted *"when you say profit, you mean the money that was left after paying all the things I use for the business like wages and materials"*. Ikoja – Odongo and Ocholla (2004) also found out that Ugandan informal small scale business owners were surprisingly knowledgeable in keeping records and calculating profits for their businesses.

When the clothing producers were asked to indicate what they based the decision for pricing their products on, majority (14) reported they considered the production costs, while very few (2) said they used competition as a guide to pricing and one used quality as a guide. Probing further they explained that they calculate the amount of materials used (fabric, threads, trimmings, buttons, zippers) for producing a particular product, the amount of time spent and labour charges, as also found by Ikoja – Odongo and Ocholla (2004).

### **5.6.3 Equipments and machinery**

The other determinant of business growth could be the availability of machinery and equipments in a business. This could also include the type of machinery and equipment, the amount spent to acquire these (using own financing). There was a very slight difference between the number of clothing producers (9) who reported having bought additional assets in the past two years and those (8) who had not. However, it was amazing that the additional assets were not in line with an increase in the number of employees. There was no question that probed for the reason why employee figures fell from what they were at the start of business. The observed changes in employment figures showed that growth of business through employees had not occurred.

The bought assets were all machinery such as drills, industrial straight sewing machines, industrial overlockers, embroidery, hemming, buttonhole machines; and steam irons (See Appendix K (f)). Included in these were also purchases of domestic sewing machines. The amount of money spent on the machinery fell in the range of P1000.00 and P40 000.00 over two years. This was all money raised from their business operation except for the group which requested funding from an international organization. All the machines used by the clothing producers were operated by electric power, contrary to what was found with informal sector in Uganda where less than a quarter of the respondents had access to electricity as well as in Bangladesh where electricity was not available to most of the small businesses (Ikoja-Odongo & Ocholla 2004; Dhungana 2002). The purchase of new machinery meant that production would improve through speed and quality, although negatively working against the employment of labour force (Dhungana 2002).

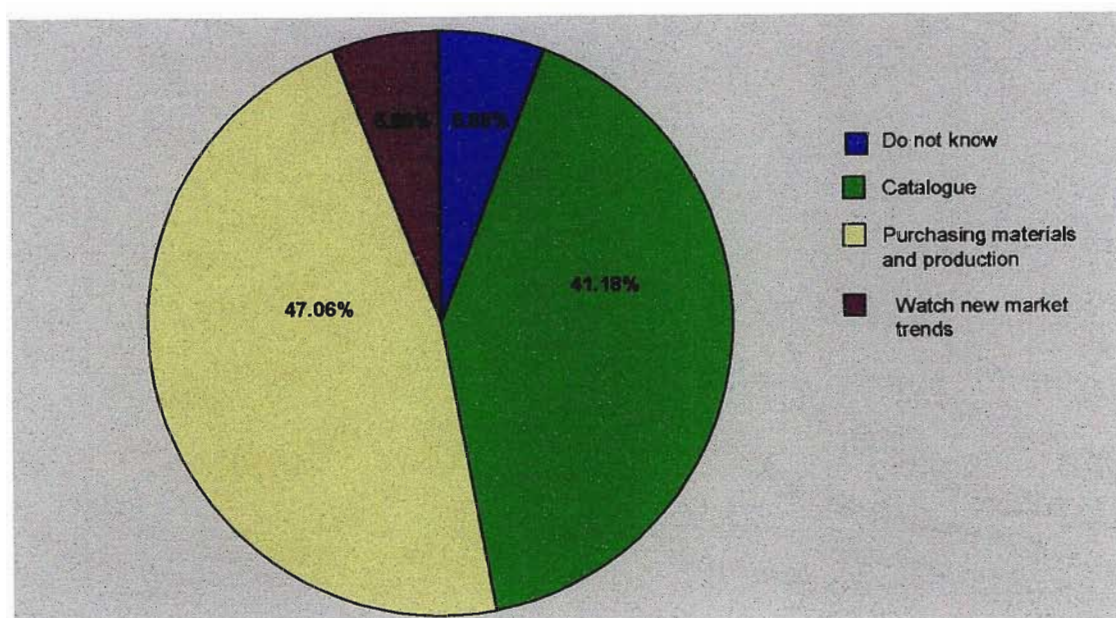
### **5.6.4 Labour in the clothing business**

The clothing producers were interviewed to find out the employee situation at the start of the businesses and at the time of the study. As indicated in Table 5.1 above, most clothing producers employed three or more people at the time of the

study. This number declined from the initial number of employees. This may be an indication that there was a decline in the growth of business; but initial grant amounts were boosted by greater numbers of employees (Botswana Government 2003b). This trend is contradictory to the other determinants of business growth such as indicated in sections 5.5.2 and 5.5.3 above. Fewer people employed in these businesses may mean that the market and demand for the products produced had not forced the clothing producers to either keep the initial numbers of employees that the businesses were started with or increase the number to meet the demands of production. The other assumption could be that the demand for products is met through the greater efficiency of fewer people (Ahson & Aslam 2003).

## **5.7 The preparations for BITF**

Preparation for the trade fair was reflected through clothing producers' objectives for participating in the event. The clothing producers also talked about other contributing factors, such as guidance from the Home Economists, which were depicted through reference to the use of handicraft (See Appendix C). The Home Economists prepared a guide and specification of products to be brought to the trade fair for exhibition and competition. This guide is referred to as the catalogue, and this is reviewed every two years to either add new products or remove others. Production of clothing was mentioned as another way of preparing for exhibiting at BITF. In preparing for the trade fair, clothing producers engaged in different activities which aided them in exhibiting at the trade fair (See Figure 5.3).



**Figure 5.3: Ways of preparing for BITF (n=17)**

Eight out of seventeen (47.1%) clothing producers mentioned that when preparing for the BITF, they purchased production materials and started producing articles for the trade fair. None of the clothing producers mentioned receiving relevant skills or enhancing their skills in order to produce and offer marketable products.

Seven (41.2%) of the clothing producers, relied on handicraft catalogues. This was done by either collecting the catalogue or inquiring about it from the Home Economists. One clothing producer mentioned that *"I study the catalogue provided by the Home Economist, select those items I could make and purchase appropriate production materials"*. The need to have a catalogue assisted the clothing producers to follow the specifications prescribed in it. This (following of the specifications in the catalogue) was also indicated as one of the prerequisites in participation at BITF by the clothing producers. Articles which entered competition for BITF were accepted only if they had followed what had been specified in the catalogue and had been subjected to local exhibitions referred to as mini shows or district shows.

The clothing producers were limited by the use of the catalogue. They did not have any way of showing their initiative or creativity in producing what their customers may want in the next trade fair (this is in reference only to items exhibited at the trade fair, but not as in subsection 5.6.1). Some felt that the catalogue was a hindrance to their production, especially to show customers at the trade fair what they could do. Here are comments from some clothing producers on the catalogue "*The catalogue is restricting, it could be worth it if we were allowed to bring any product we produce*", while another one said "*the catalogue is very restrictive , I suggest that we should be allowed to make anything that we are capable of producing and exhibit our efforts*". It could be said the clothing producers' dependency on guidance from the catalogue was limiting and disempowering as mentioned by Ife (2002).

One clothing producer had no idea of preparations required while another one said preparations were done through watching what was available in the market and observations from the previous exhibitions. None of the clothing producers mentioned preparing for the trade fair by setting objectives for participating, which would help in knowing what to exhibit, who to target and other general preparations that could earn the businesses good long term returns in future. The clothing producers indicated their reasons for participating at BITF. Their objectives matched what they understood the role of BITF to be, although they underrated competition as an objective, contrary to their stated knowledge of BITF. Evaluation of the objectives would assist in understanding how they fared in achieving their objectives at the end of the trade fair. This would assist the clothing producers to realise how many customers and contacts they made and who needed to be followed (Rosson & Seringhaus 1995; Seringhaus & Rosson undated).

## **5.8 Perceptions of the clothing producers on the benefits from BITF**

The clothing producers were given twelve different statements about the impact BITF had on them (producers) and were asked to select the best score which described how they rated that particular impact. The clothing producers' perceptions about the impact of BITF confirmed what was found in section 5.4.3, where the producers reported the business changes they realised from participating at the trade fair.

A very large number of clothing producers (16 or 94.1%) reported that change in the quality of products was as result of exhibiting at the trade fair. It is worth noting that only one did not know that change in the quality of products was a result of exhibiting at the trade fair (See Table 5.12). Repeated exhibitions exposed the clothing producers' products to more critique and suggestions for improvement from both the judges during competition of products and the general trade fair visitors. Change in quality of products became evident when more clothing producers scored high on the statements which said that "I have gained customers due to exhibiting at BITF" and "much of my business profits have been due to exhibitions I participated in". Smith *et al* (2004) attest to the noticeable change in profits as result of exhibiting at the trade fair by an almost 18 percent increase.

Fifteen (88.2%) clothing producers reported that participating at the trade fair made them realise that trade fair customers demand improved quality of products (See Table 5.11). A Pearson Chi square test performed showed a virtually significant correlation ( $p=0.017$ ) between the variables "trade fair customers demand improved quality of products" and "new customers follow clothing producers up after exhibition" (See Appendix M Table M.6). An assumption could be drawn here that the clothing producers made reference to the customers' quality needs when producing products and feedback on comments. The feedback from the trade visitors provided the producers with knowledge

about customers' expectations and their needs. This is however different from the stated lack of consideration for customers' needs when clothing producers developed new products (see section 5.5.1). The benefit should have been derived from an understanding of customers' needs and adherence to provision of the expected quality of products (Rinallo & Golfetto 2006). The demand for quality by the trade fair customers seemed to prompt customers to follow the producers for more products after the trade fair. It could therefore be said that production of quality products as demanded by the trade fair customers arouse a need for these products, leading to follow up after the trade fair (See Table 5.11).

**Table 5.11: Relationship between demand for quality by trade fair customers and follow up of producers (n=17)**

		customers follow up business after exhibition			Total
		disagree	do not know	agree	
improved quality of products through BITF	agree	4	0	11	15
	disagree	0	1	1	1
Total		4	1	12	17

Chi square test p=0.017

Twelve clothing producers reported that new customers followed them up after the trade fair with the intention of buying their products (See Table 5.12). Benefits derived by the clothing producers were therefore more customers. This could be basically because of what the trade fair visitors had seen during promotion at the trade fair as a result of what the clothing producers were capable of producing such as quality and the type of products which were appealing to customers. These customers were reported to follow clothing producers as a result of information provided by the Home Economists during trade fair. Information provided was reported to be in the form of business cards, for those who understood the importance of providing such information, or just names, telephone numbers and the location of the clothing producers businesses. Customers who followed the clothing producers at their businesses

were mostly those who responded to the promotion of the products during the trade fair, similar to findings by Rosson and Seringhaus (1995).

**Table 5.12: Perceptions of producers on trade fair benefits (n=17)**

Benefits	Response	Frequency(yes)	Percent
BPC#8 Exhibitions has brought change in the quality of my products	17	16	94.1
BPC#11 Trade fair customers demand improved quality of products	17	15	88.2
BPC#12 My new customers follow me up after the trade fair	17	12	70.6
BPC#9 I have more business contact because of BITF exhibitions	17	10	58.8
BPC#7 Since exhibiting at BITF, I have increased production	17	10	58.8
BPC#6 I have gained customers due to the exhibitions I participated in	17	10	58.8
BPC#5 Much of my business profits has been due to exhibiting at BITF	17	10	58.8
BPC#4 My earnings have increased because of exhibitions at BITF	17	9	52.9
BPC#2 I make less money when I do not exhibit at the BITF	17	6	35.5
BPC#10 Improved quality has won me customers outside the country	17	5	29.4
BPC#3 BITF does not provide me with an opportunity for additional customers	17	5	29.4
BPC#1 I usually sell more goods at the trade fair than from where I produce	17	4	23.5

Ten clothing producers reported that since exhibiting at BITF, they have gained more customers for their products. Another ten clothing producers also mentioned that production had increased ever since they started exhibiting at that trade fair (See Table 5.12). The two variables “gained customers due to participation in exhibitions at BITF” and “increased production because of

exhibiting” have been found not to have a significant relationship as confirmed by the Pearson Chi square test ( $p=0.137$ ) (See Appendix M Table M.7). The test results indicate a tendency for a correlation between “gaining customers and “increasing production due to exhibition at the trade fair”. What could be said about these results is that exhibition at the trade fair had exposed the clothing producers’ products to more people there. This in turn may have caused a slight increase in demand for the products thereby pushing the production levels up (Ligthelm 2004).

**Table 5. 13: Relationship between business contacts and profits (n=17)**

		large share of business profits from BITF			Total
		disagree	do not know	agree	
more business contacts from BITF	Agree	1	0	9	10
	Disagree	5	0	0	5
	Do not know	0	1	1	2
Total		6	1	10	17

Chi square test  $p=0.00$

Gaining more business contacts was a benefit reported by ten clothing producers. Contacts that were mentioned were mostly businesses which wanted the clothing producers to supply them with quantities in excess of two. An example here was mentioned as production and supply of school uniforms. Pearson Chi-square test ( $p=0.000$ ) revealed a very significant correlation between the variables “gaining more business contact because of BITF exhibitions” and “assigning much of the business profits from exhibiting at BITF” (See Appendix M Table M.8). As mentioned earlier, business contacts demanded larger orders than other ordinary customers gained at the trade fair, thus clothing producers made more profits from such sales. This was also found in the study carried out by Smith *et al* (2004), where they mentioned that trade fairs stimulate buyers’ interest in products. The more business contact made during the trade fair, the more likely it was for the business to realise profits (See Table 5. 13).

A large number of clothing producers said that much of their business profits were because of having exhibited at BITF. This was reported by ten clothing producers who indicated a benefit in the form of business profits derived from participation at the trade fair (See Table 5.12). An increase in profits could be seen as an indication for growth in business and could lead to more production. Pearson Chi square tests showed a very significant correlation  $p=0.000$ ) between “business profits assigned to exhibition at the trade fair” and “gaining customers due to participation at the trade fair” (See Appendix M Table M.9). Customers gained from the trade fair may contribute to additional sales, leading to an increase in business profits. Therefore the more customers gained, the more likely there was a chance to realise an increase in profits (See Table 5.14).

**Table 5.14: Relationship between gained customers and business profits (n=17)**

		large share of business profits from BITF			Total
		disagree	do not know	agree	
customers gained from exhibition	Agree	1	0	9	10
	Disagree	5	0	0	5
	Do not know	0	1	1	2
Total		6	1	10	17

Chi square test  $p=0.00$

Increased profits realised from having promoted the products at the trade fair could have led to more production materials being bought to address the demand for the products. A tendency towards a significant correlation ( $p=0.047$ ), as observed from the Pearson Chi square test, was found between the variables “business profits assigned to exhibition at the trade fair” and “increased production because of exhibiting” (See Appendix M Table M.10). Although the number of employees did not increase from the initial number that the businesses started with, clothing producers still felt that production increased. This could be associated with the machinery (see sections 5.6.3) which was bought by most clothing producers for improvement in quality and speedy production (Dhungana 2002).

Nine clothing producers reported that their earnings had increased because of exhibition at BITF (See Table 5.12). Although business operates to provide income for the employees, the clothing producers did not indicate provision of income to be linked with any objectives for participating at the trade fair. Promotion, customers and quality were most cited as reasons for participating in trade fairs. Increased earnings could have resulted from the profits realised as already indicated (Smith *et al* 2004).

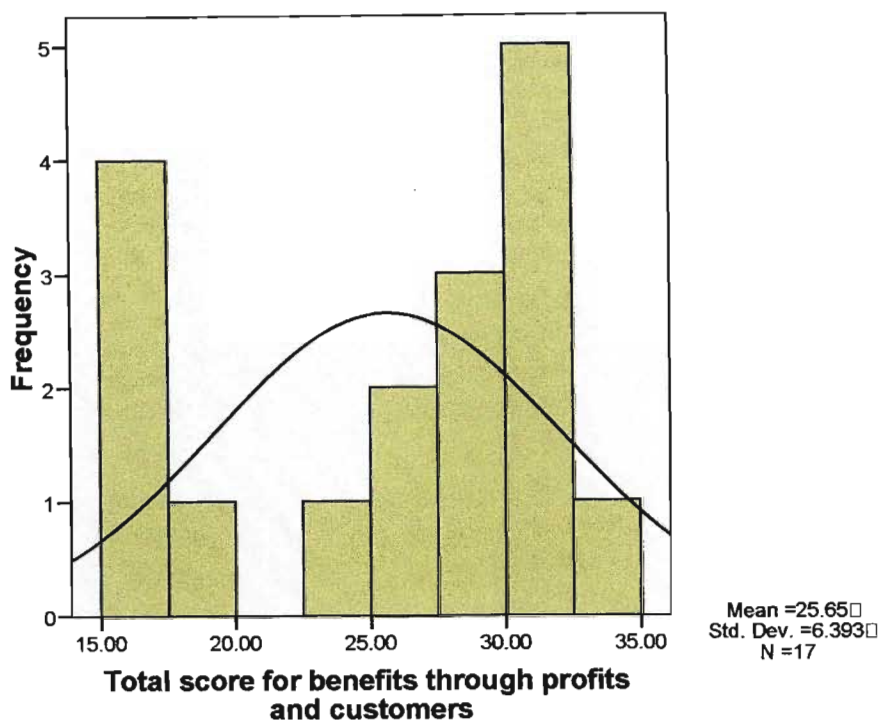
Six agreed that they made less money when they did not exhibit at the trade fair (See Table 5.12). Selling at BITF was never mentioned as priority for participation, therefore very little referral was made to sales at the trade fair. This was confirmed by Rosson and Seringhaus (1995) indicating that most trade fair exhibitors do not participate at the trade fair in order to sell, rather they do so to promote their products and gain information about competitors.

Surprisingly some (5) of the clothing producers mentioned that they benefited from BITF through having gained customers from outside the country, while from a response to the question "where are your customers located?" all except one reported that their customers were based within the country (See Table 5.12). Although there were different responses to this question about location of customers, the conclusion is that clothing producers have not benefitted greatly by gaining customers from outside the country. It could probably be said that competition for customers by the clothing producers was not sufficient because of high prices and quality of products. Even though the clothing producers believed that their products were of acceptable quality, African Development Bank (2005) pointed out that clothing producers in Botswana find it difficult to compete with low priced Asian clothing producers. These Asian producers have low cost of production methods and produce products of better quality and in larger quantities.

On the statement about BITF not providing an opportunity for additional customers, the clothing producers (5 or 29.4%) agreed while ten (58.8%) disagreed. The statement was negative; therefore an agreement with it meant that, there was no such opportunity, while a disagreement meant that there was an opportunity provided by exhibiting at BITF (See Table 5.12). The clothing producers' response to the question was that they realised that BITF provided them with an opportunity for additional customers. Smith *et al* 2004 reported that trade fair visitors who have had an exposure to the product at the trade fair are more likely to purchase product afterwards since the exposure stimulated their intention to purchase, ultimately adding to a list of new customers.

Four (23.5%) of the clothing producers mentioned that they usually sell (through representation of the Home Economists') more goods at the trade fair more than from where they operated (See Table 5.12). The trade fair is held for a short period of time (seven days) once in a year, therefore sales at the trade fair could not compare with the sales from where the business is located because, at the latter, sales continue throughout the year. According to what clothing producers mentioned on the knowledge about BITF, it provided an avenue for promoting what producers offered, and education about what other exhibitors promoted to help these clothing producers to gear up for competition and improvement on their products. It therefore follows that a short encounter with potential customers at the trade fair is unlikely to end with large quantities of products being sold at that time as affirmed by Rosson and Seringhaus (1995).

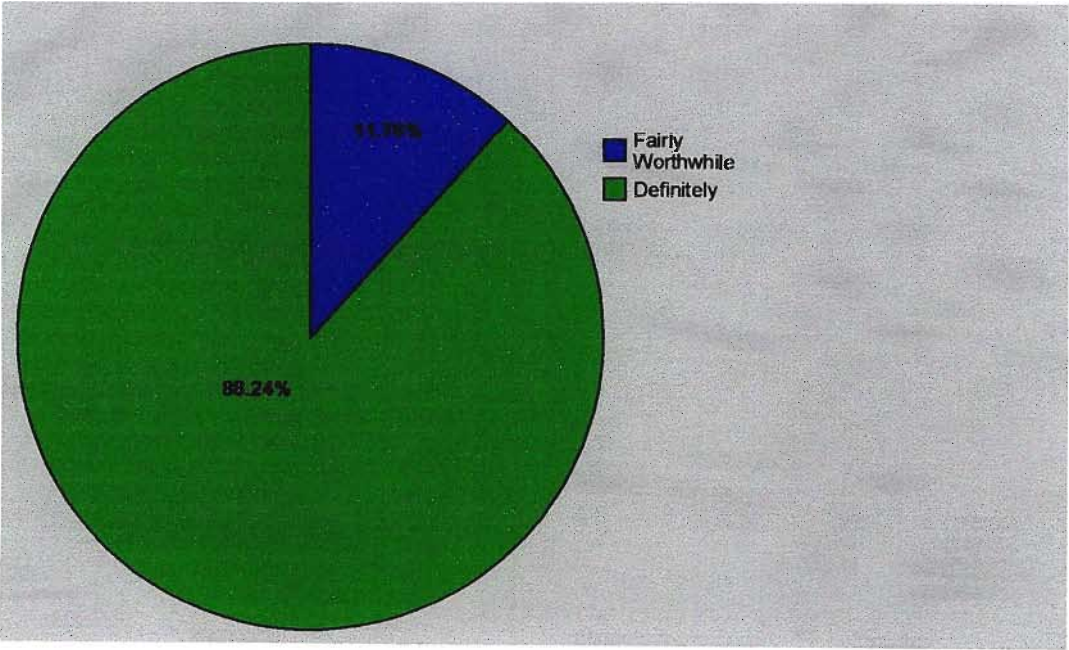
In the Likert statements regarding the benefits of participating in BITF, individual responses were totalled to produce a final score. The lowest score was 18 by one person; the highest score was 32 while the maximum that could be scored was 36.



**Figure 5.4: Producers’ total score for benefits of BITF (n=17)**

The majority of the clothing producers reported that exhibiting at BITF was very beneficial for their businesses. Figure 5.4 shows that there is a concentration of scores towards the higher end (the highest level of benefits depicted by the greatest number of beneficiaries on the measurement scale). Most clothing producers agreed that BITF impacted on them positively through the benefits derived from participation as indicated by an accumulation of the highest scores above the mean. The mean score recorded was 25.65 as compared to the median of 29.00. This indicates that there is a slightly right skewed distribution of the scores. Using the standard deviation as a measure for distribution of scores, the revelation is that there was little variation between the lowest and the highest scores indicating the concurrence of benefits by clothing producers derived from participating at BITF (std. dev. +6.39) (See figure 5.4). This means that most of the clothing producers felt that the benefits of BITF were substantial.

The other interesting observation was found from the clothing producers responses on the question on worthiness of BITF. All the clothing producers (17) agreed that participation at the trade fair was worthwhile in terms of the benefits received. Additionally, almost all the clothing producers rated the perceptions on attending the trade fair very high, indicating their willingness to participate once more at BITF if they were to be asked to. The rating for the perception on attending was lowest 1 (not all) to highest 4 (definitely). Fifteen of the clothing producers scored a 4 (definitely worthwhile), while two scored a 3 (fairly worthwhile) (See figure 5.5). The perceptions on attending and worthiness of participation at the trade fair support the results from perceptions on benefits indicated in Table 5.12.



**Figure 5.5: Producers' perception of attending the BITF again if asked to (n=17)**

The clothing producers seem to have appreciated participation at the trade fair despite the fact that its impact is not very pronounced on their businesses. Their wish to represent their exhibits at the trade fair may probably be the reason why the effects of participation were not evident. Conclusion is that the trade fair

benefitted the clothing producers; therefore their participation was highly likely if the opportunity would be made available to them. This is indicated by a large number of exhibitors (67%) who had attended a trade fair more than once in the study by Lyanda *et al* (2005).

## **5.9 The clothing producer case study – The winner of most prizes**

A case study was conducted with a winner of most prizes at the 2007 BITF under the Department of Social Services stall. The case study was conducted to provide a comparison between the winner of the most prizes in the 2006 trade fair and the general group of clothing producers in this study and establish any links between winning and the growth in business as a benefit resulting from participation at BITF.

### **5.9.1 Characteristics of the winner**

The winner of the prizes under the Department of Social Services stall at the 2006 trade fair was a female aged 54 years. This winner operated her business in Lobatse. She had acquired her skill in clothing production through in-service training at her previous work place. The knowledge about clothing production was gained through experience in working for a clothing factory in Gaborone as a quality control officer, which entailed checking the quality of clothing produced before they were dispatched. The highest level of education attained by this person was junior secondary education. She was an individual owner of the part-time business, whilst being employed by the government and had two full-time employees. This business concentrated on production of ladies and children's clothing.

### **5.9.2 Results**

The winner started her own business upon leaving the employment at the factory due to the reasons that she felt it was the right time to start on her own. Funds for establishing businesses were obtained from government funding (FAP). With

the grant, she was able to purchase initial sewing machines and materials for production. At the start of business, the winner (while she was still working for the government) had employed one person who was not qualified in clothing production. Two people were currently employed in the business (besides the owner); one employee has had training in designing and the other training in clothing production (machinist). The materials she used in the products were acquired locally, especially the fabrics used for producing school uniforms, and materials for other production were bought from South Africa. She relied on the tenders from Town and District councils for the supply of school uniforms to school children assisted through the welfare program.

The winner started by participating at the local level exhibitions (mini show). She mentioned that the exhibitions created an interest in participating at the trade fair. She reported knowing BITF as an event to compete with other competitors, and also to market and sell her products. Her objectives for participating at the trade fair were to market products, sell and improve her production standard. The winner had participated at the trade fair for five times. Her participation at BITF was therefore also through representation of the Home Economists. She only used the handicrafts catalogue to guide her in producing clothes for the trade fair. Participation resulted in making her business known by many people contributing to increased customers and improved quality of products leading to winning more prizes from competing with other clothing producers through the best products.

She revealed that she wished to leave government employment to operate the business on full time basis, but lack of markets had prevented her from leaving. Her business was located within her residence. She said this worked well for her since she could supervise the work easily. The other reason to favour residential location for business was that the home environment provided security for the business. This, she said, helped in cutting costs of having to employ security services if the business was located elsewhere.

### **5.9.3 The winner's benefits derived from participating at BITF**

During the interview, the winner revealed that participation at the trade fair had accorded her an opportunity to learn from other exhibitors and enabled her to copy and adapt the contemporary styles in clothing. This may have assisted her to improve quality of clothing, the design and increased competition in business, thus winning in competition at the trade fair and also winning the tenders to supply school uniforms. The competition strategy used in apparel, through different and unique products, is supported by Gaskill (2001).

The other revelation on benefits was made about customer needs. The winner learnt that customers needs have to be considered in the business in order to succeed. Products produced have to meet the needs and specifications of the customers. She mentioned that customers need to be given information on clothing by the producers. Trade fairs provide such an opportunity to share information with visitors and other exhibitors (Hansen 2002; Munuera and Ruiz 1999; Rosson and Seringhaus 1995).

Promotion of products was cited by the winner as one of the main benefits that resulted from participation. Promotion exposed the business and products to more potential customers. This in turn may have led to more sales and more profits for the business (Smith *et al* 2004).

An increase in the number of qualified employees could be an indication that participation at BITF had indeed been beneficial to the winner. Growth may not be that significant, but the economic benefit received from the employment of two people per business spread to more beneficiaries in their households (Omore *et al* 2004). Wages provided to the employees were reported to be not less than P1 500.00 per month, which was above the legal minimum wage for industrial class employees. The minimum wage for the employees in manufacturing industry was calculated to be P852.00 monthly for an eight hour

job, thus showing preparedness to invest more on the employees for improved output (Botswana Government 2007a; Seringhaus & Rosson undated).

However, the winner was still operating from her residential premises. Operating at home seemed to be her choice irrespective of how much money she could have been making. No profits were mentioned to indicate if she was making any progress which could be linked to benefits from BIT but could be assumed that she did make profit as more-qualified employees were later engaged in the businesses. Her overall perceptions of benefits derived from participation at the trade fair were very high. Repeat participation was likely as she experienced benefits (Iyanda *et al* 2005).

#### **5.9.4 Observations**

The winner only had experience gained from prior work, thus an indication that most of the women engaged in small and micro business are those who had acquired the experience through work or have reached maturity (Kroon *et al* 1999; Bhalla 1992). The clothing producer sample showed a mean age of 48 years which is close to the age of the winner (54). The winner was also operating part-time, making her a dual income earner. This could be an indication that women's engagement in business is triggered by a necessity to fulfil additional family financial needs (Ntseane 2004). On the-job-training seemed to be good training for gaining knowledge and skills in clothing production and good quality products especially those which compete for prizes and customers. Considering the achievement the winner had in obtaining more prizes while at the same time she was operating the business on a part time basis, the age of the owner of business could also be associated with commitment and acquisition of skills needed for business (Mkocha 2005; Ageba & Amha 2004; Ikoja-Odondo & Ochola 2004; Bhalla 1992).

Small businesses generally in other countries have experienced problems in acquiring funds. This, of course, is not the case for small businesses in

Botswana as already mentioned in the report by African Development Bank (2005). In this case the winner had an opportunity to be assisted through government start-up grants which were designed to assist small and micro business to operate and for creating employment. In addition, she had her regular income which could be also used to support her business when necessary.

The winner's business could be said to have grown in terms of the employment level. While only one person was employed at the start of business, it had since increased to two. Not only did the number increase, the calibre of employees was also improved (qualified clothing producer and a designer). Although quality has surfaced at all levels of this business, the winner continued to ascertain that her customers were maintained through provision of high quality products. She felt that this was done through purchasing the right materials for the garments produced basing on the quality and price of the fabrics as well as reliability of her supply. Romano and Vinelli (2001), state that when purchasing, the buyer evaluates the material (for quality and conformity to price tag) as well as dependability of the supply (for consistent supply of materials).

#### **5.9.5 Conclusions drawn from the winner**

Results indicate that the winner had knowledge about what the trade fair is and what the trade fair offers. She said that participation at the trade fair contributed to her acquisition of knowledge on fashion trends, understanding of customers' needs and improvement in the quality of products.

The winner's knowledge about quality control and standards could be linked to being a prize winner at BITF. Quality control in the business could be assumed to have resulted in production of quality products which were appealing to customers. Quality as referred to by the winner meant having a complete garment with all the notions (buttons, zippers, and trimmings) needed, accurate

size and measurements specified in the designs, relevance to intended use, smooth seams, and good finishing (no hanging threads).

The winner engaged qualified employees to uphold the good standards of the products produced. Having a designer and a clothing producer indicated that an increase in both the number of employees over the period of thirteen years. In reference to the increase of employees over the mentioned time span, it could be assumed that growth in the line of employment was not that significant in contributing towards business growth. Maintaining such a small number of experienced employees could favour efficiency in production and limit administration of wages. The wages of these employees were favourable considering the legal minimum wage in Botswana (Ligthelm 2004).

The winner understood that BITF provided opportunities for business growth in relation to exposure of products and acquiring customers. The other main benefit from participation was through learning from other exhibitors which eventually contributed to the improvement of quality of products.

#### **5.10 Sub problem two**

This will present results and discussions as covered in sections 5.11 to 5.14. The sub problem two was to find answers to the questions” How accurate is the council Home Economists’ knowledge and perceptions of BITF? How does BITF impact on the preparations for exhibitions and on informal small scale clothing producers? How do Home Economists interpret the impacts in relation to their future actions and communication strategies between them and the producer groups and individuals?” This sub problem is arranged into;

- Promotion of products
- Quality of products
- Preparations for the trade fair.

**5.11 Characteristics of the sample of council Home Economists**

Data collected showed that fifteen (15) Home Economists were based in different urban and district councils, located in the eastern part of the country. These were the Home Economists who represented the clothing producers at BITF for a period not less than three years. A greater number (11 or 73.3%) of the Home Economists were found to be females while only four (26.6%) were males. Nine of the Home Economists reported to possess degree in Home Economics; five had diploma in Home Economics and only one had tertiary technical degree equivalent to a degree in Home Economics. A majority (13) of the Home Economists had worked in their areas for more than four years, while one had only worked for three years (See Table 5.15). So the group participating in the study was experienced in their work.

**Table 5.15: Years of officers’ professional experience (n=15)**

<b>Years of experience</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
4 and above	13	86.67
3 years	1	6.67
Missing value	1	6.67
Total	15	100.00

The length of professional service in this field of empowering the clothing producers and representing them at BITF could be expected to have a positive link to the quality of products. Most of the Home Economists (13) were experienced in the job with more than four years experience (See Table 5.15). The Chi square test revealed no significant correlation ( $p=0.498$ ) between the two variables “length of professional experience “and “quality of products (See Appendix M Table M.11). This means that experience did not have any apparent effect on the quality of products made by the producers, hence no benefit realized by producers. On the other hand, it could also just reflect the lack of difference between 3 and more than 4 years experience. One would expect that the Home Economists gained enough experience at work and through attending

BITF which could have served to benefit the clothing producers in improving quality of their products.

**5.12 Promotion of producers’ products by the Home Economists**

The Home Economists’ understanding of their duty to promote the products from the clothing producers was revealed through the officers’ knowledge about BITF, the Home Economists’ objectives and the type of assistance they rendered to the producers.

**5.12.1 The Home Economists’ Knowledge about BITF**

The survey question on the knowledge about BITF was a multi response one, whereby respondents had to provide answers relevant to how they knew the trade fair to be. The Home Economists therefore provided many answers to the question. Some of the answers were given as *“it is a platform for showcasing both local and incoming products and selling products”* and *“It is a fora where business and institutions, service providers converge to promote and market their goods and service at international level”*.

**Table 5.16: Home Economists’ knowledge about BITF (n=15)**

Knowledge	Frequency (yes)	Percent
Promotional event	12	80.0
Sales Event	5	33.3
Competition event	1	6.7
Educational event	0	0

Twelve of the Home Economists reported that they knew BITF as a promotional event and a few (3) said they did not know it as a promotional event. Very few (5) Home Economists said they knew it as a sales event, only one reported knowing it as a competition event. All fifteen Home Economists said they did not know it as an educational event (See Table 5.16). This highlights differences in understanding between the clothing producer and the Home Economists (See

Table 5.2 above for comparisons). Reference to the trade fair as a sales event is misleading since selling of products is continuous and has to take place even after the exhibition (Skov 2004).

The same question on knowledge about BITF was posed during focus group discussions held with the Home Economists. The response to this was quite similar as they unanimously made reference to BITF as an event for showcasing, and that it had a marketing element for local products. During the focus group discussion, the Home Economists felt that the BITF was mainly a promotional event. Therefore this strengthens survey findings from which also found that the majority of the Home Economists reported to have known BITF as an event for promotion (Iyanda *et al* 2005).

Botswana International Trade Fair was viewed as an event that provided an opportunity for the producers to understand that business exists alongside competition. The Home Economists mentioned that competition related to the improved quality through winning prizes for the best products. Quality therefore provided an advantage for the producers to compete with others (Wong *et al* 1999 citing Brown *et al* 1991; Buzzell & Gale 1987).

The discussions also revealed that sales elements of trade fair were not referred to signify its importance in participating at BITF. Although the survey indicated that it was the second highest score (See Table 5.16), the Home Economists did not necessarily see it as an important element in BITF. Selling was only linked to the financial benefits accrued from finding a market for the products and not actually from BITF.

The Home Economists also referred to the trade fair as a learning experience for the producers. They said this happened through providing feedback to the producers after the trade fair. An example was given of cultural sharing between producers due to different materials (available materials in different areas) and

techniques used in production such as in weaving. Participation at BITF was also said to help in diversification of culture through products as producers were later introduced to new products which were found during the trade fair. These new products could be from other areas inside and outside the country as pointed out by Carree *et al* (2002:274) in their study on economic development and business ownership in OECD countries, small businesses experience “cross cultural influences” in products, which is usually triggered by an increase in demand for new and different products.

In contrast to focus group discussions, which also revealed that the Home Economists regarded BITF to be an event that provided learning between exhibitors, the survey found no one who saw BITF to be an educational event. Focus group discussions stimulates the thinking of group members therefore what was not revealed on individual survey questions surfaced in the discussions (Punch 2004). It could be assumed that the Home Economists did not reveal any knowledge of the trade fair to be educational in the survey mainly because producers did not directly participate. Additionally, information acquired by the Home Economists a while representing the clothing producers may not have reached these producers, ultimately resulting in no learning. However, it has to be noted that focus group discussion has limitations such as other group members may find it difficult to divulge information in the presence of other group members (Gibbs 1997).

#### **5.12.2 Objectives of participation at BITF by Home Economists**

Data analysis revealed that the Home Economists repeatedly mentioned promotion of products in most of the responses for the question “Why do you participate at BITF?” Fifteen Home Economists (15) indicated that they understood the objective of BITF to be promotional, while very few (5) said sales was their objective, two reported the objective of participation to be educational and only one competition to be an objective for participation (See Table 5.17).

**Table 5.17: Home Economists objectives for participating at BITF (n=15)**

Objectives	Number of respondents	Frequency (yes)	Percentage
Marketing/promotion	15	15	100.0
Sales	15	5	33.3
Education	15	2	13.3
Competition	15	1	6.67

Again, during the focus group discussions, the Home Economists explained that the reason they participate in the trade fair was because they were pursuing an objective of poverty alleviation from their department in various districts. They said this was done since there was very limited market at the local level, therefore bringing products to BITF exposes them to more people and eventually sell more to make profits. The Home Economists further said that exposure to more people led to clothing producers continually producing and selling and thus ultimately alleviating poverty. This is consistent with the role played by micro and small enterprises (MSEs) in alleviation of poverty as mentioned by Mkocha (2005); Ahson & Aslam (2003).

Another point mentioned by the Home Economists as one of reasons they participate at BITF was that they wanted to show the clothing producers that “business is a world of competition”. This was mentioned since clothing producers’ products went through competition and received prizes to recognize the producers’ ability to produce good quality. Participation was a way of introducing the clothing producers to competition through improving quality of products; thus leading to acquiring more customers (Kula *et al* 2006).

### **5.12.3 Type of assistance given to the clothing producers**

Assistance as a part of preparation for BITF was viewed by council Home Economists differently. Twelve of the Home Economists revealed that they provided assistance to the clothing producers through giving professional advice (in clothing production) so that producers could follow the specifications of the handicraft catalogue (a guiding tool for producers who participate at the trade

fair). The other commonly cited advice was on the production of quality products. The Home Economists assisted the clothing producers to adhere to the specified designs, sizes, fabrics and usability of product in the production of school uniforms, makgabe and men's suits. The advice rendered also included coordination of colours to appeal to the potential customers.

Training was not reported as a common assistance provided to the clothing producer since only five Home Economists indicated that they provided training to producers. Training provided was to help improve the quality of products made by the producers. Three of the Home Economists reported providing transport to the producers to assist in purchasing materials for the articles to be exhibited at BITF and for taking products to the BITF venue. Training, according the Home Economists meant introducing a new concept to the producers, which would help them improve their lives. The Oxford English Dictionary defines the word train (whose derivative is training as used in the context of the study) as "teach someone a particular skill or type of behaviour" (Oxford University Press 2001).

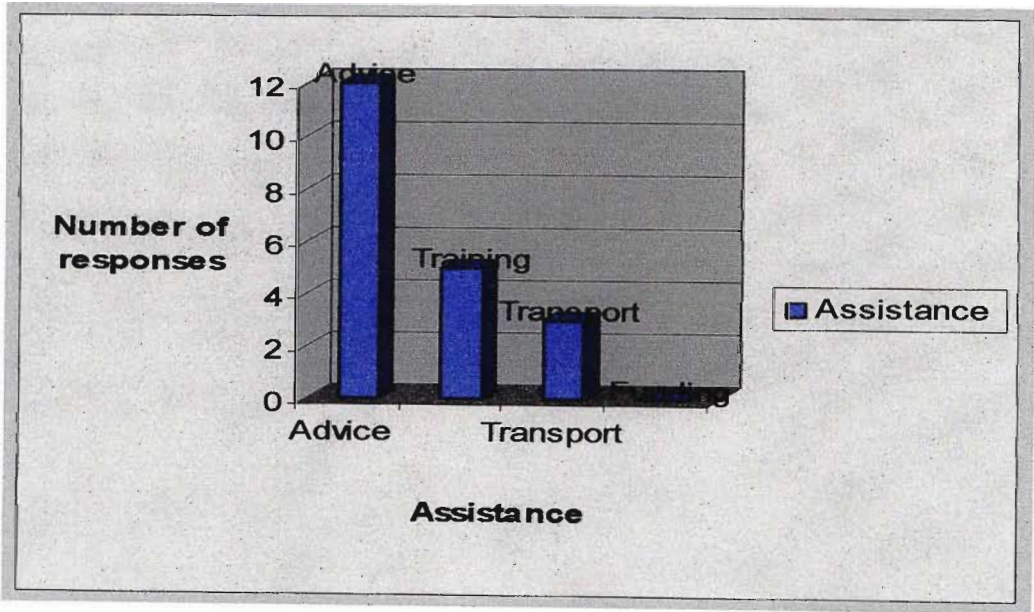


Figure 5.6: Assistance provided to producers by Home Economists (n=15)

Quality of products was emphasised in the responses from both the Home Economists and the clothing producers. Training fell within the duties of Home Economists. With an objective of alleviating poverty, the clothing producers were trained to acquire skills to utilise for earning a living. In addition to skills acquisition for driving poverty alleviation objective, the clothing producers' products were also exposed to the market as a way of generating sales. The focus group discussion revealed that Home Economists did provide clothing producers with training to equip them (producers) with skills or enhance their already possessed skills. The discussion also revealed that all Home Economists represented these clothing producers at BITF; therefore producers were assisted with transportation of the products to the trade fair (Devey *et al* 2006).

None of the Home Economists reported assisting the clothing producers with any funding (See Figure 5.5). This is a clear indication of the perceptions of Home Economists' responsibility to the clothing producers, as funding was seen as a separate responsibility from theirs.

#### **5.12.4 Linking the clothing producers to the Home Economists**

Home Economist number 14 was seen to be working with most clothing producers (5) when compared to the other Home Economists who were generally linked to three producers each. Home Economist number 14 also had producers who were producing a variety of products, such as leather products and beadwork. Only one clothing producer was linked to Home Economist number 7 (See Table 5.18). The average number of clothing producers per Home Economist in this study was just less than 3 for the 8 professionals involved. The remaining Home Economists had participated in the trade fair (as per selection criteria) but did not have participating clothing producers.

**Table 5.18: Producers assisted by council Home Economists (n=17)**

Home Economists represented by codes	Frequency of clothing producers	Percent
14	5	29.4
13	2	11.8
12	3	17.6
11and 9	3	17.6
10	3	17.6
7 and 4	1	5.9
Total: 8 Home Economists	17	100.0

As indicated in Table 5.18, the eight Home Economists were working with seventeen clothing producers, although not evenly distributed. It could be assumed here that these seventeen clothing producers had a chance to be fully assisted to improve quality of products and business operations. The expectation from this scenario is that feedback from the Home Economists could easily reach the clothing producers after the trade fair. Communication between the two groups (the Home Economists and the clothing producers) could be continuous in order to provide necessary guidance in production and marketing of clothing. The ratio of Home Economist to the clothing producers could allow for quality service especially that Home Economists reported that they visited the clothing producers on an average of four times a year. Koblinsky *et al* (1989), in their study on Family Welfare Assistants in Bangladesh, found out that the Family Welfare Assistants yielded good results when they spent time with fewer clients providing relevant information.

There was a tendency for Home Economists to work mostly with the clothing producers who saw their businesses as small and micro (See Table 5.19). Fifteen of the clothing producers reported that their businesses were micro and small while only two thought their businesses were medium size. Although they rated the businesses as medium, the number of employees in such businesses fell far below what could be termed medium size businesses according to Hinton *et al* (2006) who state that medium enterprises employ between 26 to 49 people.

**Table 5.19: Producers’ ratings of their businesses (n=17)**

<b>Business rating</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Micro	8	47.1
Small	7	41.2
Medium	2	11.8
Total	17	100.0

**5.13 Quality of products**

Quality of the products has been observed to be one of the greatest factors in guiding the production of clothing exhibited at BITF. The use of catalogue was stated as one way of ensuring production of quality products. Quality of products also was reported in the changes brought about by participating at BITF. It was also reflected in the contributing factors towards deciding what was to be exhibited since products taken to BITF had been those which had followed specifications provided by the catalogue. As was stated in the catalogue, quality was depicted through accurate sizing, fashionable colours and style, workmanship, and finishing (See Appendix C).

**5.13.1 Reference of catalogue as a guiding tool**

When the Home Economists were asked about the assistance provided to the clothing producers, they reported quality of products as reflected in such comments as *“give guidance and advice to them to produce quality products”* and *“advice on how to produce quality products that will be at par with those of established producers”*. Eleven of the Home Economists mentioned that they distributed the catalogue to the clothing producers as a way of preparing for the trade fair. This was to ensure that producers follow what is specified in the catalogue, since to the Home Economists, the standards contained in it lead to the production of “quality products” by the producers. As mentioned by Ife (2002), the use of the catalogue does not empower the producers, and it may limit their creativity.

### **5.13.2 Council Home Economists perceptions of changes brought about by producers' participation at BITF**

Ten Home Economists reported that the change they noticed had been that the clothing producers were challenged to produce high quality of products as a result of participating at the trade fair. Exposure and recognition of the clothing producers, and challenges to produce more goods were each reported by two Home Economists (See Table 5.20).

It could be deduced here that since the Home Economists used a catalogue as a guide for the production of items for the trade fair, the changes that the producers realised should centre on production of good quality clothes. Recognition and exposure was rated low, although the Home Economists rated promotion of products higher under knowledge of BITF and their objectives for participation at the trade fair ( See Tables 5.16 and 5.17 above).

**Table 5.20: Changes to producers brought about by attending BITF (n=15)**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Challenges to produce high quality products	10	66.7
Exposure and recognition	2	13.3
Challenges to produce more products	2	13.3
Competition challenge	1	6.7
Total	15	100.0

### **5.13.3 Changes in the quality of products exhibited at BITF**

The Home Economists reported that the quality of clothing producers' products had improved since the clothing producers started participating at the trade fair. All the Home Economists (15) agreed that the quality of products exhibited at BITF was important and the outputs that clothing producers produce for their daily business operations had improved. To support why they agreed that the changes were brought about by exhibiting at the trade fair, the Home Economists mentioned the emphasis on the quality standards were stipulated in the catalogue. This emphasis was mentioned by nine of the Home Economists, when answering a question on the reasons for improvements in the quality of

products. Two Home Economists reported the high demand for products by consumers as an indication of change in quality of products while two reported that competition was an indication of a producers' ability to produce the desired quality of clothing (See Table 5.21). Retief and De Klerk (2003:24) support quality in terms of specifications by describing it as "manufacturing-based quality" since it is in line with product manufacturing specifications and standards.

The focus group discussions revealed that improved quality of products was reflected in fewer criticisms (negative comments) from the judges, and more creativity on the part of clothing producers. Since the products under the Department of Social Services stall competed amongst themselves, the Home Economists mentioned that there was an increase in the number of prizes won (*performance of products against others*) by individual clothing producers in the last trade fair compared to previous trade fairs. Additionally competition between stalls in the same category as the one exhibiting the clothing producers' items was reported to have been awarded a first prize for the department during the 2006 trade fair. Maani et al (1994) indicated that there was a relationship between quality, productivity and performance of an enterprise, not ignoring the fact that marketing of products could also make an impact on the overall performance.

**Table 5.21: Home Economists' Reasons for changes or no changes in quality of products (n=15)**

Reasons for changes in quality	Frequency	Percent
Emphasis on quality standards	9	60.0
Competition	2	13.3
High demands in products	2	13.3
Repeated exhibitions	1	6.7
Total Responses	14	93.3
Missing	1	6.7
Total	15	100.0

#### 5.13.4 Home Economists' explanations of qualifying products

Responding to the question on “what factors contribute towards deciding on what is to be exhibited”, ten out of fifteen (66.7%) Home Economists mentioned that quality of products contributed towards what had to be exhibited. Catalogue specifications were reported by about half 8 (53.3%) of the Home Economists. Almost the same number of responses from producers (7) also reported the use of the specifications in the catalogues in the preparations for the trade fair (see section 5.7). Availability of production material was reported by four Home Economists as a factor, while marketability of the product was reported by three. Only one Home Economist cited earlier participation at the mini or district shows as part of the preparations (See Table 5.22). This could then mean that the Home Economists did not regard local exhibitions and competition as a deciding factor that led to exhibition at BITF, just as much as the clothing producers who did not mention it at all (See section 5.7).

**Table 5.22: What characteristics guide selection of products for exhibition?  
(Home Economists) (n=15)**

Factors deciding exhibition	Frequency (yes)	Percent
Quality of products	10	66.7
Catalogue specifications and regulations	8	53.3
Availability of production materials	4	26.7
Marketability of products	3	20.0
Pre - exhibition in mini shows	1	6.7
Market trends	1	6.7

From focus group discussions, the Home Economists reported that the clothing producers did not make any contributions towards choosing what was to be exhibited at BITF. Clothing producers were not really involved in decisions about what was to be exhibited or its quality. The review of the handicrafts catalogue was only done by officers. The only involvement of clothing producers in the exhibition decisions was identifying what they could produce from the handicraft catalogue made available to them including sizing of products, especially those that had cultural links such as basketry and traditional garments. The clothing producers' involvement in additions or removals of items in the catalogue could

be said to be minimal since there was no concrete way mentioned on how their contributions were gathered.

#### **5.14 Preparation for BITF**

Preparation for participation at the trade fair is expected to be in line with the Home Economists' objectives for participating as mentioned by Munuera and Ruiz (1999). In their study Munuera and Ruiz said that knowing and understanding the company's objectives helps in identifying the relevant trade show to target the appropriate customers. The Home Economists reported different ways which they used to prepare for participation. The preparations cover activities such as distribution of catalogue to the producers, meeting with producers, and type of training provided as well as participation in mini shows and district shows.

##### **5.14.1 Home Economists' activities in preparation for participation at BITF**

Eleven Home Economists reported to have been engaged in the activities that dealt with both the distribution of the catalogue to clothing producers as well as meeting the producers through visiting the places of production. Conducting pre-exhibitions were cited with eight Home Economists reported using either mini shows or district shows as activities for preparing towards BITF participation. Knowledge of the objectives of BITF as a promotional event could be linked to the way Home Economists prepared for the BITF to make it beneficial to the clothing producers.

As seen earlier all the Home Economists understood the objectives of participating at BITF as promotional. Distribution of catalogue to the producers was expected to contribute to the production of products which could easily appeal to the consumers. Meetings with clothing producers were conducted to ensure that producers produced quality products which could be appreciated by their current customers and potential customers at BITF and outside the trade

fair. Training was not mentioned by any Home Economists to be a method for preparing the clothing producers to participate at BITF. Training was only mentioned by a few (5) as form of assistance Home Economists provided to the producers. To Home Economists, training meant arranging a session with clothing producers to provide them (producers) with knowledge and technical skills which would help address their skill and knowledge needs in production of clothing. Such training offered was semi structured since no syllabus was followed and no certificates awarded except when producers were referred to MTTC. Training offered to the clothing producers was a government initiative to provide support to the producers (Devey *et al* 2006; African Development Bank 2005).

### **5.15 Sub problem three.**

The sub section 5.15.1 to 5.15.5 will address sub problem three through data collected from two independent exhibitors. The aim of sub problem three was to address the question "How accurate is independent small scale clothing exhibitors' knowledge about the BITF, its impacts and their perceptions regarding the use of trade fair as a marketing and promotional tool?"

This sub problem dealt with the sample of independent small scale clothing exhibitors with data collected through in-depth interviews.

#### **5.15.1 The independent small scale clothing exhibitors**

Two case studies were built from interviews held with two independent small scale exhibitors to determine how much the studied exhibitors knew about BITF, how it had impacted on their businesses and how they (exhibitors) perceived it in relation to the benefits for their businesses. This served as a comparison between the producers and the independent exhibitors. The intention was to interview 10 independent exhibitors, but in spite of being busy and promising to send the survey questionnaires back to the researcher, only two did so.

### **5.15.2 Characteristics of the independent exhibitors**

#### **Case study A**

The first independent exhibitor was a female business owner from Francistown who had been in business for eight years. This exhibitor was working as a full time worker in her business. She had started the business with four employees including herself and the number was still maintained at the time of study. The exhibitor was the owner of the business which was making only ladies clothing and was operating from her home. The clothes made were ladies dresses, skirts, ladies' suits, men's shirts, and school uniform (girls' and boys' truck suits).

#### **Case study B**

This exhibitor was a female business owner, who was operating the business in Gaborone. She was a fulltime worker in the business and had operated the business for thirteen years. The exhibitor started her business with two employees including herself. At the time of data collection, she had eight employees excluding herself.

### **5.15.3 Results**

#### **Case study A**

The independent exhibitor was found to have been exhibiting annually without missing a year since 2000, making it six years. Information about the trade fair was made available to the independent exhibitor by the Department of Non Formal Education (DNFE). The independent exhibitor knew BITF to be an event for promoting products and business. She understood the objectives of BITF to be promotion and selling of products. She felt that she had achieved her objectives through selling clothing during exhibition and promoting her products through interaction with the people (visitors) at trade fair. She had started earning very little (P100.00) before participating at BITF and reported very little annual profit of less than P500.00.

The independent exhibitor did not have any special way of preparing for the trade fair. She mentioned that she was creative and usually people liked her creations. She only produced what she thought people liked and believed she was always correct because people showed interest in her products. The main problem was that clothes from China were preferred due to lower pricing. This exhibitor could not tell how much profit could be attributed to exhibiting at BITF. The 2006 trade fair did not allow her to make sufficient sales because trade fair visitors preferred cheaper priced products such as those from China. She had been able to purchase equipment (sewing machine) for the business costing P1000.00. A similar view has been shared by Palmi (2006); African Development Bank (2005); Lund and Skinner (2003); Crick and Katsikeas (1995) saying that small businesses especially in the clothing industry face more international competition from the low cost products from Asian countries.

The independent exhibitor had been provided with training through the DNFE which covered literacy skills and business management. The department also assisted her in production of clothing. She did not have any work experience in clothing production, but instead she had worked as a cleaner in a small clothing business and used to assist in basic sewing tasks such as ironing and tacking. This independent exhibitor did not inform her customers that she was exhibiting at the trade fair. Promotion outside BITF was only done through advertising the products at the local tribal offices.

To ascertain customer satisfaction, this independent exhibitor consulted with customers when they made their purchase at the place of production, in order to obtain immediate feed back. Customers did not prefer the independent exhibitor's products since the quality was inferior and were priced higher than the clothing products from Chinese owned shops. Businesses selling clothing from China presented her with tough competition due to cheaply priced goods. To expand the product line, the independent exhibitor had introduced a new product during the past two years. African Development Bank (2005) states that it is

important for production to be diversified in order withstand competition from low priced clothing from the Asian countries.

The changes realised by the exhibitor as result of participating at BITF were a slight increase in the number of customers and a great improvement on amount of production.

### **Case study B**

The business was operating from a rented city council market stall. The rented room was not spacious enough to accommodate all the industrial machines in it, the materials used for production and displaying finished products. This also made movement of workers inside not very easy. The business was financed through government grant (FAP) and personal funds. This independent exhibitor produced clothing for men, women, children, including accessories and shoes. Clothing range produced were track suits, school uniform, shirts, trousers, shorts, blouses, dresses, skirts, night dresses and pyjamas. She had exhibited every year without skipping a year since 1992. The information about trade fair was made known to her through the Integrated Field Services (IFS) officer who was responsible for FAP monitoring.

This independent exhibitor knew BITF as an event that provided promotional and educational opportunities. Her objective for participation at the trade fair was to acquire more customers. She said exhibiting at the trade fair provided an opportunity to acquire more, sell and eventually make profits. She did not achieve all the objectives for exhibiting at the trade fair except for acquiring more customers. She had been exhibiting at the trade fair since 1992, thus fourteen years participation.

This exhibitor mentioned that she usually prepared for the trade fair by making observations during the trade fair, such in the 2005 trade fair, on what products and styles sell more. In preparation she then makes modifications to the styles to

appeal more with a difference so that she could compete through product differentiation. Another strategy she used was observing how people behave. This was explained through producing track suits made from fabrics with colours of the national flag. She had observed the support that the national soccer team was given by the people over the years she then designed and produced the track suits.

The independent exhibitor in this case did not have any training in clothing production. She however obtained the skill while working for a clothing firm in Gaborone before she started her business. Promotion of the products was done through word of mouth to inform customers that she was going to be exhibiting at the trade fair. Additionally, she purchased government gazette, which is a booklet for advertising government tenders, to prepare samples to be sent with tender documents as a means to promote her work (Mkocha 2005).

This independent exhibitor initially earned P500.00 per month and the wages had increased to P2000.00 per month. The business had made an average annual profit of P15000.00 in the last two years. From the annual profit of P15000.00, two thousand Pula (P2000.00) was realised from the sales conducted during the trade fair.

Satisfied customers' referred others to purchase her products, while some gave immediate feed back as soon as purchase was concluded. Customers preferred the Botswana flag track suits which were exhibited during the 2006 trade fair, but the price was unaffordable to some customers due to the expensive material used. The track suits were a new product made in the past two years.

The exhibitor intended to expand her business. There was growth in the number of customers as well as in improvement in the products made by the exhibitor. She had also purchased two machines (embroidery and straight sewing) valued P4 500.00 between the years 2004 to 2006.

#### **5.15.4 Benefits derived from participation at the trade fair**

##### **Case study A**

The independent exhibitor indicated her benefits from BITF through the increase in the number of customers, increased production, and additional machinery bought for the business in the last two years prior to the commencement of the study. The benefits were further supported by the exhibitors indicated willingness to exhibit repeatedly. Although it appears that the exhibitor had an increase in wages, this could be viewed as very insignificant. The reasons for the insignificance of wage increase are two-fold; firstly the business had operated for eight years and exhibited for seven years. Secondly, the wage she mentioned is far less than the legal wage (P852.00) set by the government for workers in manufacturing. Revealing true information about ones wages could be difficult for some people because of fear of being discovered for evading taxes as already indicated in sub section 5.6.2.

##### **Case study B**

The exhibitor benefited from exhibiting at BITF through increased number of customers. Production had also increased which warranted more space. The space which the exhibitor operated from was very small with no space for display of products and other operations. More space was needed to cater for growth. More machines were purchased to allow an increase in production. Additionally, her earning had increased. She had realised an increase in profits made from sales conducted during the trade fair (Gaskill 2001).

She used the trade fair as a learning event in order to compete through product differentiation. Employing observation strategy by closely studying trade fair customers' buying behaviour seemed to have worked well for her. This strategy was also mentioned by Skov (2006:776), when she said, "the fair allows for many different types of observation and interpretation". This could be used by other producers to complement their creative minds in meeting customer needs. Additionally, independent exhibition by this exhibitor produced positive results

compared to the producers represented by Home Economists as was also observed by Seringhaus and Rosson (2000) cited by Lyanda *et al* (2005).

This independent exhibitor had gained more knowledge in competition as indicated by production of quality clothing and complementary garments which gave her a competitive edge over other producers of clothing. The complementary garment referred to a complete set of school uniform items rather than producing shirts and shorts separately (excluding production of ties, track suits, skirts, blouses, dresses and jerseys). This provided a competitive advantage to her business over other competitors in the school uniforms market, since customers buying school uniform would find all needed items from one business (her business). Here quality was improved through competition with other clothing producers. There was also an increase in the number of customers and increase in production as indicated by the intention to expand (Kula *et al* 2006).

#### **5.15.5 Analysis of exhibitor's responses**

##### **Case study A**

There has been a great improvement in the production of clothing as a result of exhibiting in the trade fair. Participation in the trade fair was mentioned to be very useful by this exhibitor and that she viewed it as a definitely worthwhile experience to repeat.

The independent exhibitor's business had shown some growth. The number of employees at the start of business was the same as after eight years. There was a slight increase in customers as a result of exhibition at the trade fair. Although the Chinese businesses were affecting the sales of the products from the exhibitor, there was willingness to include other clothing products which were not available from these Chinese owned shops. Development of new and different products became the survival and competition strategies for this exhibitor. Production of clothing products had increased tremendously in the exhibitor's

business. Growth was indicated by the purchase of additional machinery (African Development Bank 2005; Smith *et al* 2004).

Stall prices did not seem to really affect this exhibitor, even though she reported very little profit made. Yet, for the cost of P2259.00 covering a stall area of 9m<sup>2</sup>, every year with a likelihood of an annual increase, she continued to participate.

### **Case B**

The amount of money which was realised from the sales made during the trade fair was acquired only from additional customers acquired at the trade fair. These customers followed the exhibitor later for other supplies, especially those who bought school uniforms. On the contrary, she did not meet her sales objectives because the 2006 trade fair seemed to have very few visitors. She felt that information about the trade fair had not been adequate.

Experience obtained through working in a clothing firm provided the independent exhibitor with knowledge in quality clothing production. This experience also contributed to producing according to customers' needs as well as according to seasons to meet the seasonal needs in clothing.

Besides BITF, promotion was mainly done through word of mouth. Access to purchase of government gazette provided the exhibitor with an opportunity to know which tenders were advertised and prepared well in advance for them. Tender submissions also gave the exhibitor a chance to show the quality of products she was capable of producing, through presentation of samples. She responded to the advertisements in the government gazette to supply the government with protective clothing.

Possible expansion of the market for her products was indicated by her need to promote products internationally. Although a small business, she had thought of

collaborating with the export organisation (Exporters Association of Botswana), which could assist in exporting her products outside the country.

Observations revealed that the products were of very high quality, hence customers' satisfaction. The satisfaction of customers was indicated through referrals of new customers by the old ones and immediate feedback from customers following a purchase.

A new product was developed in the last two years. This was an indication that the business had taken a step towards growth. Although the prices were high for other customers, quality was maintained through the use of appropriate fabrics and very good workmanship. Channels of distribution had not changed; therefore growth through increased or improved channels of distribution was not evident.

The exhibitor could be said to have invested in the trade fair through the amount of money (P2259.00 for a 9m<sup>2</sup> stall) she paid every year for the stall in order for her products to be promoted. Trade fair could also be viewed as an investment for future gains as stated by Hansen (2004:1) "trade fair like other business investments is expected to yield positive returns".

#### **5.15.6 Conclusions for the independent exhibitors case studies**

Benefits from BITF were very apparent with these independent exhibitors. They said that they experienced an increase in the number of employees as result of exposing their products to more people through BITF. They had also developed new products within the last two years. Since the exhibitors participated at the trade fair, the number of customers was said to have increased. Additionally there had been a desire to expand the businesses through expansion of premises or relocation. Another benefit was growth in businesses which was noticed in the purchase of machinery as well as a desire to expand to

accommodate the machinery. There was a noticeable increase in the earnings of the exhibitors.

Knowledge and experience in clothing production had a positive impact on the quality of clothing products produced by these independent exhibitors and had also added value to how the business was operated. Repeated exhibition at the trade fair contributed greatly to quality of products and gaining more customers. Conclusion could be drawn that participation at BITF by the independent exhibitors was highly beneficial.

Product distribution channels for these exhibitors had not changed as they were still selling from their places of operation. The main mode of product promotion was word of mouth, especially for informing customers about exhibited products at the trade fair. The exhibitors have shown commitment to investing in the trade fair for future benefits.

#### **5.16 Sub problem four: Comparisons between the three samples**

The aim of sub problem four was to provide answers to the question "Are there any similarities or differences between the informal small scale clothing producers, the council Home Economists and the independent small scale clothing exhibitors on perceptions regarding benefits or constraints of participating at BITF? Furthermore how does the general clothing producers' functioning and the BITF prize winner compare in relation to production techniques and strategies? Are there any links between winning and the growth in business as a benefit resulting from participation at BITF? "The comparisons are summarized in Table 5.23.

**Table 5.23: Summary of Sub problem four - comparisons between the samples**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Informal small scale clothing producers</b>		<b>Home Economists</b>	<b>Independent small scale exhibitors</b>	
	<b>The producers (general)</b>	<b>The winner</b>		<b>Case A</b>	<b>Case B</b>
<b>Knowledge and understanding of BITF</b>	Majority knew it to be for promotion of products	Promotion, sales and competition	Educational and promotional	Promotional	Promotion and education
<b>The objectives for participating at BITF</b>	Promote products and education	Promote, sell and improve quality of products	Promotion of the products	Promotion and selling	Promotion and acquire more customers
<b>Preparations for participation at BITF</b>	Purchase production materials and use the handicrafts catalogue for guidance	Use handicraft catalogue for guidance	Distribution of catalogue and organising mini and district shows	Creativity, produce anything which may appeal to customers	Observe fashion trends and buying behaviour during the trade fair for use in the next trade fair. Produce with modifications for exhibition
<b>Frequency of exhibition at BITF</b>	On average more than four years	More than four years	More than four years	More than six years	More than six years

<b>Production and promotional strategies employed by the groups</b>	Own creativity, producing ladies, children and men's clothing.  used word of mouth and travelling to sell	Focus on quality assurance and use of appropriate material for production:  Emphasises competition as a drive towards quality	Use BITF to promote products for the producers.  Not applicable because they were not involved in production	Production of African wear which was not available from Asian businesses (competition strategy)	Observations of fashion trends and people's behaviours.  Tendering for supplying government, prepare to acquire more and different customers, follow up of customers after the trade fair.
<b>Impact of BITF shown by changes realised</b>	Increase in assets, more profits, increase in customers, improved quality of products, new products developed	Promotion of business, winning more prizes, development of new products	Improvement in quality of products	Improvement in production, addition of new products	Growth in number of customers, increase in assets, increase in employment figures, increase in profits.
<b>Perceptions on benefits from Participation in BITF</b>	Improved quality of goods, customers following producers after the trade fair ended, more business contacts, profits gained, increased earnings	Improved quality of products, increase in the number of customers, improvement in earnings, increase in profits	Improvement on quality of products,	Increase in assets, increase in production	Increase in the number of customers, increase in earnings, increase in production, increase in profits, more knowledge gained in competition
<b>Worthiness of BITF</b>	Worthwhile participation and would definitely participate again	Worthwhile participation and would definitely participate again	Worthwhile participation and would definitely participate again	Worthwhile participation and would definitely participate again	Worthwhile participation and would definitely participate again

In order to make comparisons of the results from the three groups of samples, common themes referred to under sub problems one, two and three will be used.

The issues to be considered are:-

- Knowledge and understanding of BITF
- Objectives of the BITF
- Preparations for BITF
- Production and promotional strategies
- The impact
- Perceptions and Benefits
- Constraints/challenges.

#### **5.16.1 Knowledge and understanding of BITF**

The producers, council Home Economists and independent small scale exhibitors considered education to be the most important contribution of BITF when compared to other aspects. They seemed to agree that the participation in BITF provides education to the participants. All three of the research samples, considered promotion provided by BITF to be the next most important. BITF was only known by the producers and the winner to provide an event for competition.

Although mentioned by the winner of most prizes, sales were also mentioned by insignificant numbers of all the research samples except the independent exhibitors, who did not mention it at all. It could be assumed that the research participants realised that the seven days spent at the trade fair was not enough to make many sales. The trade fair could only stimulate the interest of the customers to buy the products at a later stage. Education and promotion were seen to be the most important aspects of BITF by the participants in this research as also reported by Skov (2006) from her study of trade fairs in general.

#### **5.16.2 The objectives for participating at BITF**

Promotion of the products was commonly cited by all the research participants as their main objective for participating in the trade fair. Surprisingly education,

sales and competition were least seen as objectives by all the samples, except clothing producers who considered education as an objective. The objectives as set out for BITF included "to lure quality exhibitors, ensure international participation, and invite more manufacturers than trader firms" as mentioned by Iyanda *et al* (2005; 58) (See also section 3.6).

It would seem proper to say that knowledge about BITF could help in setting objectives for participating. The studied groups appeared to have similar objectives to what they believed BITF offered. Although some of the groups expected sales at the BITF while sales were not an objective for the event, failure to achieve this objective was likely. It is however interesting to note that the winner's objectives for participating in BITF matched the objectives of independent exhibitors.

#### **5.16.3 Preparations for participation at BITF**

While the clothing producers (including the winner) and the Home Economists used the handicrafts catalogue to prepare for the trade fair, the independent exhibitors were creative in the designs and followed no specifications. It appeared that the independent exhibitors especially case B, followed the objective of learning by observing what was happening at the last trade fair to produce for the next trade fair.

Although the catalogue was used, it was reported to be a hindrance to the producers' creativity. The Home Economists on the other hand prepared for BITF by producing the catalogue for guiding the clothing producers.

It seemed that preparations for most of these groups, especially the clothing producers and the Home Economists, were made in an effort to meet their own objectives for participation. The use of the catalogue appeared to be one way of ensuring that the quality of products met the set specifications.

#### **5.16.4 Production and promotional strategies employed by the groups**

The discussion under this sub section excludes the Home Economists since they only provided an opportunity for promoting the clothing producers' products during the trade fair and bulk of promotional activities are carried out by the business owners especially by incorporating that during production.

The clothing producers relied on their own creativity in producing products to be exhibited at BITF, while the winner focused on ensuring that the quality produced was of the standard that she had set for products in her business. She ensured that the materials used were appropriate to what was produced. The independent exhibitors on one hand made observations on trends and behaviour, participated in tendering for supply of products to government, emphasised quality production, and differentiated products in order to beat the competition posed by cheaper priced products (specifically clothing from China). This competition strategy was also reported by Schmitz (1999) in his study that Brazil shoe cluster focused on quality in order to compete with low cost products from China.

The clothing producers mainly used word of mouth as well as travelling outside production areas in an effort to promote their products. The independent exhibitors prepared their products in a way that could easily attract additional customers with different needs than were served before. Following up potential customers after the trade fair ended, worked towards keeping the new customers; and provision of complementary products encouraged sales.

#### **5.16.5 Impact of BITF shown by changes realised**

Most of these groups had participated at the trade fair for over four years (as per the sampling design). It would be proper to assume that BITF should have impacted on them in a similar way. This is based on the fact that they had been exposed to the trade fair for a considerable amount of time with the least being three years and the highest being thirteen years.

All the groups, with the exception of the Home Economists, added new products in their businesses. Large employment growth was observed only with the independent exhibitor in Case B (an average of 6% annually). Most of the clothing producers actually experienced a decline in the number of workers.

Both the clothing producers and the Home Economists reported an improvement in quality of products. The winner and the independent exhibitors did not see improvement in product quality as worth noting. Purchase of machinery was also commonly found in these groups (the clothing producers and the independent exhibitors). The clothing producers and independent exhibitor in Case B reported realising greater profits in their businesses and increased production.

Generally, impact of BITF was noticed through more product development, increase in the number of customers, amount of profits and additional assets acquired. Increase in employees was however not common to all the samples.

#### **5.16.6 Perceptions on benefits from participation in BITF**

The results appear to be similar for the all production groups in this research. There seem to be perceived benefits for all the respondents relating to increased numbers of customers, quality of products, production increases, improved earnings and profits. The Home Economists' main perception of benefits realised was from improved quality of products by the clothing producers.

Increase in the number of customers could have triggered a demand in products thereby increasing production. The additional machinery bought in the last two years by clothing producers generally, also could be said to have contributed to the increase in production.

To validate the benefits they perceived to have derived from participation at BITF, all the respondents mentioned that participation at BITF was worthwhile.

Participation in the next trade fairs was thought important since all mentioned if they were to be asked to participate in future, they definitely would do so.

#### **5.16.7 Constraints and challenges faced by the clothing producers**

The main constraint the clothing producers mentioned was the use of the handicraft catalogue to guide their production towards participation at the trade fair. They reported that they are unable to show their creativity in production. The catalogue also prevented them from showing potential customers at the trade fair what they could offer in their businesses.

Representation of the producers by the Home Economists was yet another problem cited by the clothing producers. Representation deprived the clothing producers of direct contact with the customers at the trade fair as was found out by Tan (1992) when in Philippines, Market Encounter Programme (MEP) was handled by the agencies representing the producers in regional buying outlets. They mentioned that interacting with customers could help them know customers' needs, and also share with customers the information about how their products were produced and how they worked. Being at the trade fair personally could help in seeing what other competitors offer customers and this could provide ideas for creativity and diversification. The clothing producers mentioned that feedback was not forthcoming from the Home Economists after they represented them at BITF. This lack of or insufficient feedback resulted in some of vital information not reaching the clothing producers. However, the Home Economists thought that their reports to the producers were adequate.

Prices for the stalls at the trade fair were said to be unaffordable by most clothing producers. These prices may have caused them to personally not participate but rather do so through the Home Economists.

In the midst of generating income for survival; the clothing producers are faced with challenges which appeared to hinder them from fully benefitting from the

trade fair. These challenges are firstly, accurately understanding that the trade fair existed for some purpose and the need to set objectives which are achievable and based on the purpose of the trade fair.

Secondly, knowing what they have achieved or failed to achieve from exhibiting. Evaluation of the objectives for participation is needed to enable clothing producers to identify any gaps which prevent achievement of objectives and strengthen necessary areas. Evaluation should be in line with each clothing producer's personal objectives and resources (Herbig *et al* 1997).

The third challenge is taking the initiative to participate on their own so that they would know what their business needed and avoid relying solely on the Home Economists for promotion of products. Additional to this challenge, is knowing the needs of trade fair customers. BITF could be used as an extension to the producers' personal promotional strategies (Herbig *et al* 1997).

Fourthly, learning through exhibition and adapting the knowledge and skills could improve their businesses. Therefore it is necessary for the producers to use the trade fair for learning and benchmarking for future benefits in businesses.

The fifth challenge is understanding customer competition for business growth. Although the producers did not seem to consider competition highly, those who mentioned it knew that BITF provided an opportunity to compete between each other (clothing producers) for winning prizes. Competition, however, should also be applied in attracting more customers towards the products available, as well as being at the forefront in introducing new and appealing products to customers (Gaskill 2001).

Lastly clothing producers have a challenge to make long term investments. They should learn to put money into promotional activities for their products. The trade

fair could be used as an investment for their small businesses (Herbig *et al* 1997).

### **5.17 Summary**

Chapter five analysed and discussed the results of this study in relation to clothing producers, the Home Economists, exhibitors and comparing the results. The discussions of the results were aligned to the four sub problems. The findings of the research are similar to what was revealed by literature. Literature revealed that knowledge about the trade fair and its objectives is important for the exhibiting businesses to prepare for exhibition in order to target the customers. Also revealed was that businesses that participate in the trade fair benefit more on the increase in the number of customers and increase in profits. The study found out that the clothing producers' understood BITF to be an educational event. All the samples reported that their objective for participation was promotion of products. While the clothing producers were guided by the catalogue for preparing for the trade fair, the independent exhibitors were creative and observed fashion trends at BITF and through daily life happenings. Noticeable impacts as found in the study was on growth in the number of customers, increase in production, increase in profits, increase in assets, improvement in quality of products and additional products developed. The study also found that the clothing producers experienced a decline on the number of employees while the independent exhibitors experienced an increase. The clothing producers perceived benefits were likewise to impacts experienced. These were improvement in quality of products, increase in profits, increase in production, increase on the number of customers and an increase in assets.

The next chapter will present the summary of the research findings, conclusions and recommendations on the improvements for the study, policy and further research.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **6.0 INTRODUCTION**

The study set out to establish the impact experienced by informal small scale clothing producers through their participation in the Botswana International Trade Fair. Literature was consulted in order to build theory relating to marketing by small scale and informal clothing businesses on a national and regional level. Furthermore, the study presented a description of the study area for providing a visual picture on the situation in relation to the focus of the study (informal small scale clothing producers). Seventeen clothing producers and one outstanding producer (winner of exhibition prizes), fifteen Home Economists, and two independent clothing exhibitors formed part of the research. The latter served to provide an outside view and perceptions of the impact BITF had on the informal small scale clothing producers participating at the trade fair. To establish the impact, the study employed the use of questionnaire, focus group discussions, case studies and survey for collecting data. Data were analysed to create themes for further discussion to establish the exact impact BITF has had on the clothing producers. The results of the study were also analysed and discussed to find meaning and to make recommendations to maximise the benefits of participating in the BITF.

Chapter six presents a summary of the research which includes the research methodology and the area of the study. The research conclusions are also presented, which will provide an answer to the research question that was "How does exhibiting at the Botswana International Trade Fair benefit the informal small scale clothing producers"? This chapter also presents recommendations for the clothing producers, the Home Economists, for policy implications and improvement, for improvements in the study and for further research.

## **6.1 Summary**

This section presents summary of the research. It highlights the purpose of the study, as well as what was revealed in the literature to help formulate the research question and study questionnaire for data collection. The summary will also provide an overview of Botswana's socio-economic situation in relation to the focus of the research.

The study was conducted in selected urban centres and villages in Botswana. The areas are found on the eastern part of the country, and has developed infrastructure which made BITF easily accessible. Each area had at least one Home Economist who provided services to the informal small scale clothing producers but at the same time having other responsibilities besides promotion of products at BITF. The country has had a decline in rainfall and persistent drought, which drove the economy away from agriculture and resulting in the establishment of many small businesses for income generation. Poverty in Botswana is most felt at micro levels, therefore small businesses have been an answer to a call for diversification of the economy.

Lack of education to some pockets of the population limits access to earning a meaningful income, therefore small businesses close a gap between lack of education and employment opportunities. BITF has been seen to provide avenues for promotion and marketing products from clothing producers. Home Economists, as vehicles of change, assist clothing producers through the Department of Social Services, and are responsible for facilitating access of products from clothing producers to BITF. Government provides small businesses with support through legislation for finance, training and promotion. BITF's objectives include among others to provide an avenue for promotion of products and information-sharing between local and international manufacturers and service providers.

The sub problems were addressed using both qualitative and quantitative approaches in research. Qualitative data were collected using focus group discussions, in-depth interviews and case studies. Quantitative data were collected through the use of survey and interview questionnaires. Furthermore the majority of the clothing producers (17 out of 18 or 94.4%) and the Home Economists (15 out of 18 or 83.3%) responded to the interviews and survey questionnaire respectively, while very few independent exhibitors (2) returned the survey questionnaire. The single top performing clothing producer was interviewed.

Data was analysed and discussed in relation to clothing producers, the Home Economists, independent exhibitors and comparing the results. The discussions of the results were aligned to the four research sub problems. The findings of the research are similar to what was found from literature. Munuera and Ruiz 1999 established that knowledge about the trade fair and its objectives was important for the exhibiting businesses to prepare adequately for the exhibition in order to attract customers. What was also found was that businesses that participated in the trade fair felt they benefitted more in relation to the increase in the number of customers and increase in profits.

All groups of participants reported that their objective for participation was promotion of products. While the clothing producers were guided by the catalogue in preparing for the trade fair, the independent exhibitors were themselves creative and observed fashion trends at BITF. Noticeable impacts reported by both clothing producers and independent exhibitors were growth in the number of customers, increase in production, increase in profits, increase in assets, improvement in quality of products and additional products developed. The study also found that the clothing producers experienced declines in the number of employees while the independent exhibitors experienced an increase. The clothing producers' perceived benefits supported the impacts they observed from participating at the trade fair.

## **6.2 Conclusions**

This section presents the conclusions from the study following the discussions of the results in chapter five. The conclusions are arranged according to the answers to the research questions posed in the four sub- problems.

### **6.2.1 Conclusions on research sub problem one**

The question to research sub-problem one was, how accurate is the informal small-scale clothing producers' knowledge regarding the objectives of the Botswana International Trade Fair, and their expectations of the trade fair as a marketing tool? Did they realise their expectations in relation to benefits derived from participating?

The study concluded that the clothing producers had mostly accurate knowledge about BITF and that they agreed that it provided an opportunity to learn new ways of improving their businesses. The clothing producers also knew that some objectives of BITF were promotion and education. Their perceptions of BITF as a marketing and promotional tool were mostly positive due to the fact that customers followed them for purchasing their products after the trade fair, and new contacts were made during the trade fair. There were no discrepancies regarding their knowledge and perceptions of the trade fair. In fact it was most accurate, therefore the Home Economists had done good job in transferring this information.

The clothing producers realised the need to improve the quality of their products and subsequently managed to do so as a result of learning from BITF participation. They managed to expose their products to more people resulting in acquiring additional customers; increased production since they also added new machinery into the businesses; and increased their profits after participating at the trade fair. The main observed changes were improvement in the quality of clothing produced and the addition of new products.

The Clothing producers however lacked the knowledge of how to promote products besides at BITF in order to attract more customers and generate sales. They relied mostly on the Home Economists for promotion of products through BITF.

### **6.2.2 Conclusions on research sub problem two**

For research sub-problem two, the question explored was: how accurate is the council Home Economists' knowledge and perceptions of BITF; how does BITF impact on the preparations for exhibitions and on informal small scale clothing producers? How do Home Economists interpret the impacts in relation to their future actions and communication strategies between them and the producer groups and individuals?

The conclusion relating to research sub-problem two was that the Home Economists accurately knew the importance of BITF since their knowledge and objectives all matched those of BITF (promotion of products) (See section 3.6). Their preparations for exhibition were also in support of promotion since they subjected the producers' products to competition for the quality that attracts customers. A challenge to produce quality products was a change that the Home Economists observed in the producers after they participated at BITF. This challenge is in line with the post-trade fair reaction of producers in producing products of improved quality.

The assistance rendered by the Home Economists included professional advice to enable production of quality products, training of producers, and transportation of products to BITF. There seemed to be insufficient feedback by the Home Economists to the clothing producers after the trade fair; hence the producers expressed dissatisfaction at being represented at BITF rather than attending themselves. To communicate effectively and efficiently with clothing producers after the trade fair, the Home Economists suggested workshops conducted for all the participants for dissemination of feedback information. However, it has to be

noted that sometimes language could be a barrier for the clothing producers to comprehend the needs of their customers, and that first hand information could be very useful for producing to meet the expressed needs of customers.

### **6.2.3 Conclusions on research sub problem three**

The question to research sub-problem three was: how accurate is independent small scale clothing exhibitors' knowledge about the BITF, its impacts and their perceptions regarding the use of trade fair as a marketing and promotional tool?

The conclusion from the third sub-problem was that the independent exhibitors' knowledge of and objectives for BITF were the same as their objectives for participating at the trade fair (promotion and provision of networking relationships between exhibitors), therefore were accurate. BITF contributed to the independent exhibitors' business growth through increased numbers of customers, improvement in quality of products, increase in production machinery and production quantities due to development of new products to add to the existing clothing lines, and increase in the number of employees. The independent exhibitors' perceptions about their participation were also positive because profits and earnings increased, and more knowledge was gained for improvement in general marketing.

The independent exhibitors had promotional strategies besides BITF, and they had gained knowledge and production skills through on-the-job training before going into business which worked greatly in increasing creativity and appeal of the quality of their clothes. On- the-job training (in previous employment) seemed to be an excellent way for acquiring skills for production of clothing since this seemed to supply the necessary business experience.

#### **6.2.4 Conclusions on research sub problem four**

Comparisons between the groups of samples were covered by research sub problem four through these questions: are there any similarities or differences between the informal small scale clothing producers, the council Home Economists and the independent small scale clothing exhibitors on perceptions regarding benefits or constraints of participating at BITF? Furthermore how does the general clothing producers' functioning and the BITF prize winner compare in relation to production techniques and strategies? Are there any links between winning and the growth in business as a benefit resulting from participation?

All the samples had similar expectancies of BITF (as a promotional activity) with their objectives being to promote products. Strategies used by the clothing producers were to use their own creativity in production and word of mouth for promotion of products. The independent exhibitors on the other hand used product differentiation, observation of fashion trends and purchase behaviour of customers at BITF for inputs into subsequent production, tendering for supply to government, and follow up of potential customers after the trade fair ended.

All groups reported similar benefits such as an increase in their business assets, new products were developed, more profits realised, increase in the number of customers and improvement in quality of products. The independent exhibitors realised additional positive impacts as development of new products and increase in number of employees. Independent exhibitors also benefited from self-representation at BITF for greater learning. The main difference in impact was that independent exhibitors' employees were more experienced in comparison to the clothing producers. Training was also through work experience rather than formal qualifications. The independent exhibitors, unlike the clothing producers, gained more knowledge by directly participating at BITF, and apparently made more contacts at the trade fair.

Overall the conclusion derived from this study is that participating at BITF has positively impacted on all participating businesses. Participation has had an encouraging effect on number of customers, production quantities, profits, assets, product development and quality of products. However direct experience of the BITF is advocated; and good training comes from previous experience in clothing factories (exhibitors and prize winner).

### **6.3 Recommendations**

This sub section presents recommendations for improving the clothing producers' businesses. The recommendations are geared towards empowering the clothing producers, through marketing techniques, reduction of dependency and increasing commitment. The recommendations are also for the Home Economists to improve service provision towards the clothing producers. Lastly, they are for helping in development of support policies for improving the operations of the producers.

#### **6.3.1 Recommendations for clothing producers.**

The clothing producers need to understand the importance of what contributes to business growth and sustainability. The clothing producers have to make an effort to incorporate competition and marketing into their business strategies for growth and sustainability.

**Competition:** - Although most of the clothing producers knew BITF to be a promotional event, the producers have to be made aware that competition does not only apply to products for winning prizes. Clothing producers have to be aware that businesses compete for customers and it is only through their production and promotional strategies employed that their businesses could be sustained.

**Marketing:** - The clothing producers should try to put more efforts in marketing of their products locally. Taking the initiative of securing stalls at the mini and

district shows on their own could provide them with an opportunity to meet customers and learn from their comments in relation to the products exhibited. At the BITF, stalls could be secured on individual or partnership basis to share stall rentals (where possible), or even sharing the costs by allowing the government to pay for the stalls while the clothing producers man the stalls. In addition, marketing strategies have to be employed after the promotional events (trade fair) to continually attract customers.

The day-to-day types of clothing production were similar for all the producers. This is likely to lead to saturation of the market for such usual products. The specific items that were guided by the BITF catalogue were not generally incorporated into the normal production activities. The clothing producers therefore should learn to differentiate their products from those of their competitors, especially when producing in the same area. This could allow for creating a need for different products by customers, therefore addressing the needs of all customers.

Expenses for marketing: - Financial support has not been a problem in Botswana for micro and small scale businesses; clothing producers could source funds for strengthening promotional activities of the businesses as an investment for the future. Government should ring-fence funding available for marketing.

### **6.3.2 Recommendations for council Home Economists.**

The Home Economists should encourage the clothing producers to promote their products. More emphasis should be put on marketing of products by the clothing producers themselves as a way of empowering them to initiate promotional activities and communicate with potential customers. Encourage promotion of products by owners at mini show and district shows rather than the Home Economists as at present.

Self representation at BITF: - The Home Economists should empower the clothing producers and reduce dependency on government in product promotion. The clothing producers should be allowed to personally participate at the BITF even if only on a rotational basis. This participation allows the clothing producer to interact directly with customers at the trade fair; share information with customers and other producers; and learn from customers' comments; interact with competitors in similar businesses; and make observations of what visitors look for at the trade fair that could be built into future products. Networking relationships are critical for the growth of businesses.

Non involvement of the clothing producers during designing the catalogue results in a lack of understanding of what the customers want. It is important for the Home Economists to consult with the clothing producers for incorporating what they normally produce in the catalogue in such a way as to attract customers.

Wean off Home Economics support: - Government support is essential for a growing micro and small scale economy, therefore promotional assistance should continue in the form of securing stalls, providing transport for clothing producers' exhibits and paying the stall rental price as it is with other government departments. However this support should be for a specified period to let clothing producers take up promotional activities themselves, thus weaning them off from perpetual support from government and empowering them as was indicated by Ife (2002). The arrangement to wean the producers would enable identification of additional clothing producers to be supported, leading to an expansion in government support to small manufacturing businesses improved efforts to alleviate poverty and unemployment.

### **6.3.3 Policy implications and improvement**

Information on the clothing producers assisted by the Home Economists was not readily available; data on small scale producers and their businesses would be useful for evaluation and planning purposes. It is recommended that Department

of Social Services develops and maintains a centralised data base for all micro and small scale producers assisted by Home Economists. This could enable monitoring of the producers in terms of assistance rendered and how long the assistance has been on-going, and if the assistance was worthy to them, as well as monitoring ratios of Home Economists to the producers for effective and efficient service delivery.

Establishment of local markets for producers to utilise for networking with others and marketing of products from different regions within the county could improve marketing skills of producers. These local markets should be coordinated by a body such as in the situation of Malawi and the Philippines. In Malawi government policy support the establishment of promotion and development cooperatives and promotion of cottage industries; and in Philippines (Market Encounter Programme), there is collaboration in the areas of resources and expertise, learning about the needs of other consumers.

Government provides immense financial support to the businesses, including small businesses such as those in clothing manufacturing. To ensure sustainability of these small businesses, marketing initiatives by producers should be encouraged. Government should ring-fence funding for marketing to ensure that producers are assisted with empowerment initiatives to engage in promotion or facilitation of the promotion of their own products.

There is need to streamline support that is provided to the micro and small businesses such that agencies charged with responsibilities are not responsible for more tasks than they could handle, so that monitoring and service delivery would not be affected. An example is business management training, promotion and marketing, finance, and technical training should be coordinated by government but assigned to different agencies for delivery and to include a variety of approaches.

The idea of cost sharing should also filter to small businesses to instil a spirit of commitment. Benchmarking with South African SETAs could benefit both the government and the clothing producers including the possibility of employers paying some levy for training of employees. Government would be relieved of footing the bill in training for private sector and clothing producers would feel more committed in businesses and compete for national and regional markets. This arrangement could support the services already provided by agencies assigned to promote small scale businesses such as in business management kills.

#### **6.3.4 Recommendations for improvements in the study**

The clothing producers' sample (forming the focus of the study) used for the study was rather too small to be representative of a wider population of the informal small scale clothing producers who exhibit at BITF through council Home Economists. In order to improve this, and have a representative sample, a larger sample could be used comprising of clothing producers from all the participating districts and urban councils.

To establish the extent of the impact of BITF on the small and micro businesses, it would be worthwhile to undertake a comparative study between clothing producers who have participated at the trade fair over some time and those who have not participated at all.

The study focused on clothing producers who had participated at least three times at BITF. The study could have yielded better results if a selected group of producers were observed periodically over some years (about three-five) to note changes in businesses over a specified period such as changes in business profits, sales, numbers of employees, customers, and assets. These changes could be recorded continuously as they participate at the trade fair to measure performance of their businesses using the changes. To measure performance of the clothing producers' businesses in relation to participation, supervised record

keeping (income, expenditure, production quantities, amount of stock kept) could be added into the study. Inclusion in the study would also be the role of training offered by the Home Economists in relation to preparing clothing producers for better quality of products, and the clothing producers' justification of changes in designs of products for attracting customers. More independent exhibitors need to be added into the study for comparison - with classification linked to their success rates.

#### **6.3.5 Recommendations for further research**

Government has provided support to the informal small scale clothing producers through the Home Economists' services in district and urban Councils. For a long time some of the clothing producers have been receiving assistance from government with no indication that they could survive outside the assistance from the state. A study on the sustainability of the clothing producers' businesses after withdrawal of the assistance and support of the Home Economists could be conducted. The length of support as well as the effects of the supports on the businesses needs to be incorporated into the study. This study could also look into the type of support provided, any other additional sources of support (besides from the Home Economists) which could have bearing on sustainability. Observations and monitoring of businesses could be performed through a five year period.

The Home Economists have provided training to the informal small scale clothing producers, as was mentioned in this study. A study on an extent to which training prepares the clothing producers for business (production and management) and involvement in BITF could be conducted. Included in the study could be the guiding tools for designing training, and the clothing producers' role in deciding on the type of training as well as the strategies used by the Home Economists to empower the clothing producers.

The clothing producers' businesses in this study did not show much growth in terms the numbers of employees and as a result, there was a greater challenge to produce more to meet customers' needs in quantities. Most of the clothing businesses in this study were micro and small. A study should be conducted to establish the number of businesses that graduated from micro to small and from small to medium. This could be based on the year that initial funding was introduced through FAP, as most of the producers acquired funding through this grant.

As the main objectives of BITF are to provide businesses with opportunities for promoting their products, networking with other businesses and linkages between participants, not all small businesses take full advantage of this. A study to evaluate overall effectiveness of BITF in relation to promoting micro and small businesses in Botswana could be carried out. The study would incorporate an investigation on BITF promotional strategies and how accessible is the information to the majority of businesses; factors that attract exhibitors to participate; and those which hinder participation. The study would also include suggestions for improvement in organising the BITF.

Although micro and small businesses contribute significantly to the economy of the country, and are largest employers, there was no exclusive information on the economic contribution of the small scale clothing businesses; neither was there any on the impact of such businesses on employment figures. A study on the overall impact of small scale clothing businesses on the economy and unemployment figures would be necessary to provide information which would be used for development planning purposes. The study would include the number and types of businesses in rural settings and in urban settings, number of years in operation, average annual profits, average wages, average number of family members per employee, educational levels of employees and skills possessed. This information would identify which types of businesses and under what conditions they would need to be strengthened.

Most of the clothing producers in this study were found to be women and their employees were also mostly women. A study could be conducted to investigate what attracts women into such businesses and what differences eventuate when men become involved.

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## **APPENDIX A: JOB DESCRIPTION OF A HOME ECONOMIST AT DSS**

**Job Title: Principal Home Economist**

### **Main purpose of the job**

To plan, coordinate and monitor Home Economics programme at the national level through prudent utilisation of resources.

### **Duties**

1. Heads the Home Economics Division which entails Policy and programme development; Community education and training; Economic Empowerment projects; Early Childhood Care and Education programme; Marketing and product promotions (Fairs, and exhibitions).
2. Formulates, develops and reviews policies and programs for Home Economics. Interprets policies into programs of action for implementation by the Local Authorities.
3. Provides professional guidance to the department, Local Authorities and NGOs on Home Economics policies and programs.
4. Coordinates promotion of economic empowerment of rural communities through exhibition and marketing of local products in the International Trade Fairs and encourages production of quality products and competitiveness by exhibitors.
5. Coordinates the research and development for indigenous foods and textile materials for promotion, economic empowerment and poverty alleviation.
6. Coordinates the implementation of Family programs and National Program of Action for the Family; monitors activities marking the Commemoration of the International Family Day.
7. Advises on all issues of Home Economics and drafts answers to Parliament.
8. Coordinates the collation and analysis of statistics for Home Economics program, such as in Early Childhood Development and Poverty Reduction programs.
9. Monitors the implementation of the Early Childhood and Education program in Local Authorities and provides technical support for capacity building to the program implementers.

10. Collaborates with other government Departments /ministries, NGOs, national agencies and international bodies on issues related to Home Economics profession and specifically serve as a member to:
  - Pre School Development Committee
  - University of Botswana - Home Economics Education Advisory Committee
  - Small Enterprises Promotions Trust ( SEPROT)
  - Women's Shelter
  - Interministerial Extension Coordinating Committee
  - National Child Welfare Committee
11. Analyses the Division's manpower requirements and liaises with the supervisor on drawing of manpower training and staffing.
12. Coordinates the preparations of an annual budget, annual performance plans, and annual/ quarterly performance reports for the division
13. Attends national committees/conferences/meetings and task forces, on behalf of the Department and Ministry, as delegated by the Supervisor and provide reports and report to supervisor
14. Monitors and appraises performance, for Divisional Staff for enhancement of productivity, upholding public service reforms, and promotion of public service charter.
15. Undertakes any other duties as required by the management.

## **APPENDIX B: JOB DESCRIPTION FOR COUNCIL HOME ECONOMIST**

**Job Title: Home Economics Officer**

### **Duties**

1. Monitors and supervises project implementation.
2. Provides technical guidance in setting up formation of groups.
3. Visits and advises households and Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) centres on nutrition and food security.
4. Liaises with other stakeholders in mobilizing the communities for economic empowerment.
5. Trains Early Childhood Care and Education staff on procedures and proper management of centres.
6. Initiates provision of financial and technical support to community based projects.
7. Inspects ECCE centres to ensure adherence to the policy.
8. Prepares annual and quarterly performance reports and ECCE centre statistics and compliance reports.
9. Keeps inventory of all equipments and materials.
10. Promote marketing for small-scale entrepreneurs by exhibiting their products at international trade fair, district and mini trade fairs.
11. Empowers families on relevant legislation, laws and policies.
12. Mount community meetings, seminars and workshops on Home economics program in area of operation.
13. Disseminates knowledge on family resource management.
14. Compiles directory on traditional foods for nutritional analysis.

**APPENDIX C: HANDICRAFT CATALOGUE**  
(Items for exhibition at the trade fair).

**Section 1. Machine Sewing**

Class A. Man's suit, size 36- 40

- Use plain suiting fabric
- No opening/sledges at the back or sides
- Welt pockets with flaps
- Inside secret pocket on the right
- Outer breast pocket on the left
- Single breast
- Lined
- Interlining on hr jacket
- Belt loops on trousers
- Right back pocket on trousers.

Class B. Sleepwear

(i) Lady's summer nightie with gown

- With belt
- Size 36- 38
- Use satin cloth or polycotton material
- Short sleeved gown

(ii) Man's pyjamas,

- Size 36- 38
- Use satin cloth or polycotton
- No trimmings
- Short pants

Class C. Children's toweling robe

- Size 10- 14 years
- Use toweling material
- Continuous / shawl collar
- With belt

Class D. Quilt (double bed)

- 2 pillowcases, 45 x 70 cm ( standard)
- Polycotton materials
- 200 x 230 cm

Class E. Toilet set; cistern cover, seat cover, curtain, toilet paper holder, floor mat.

## APPENDIX D: PRICES AND APPLICATION FORM FOR EXHIBITION STALLS

### BOTSWANA INTERNATIONAL TRADE FAIR

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

#### Application form

I/ We \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ (designation)  
of \_\_\_\_\_ (business)  
located at \_\_\_\_\_ (physical address)  
and \_\_\_\_\_ (postal address)

wish to confirm our requirements for an exhibition stand at Botswana Consumer Fair

Our contact Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax number: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Our required floor space area is (delete where appropriate):

- 3m x 3m (9m<sup>2</sup>) @ P327.00 per m<sup>2</sup> in Boipuso Hall P2943.00
- 3m x 3m @ P251.00 per m<sup>2</sup> Special Marquees P2259.00
- 3m x 3m (9m<sup>2</sup>) @ P315.00 per m<sup>2</sup> in Ditshupo Hall P2835.00
- 5m x 5m @ P67.00 per m<sup>2</sup> Open Space P1675.00
- or multiples thereof

(INCLUDES VAT)

**ALL CORNER STANDS WILL INCUR AN ADDITIONAL 10% INCREASE ON STAND RENTAL**

larger than 9m<sup>2</sup> (please specify) at per square metre: \_\_\_\_\_

The above includes shell scheme partitioning, 2 spotlights, carpeting, single plugpoint and labelling of stands.

Our organisation is a (delete where appropriate):      Manufacturer      Service Provider      Retailer

Government Dept.      Parastatal      NGO      Other: \_\_\_\_\_

and originates from \_\_\_\_\_ (country where business operates)

I/we would like to be judged under: \_\_\_\_\_ scale: small / medium / large and category: \_\_\_\_\_

The products or services that we wish to display are: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ and these shall be for

\*(tick where appropriate):      \*display purpose only      \*sale from the stall

Signed in accordance with the Terms and Conditions overleaf, which I have read and understood, together with the contents of the Exhibitor's Manual.

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

#### FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Application accepted Yes/No \_\_\_\_\_ New Exhibitor / Repeat \_\_\_\_\_

Provisional space allocated \_\_\_\_\_ m<sup>2</sup> at stall No. \_\_\_\_\_

Final space allocated \_\_\_\_\_ m<sup>2</sup> at stall No. \_\_\_\_\_

Receipt No. \_\_\_\_\_ Amount \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Receipt No. \_\_\_\_\_ Amount \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Cumulative totals: Exhibitor \_\_\_\_\_ Space allocated \_\_\_\_\_ m<sup>2</sup>

ORGANISER  
Fairground Holdings (Pty) Limited

P / BAG BO3 GABORONE BOTSWANA TEL: (267) 397 55 55 FAX: 390 42 63, 395 67 60  
GABORONE INTERNATIONAL SHOWGROUNDS, OFF MACHEL DRIVE, GABORONE, BOTSWANA

## **APPENDIX E: LETTER REQUESTING FOR PERMISSION-DSS**

University of KwaZulu – Natal  
Private Bag X01, Scottsville 3209  
Tel: +27(0)33 260-5212  
November 3, 2006

The Director  
Department of Social Services  
P.O Box Bo180  
Gaborone  
Botswana

Dear Madam.

### **REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT AND DISTRICT COUNCILS - MRS MILANE K. SELWE**

This serves to make a request to allow Mrs. Milane K. Selwe to undertake her research with the council Home Economists.

Ms. Selwe as a student in the School of Agricultural Sciences and Agribusiness and will be undertaking her research as a fulfillment towards a degree in Masters of Social Science (Community Resources).

Milane is requesting to utilize the Home Economists meeting scheduled for 6-7 December 2006 to collect her data. She also requests for assistance from the Home Economics office in the department to facilitate in accessing the required information for the study. She will later need to contact the council Home Economists in the areas of Molepolole, Ramotswa, Lobatse, Francistown, Kanye and Masunga for meetings and further consultations with informal small scale clothing producers who exhibit at the Botswana International Trade Fair.

The research is intended to inform the Department of Social Services and program implementers at the councils about the possible approaches to be used in order to accelerate economical benefits of the trade fair on the informal small scale clothing producers. It is also hoped to accord the informal scale clothing producers with possible ways that they could employ to derive benefits from participating in the trade fair.

Thank you very much for your time.

Yours Sincerely

Maryann Green (Professor)  
Head of Discipline, Community Resources

## **APPENDIX F: LETTER REQUESTING FOR PERMISSION - COUNCILS**



### **Community Resources**

School of Agricultural Sciences and Agribusiness  
Faculty of Agriculture, Engineering & Science

King Edward Avenue, Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg  
Private Bag X01, Scottsville, 3209, South Africa  
Telephone (033) 260-5271 Fax (033) 260-5067  
Email: [Green@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:Green@ukzn.ac.za)

**November 3, 2006**

#### **The Council Secretary**

- North East District Council
- Kweneng District Council
- South East District Council
- Southern District Council

#### **The City/ Town Clerk**

- Lobatse Town Council
- City of Francistown

Dear Sir/ Madam

### **REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT AND DISTRICT COUNCILS- MRS MILANE K. SELWE**

This is to request you to grant Ms. Selwe permission to undertake her research in your council through working with the Home Economists.

Ms. Selwe is a student at the University of KwaZulu – Natal and will be undertaking a research as fulfillment towards a degree in Masters of Social

Science (Community Resources). She will need to consult with Home Economists in the councils and will also need their assistance in locating and contacting the informal and small scale clothing producers and exhibitors in the areas of Masunga, Molepolole, Ramotswa, Kanye, Lobatse and Francistown. She further request for arranged meetings/consultations with the participants.

The research is hoped to inform policy makers in the Department of Social Services and program implementers at the councils about the possible approaches to be used in order to accelerate economical benefits of the trade fair on the informal small scale clothing producers. It will also accord the informal scale clothing producers with possible ways that they could employ to derive benefits from BITF.

Ms. Selwe is expected to start her research work in December 2006 and I am requesting that you will facilitate the process in order for her to collect the required data. **Attached is a tentative schedule for the meetings.**

Thank you very much for your time.

Yours Sincerely

Maryann Green (Professor)  
Head of Department, Community Resources

**APPENDIX G: STANDARD LETTER TO ALL RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS AND CONSENT FORM**

University of KwaZulu – Natal  
Private Bag X01, Scottsville 3209  
Tel: +27(0)33 260-5212

November 3, 2006

Dear Sir/ Madam

**REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH**

My name is Milane Selwe. I am a Masters of Social Sciences student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa, doing research for my studies. I am requesting you to participate in the study by answering the questions which will help us establish how the Botswana International Trade Fair (BITF) impacts on the work that you do. This study is intended to inform policy makers in the Department of Social Services and program implementers at the councils about the possible approaches to be used in order to accelerate economical benefits of the trade fair on the informal small scale clothing producers. It will also accord the informal scale clothing producers with possible ways that they could employ to derive benefits from BITF.

Please understand that participation in the study is voluntary and you may withdraw at anytime if you wish so, without giving reasons.

I want to assure you that everything you say to me will be treated with utmost confidentiality and results will be reported as averaged information and no mention of names will be done.

Please indicate your consent to participate by signing your name below.

I..... (Full name)

hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project and do understand that I may withdraw from participating in the research at any time if I wish.

.....

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

DATE

**If you wish to know more about this study or have further questions please feel free to contact the following**

**My Supervisor – Professor Maryann Green**

University of KwaZulu – Natal  
Private Bag X01 Scottsville  
3209 Pietermaritzburg  
Telephone +27 33 260 5271

**The Researcher- Milane K. Selwe      +267 71636206 / +27 767057353**

**THANK VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME**

APPENDIX H: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR INFORMAL SMALL SCALE CLOTHING PRODUCER

Name of the District.....  
Name of town or village location of business .....  
Name of business (coded) .....

A. PERSONAL DETAILS

1. Position in business owner ☐  
Employee ☐  
Other specify ☐  
.....
2. Age (in years)..... ☐
3. Gender ..... F ☐ M ☐
4. How many years of schooling do you have?  
None ☐  
Primary ☐  
  
Junior Secondary ☐  
Senior Secondary ☐  
Tertiary ☐

B. DESCRIPTION OF BUSINESS

5. How many employees are there in the business? (including yourself)  
0 ☐  
1-2 ☐  
3-4 ☐  
>4 ☐

7. How many years has the business been operating?
- .....

9. Wheredo you produce your goods?

10. Do you intend to relocate the business? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Explain the reasons

- | Type of clothing   | Response (X) | Specify type(s) |
|--|--------------|-----------------|
| Ladies clothing  |              |                 |
| Men's clothing   |              |                 |
| Traditional Leather skirts<br>(Mothikga/Phaeyana)                        |              |                 |
| Traditional leather trunks(motseto)                                      |              |                 |
| Children's clothing  |              |                 |
| <b>Accessories:</b><br>Beaded headbands, bangles,<br>necklaces, earrings |              |                 |
| Traditional beaded girls kilts<br>(makgabe)                              |              |                 |
| Shoes  |              |                 |
| Other ( please specify)  |              |                 |

12. How would you rate your business? (put X where appropriate)

micro	small	medium	stagnant

C. BITF FACTUAL EXPERIENCE

13. What do you know about the Botswana International Trade Fair?

.....

.....

14. Where did you get the information?

.....

.....

15. Why do you participate in the fair?

.....

.....

16. How do you normally prepare for the trade fair?

.....

.....

17. How many times have you sent your articles to the show?  
(put X in an appropriate box)

1-3	
4-5	
>6	

18. How do you let people know that you are exhibiting at the fair?

.....

.....

19. How much average annual profit did your business make in the last two years?

Profit	Response(put X where appropriate)
<P500.00	
P501-1000	
P1001- P2000	
P2001- P4000	
>P4001	

#### D. BITF BENEFITS THROUGH PROFITS AND CUSTOMERS

20. Please mark the following statements using the key below. (Please put X where appropriate)

1=Strongly agree; 2=Agree; 3=Do not know; 4=Disagree; 5=Strongly disagree

		Strongly agree	Agree	Do not know	disagree	Strongly disagree
1	I usually sell more goods at the trade fair than from where I produce	1	2	3	4	5
2	I make less money when I do not exhibit at the BITF	1	2	3	4	5
3	BITF does not provide me with an opportunity for additional customers	1	2	3	4	5
4	My earnings have increased because of exhibitions at BITF	1	2	3	4	5
5	Much of my business profits has been due to exhibiting at BITF	1	2	3	4	5
6	I have gained customers due to the exhibitions I participated in	1	2	3	4	5
7	Since exhibiting at BITF, I have increased production	1	2	3	4	5
8	Exhibitions has brought change in the quality of my products	1	2	3	4	5
9	I have more business contact because of BITF exhibitions	1	2	3	4	5
10	Improved quality has won me customers outside the country	1	2	3	4	5
11	Trade fair customers demand improved quality of products	1	2	3	4	5
12	My new customers follow me up after the trade fair	1	2	3	4	5

**E. TRAINING**

21. Have you had any training in clothing production? ☐ Yes ☐ No

22. If yes, how do you think training prepared you to participate in the trade fair?

.....

.....

23. Did you get any assistance from government officers? ☐ Yes ☐ No  
If yes, which government department(s) assisted you? (Please list the type of assistance)

.....

.....

**G. CUSTOMERS AND MARKETING**

24. How do you let people know that you will be exhibiting at the trade fair?

.....

.....

25. Besides the BITF, do you have any other channels for marketing your products? ☐ Yes ☐ No

26. If yes, which are they?

.....

.....

27. How do they or does it compare with the use of BITF?

.....

.....

28. Can you suggest still other means you are not using (besides the trade fair) by which you can promote your products?

.....

.....

29. Where are your customers located? (put **X** where appropriate)

Local where production takes place	in other towns or villages	Outside the country

30. How has your distribution of your products to the customers changed?  
.....  
.....

31. How do you get to know if your products satisfy your customers?  
.....  
.....

32. Why do you think customers prefer your products to similar ones from other exhibitors?  
.....  
.....

33. Have you developed any new product in the last two years?  

☐ Yes ☐ No

34. Explain your response to the last question.  
.....  
.....

35. What changes has attending the fair brought to your business?  
.....  
.....

36. Do you need to expand your business premises (or have you expanded in the past two year)?  

☐ Yes ☐ No

  
.....  
.....

37. What additional business assets have you bought in the last 2 year? Include general costs incurred.  
.....  
.....

38. What guides you in pricing your products?  
.....  
.....

39. From your observations in your business, how do you products compare with those from other competitors in terms of prices?  
.....  
.....

40. Overall, is your participation at the trade fair worthwhile?  

☐ Yes ☐ No

Please rate on a scale below with an **X** to indicate your perceptions on attending the trade fair

1( not all)	2 (only satisfactory)	3 (fairly worthwhile)	4 (definitely)

41. Make suggestion as to how the trade fair could benefit you more  
.....  
.....  
.....

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME**

**APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR HOME ECONOMISTS**

**A. PERSONAL DETAILS**

Name of the District.....

1. Professional Experience in this job (in years)
2. Gender

F ☐ M ☐
3. What qualifications do you posses?

Degree in Home Economics

☐

Diploma in Home Economics

☐

Other

☐

**B. BITF FACTUAL EXPERIENCE**

4. What are your objectives of participating in the trade fair?

.....

.....
5. What do you know about the Botswana International Trade Fair?

.....

.....
6. How many years have you attended the trade fair?

1-3

4-5

6-7
7. How many producers/producer units did you represent at the trade fair in the following years?

2002	2003	2004	2005	2006

C. PREPARATION FOR THE BITF

8. How do you prepare the producers for participating in the trade fair?

.....

.....

9. How often do you meet with the producers? (Please indicate with a X where appropriate)

Never	Once a year	Twice a year	Three times in a year	Every quarter

10. When do you meet with them? (Please indicate with a X where appropriate)

Meeting times	Response ( put X where appropriate)
Before the trade fair	
After the trade fair	
Both before and after	

11. What kind of assistance did you give them?

.....

.....

12. Which factors contribute towards deciding on what is to be exhibited?

.....

.....

13. Do you think there are other factors that could aid in the decisions?

☐ Yes ☐ No

14. Please explain your response?

.....

.....

D. PRODUCTS AND PROMOTION

15. Do you think there has been a change in the quality of products that you have exhibited at the trade fair in the last three years? ☐ Yes ☐ No

16. Please explain your response to the question above  
.....  
.....

17. How do you think the promotion of the products could be done besides using the trade fair?  
.....  
.....

18. Which clothing products do you exhibit at the trade fair?

Type of clothing	Response (put X where appropriate)	Specify type(s)
Ladies clothing:		
Men's clothing:		
Traditional Leather skirts (Mothikga/Phaenyana)		
Traditional leather trunks (motseto)		
Children's clothing:		
<b>Accessories:</b> Beaded, Headbands, bangles necklaces, earrings		
Beaded girls kilts (makgabe)		
shoes		
Other ( please specify)		

19. Among these products, which ones do customers prefer and why?  
.....  
.....

20. Have producers developed any new products in the last two years since exhibiting? ☐ Yes ☐ No

21. Please explain your response to the last question.  
.....  
.....

22. Do you think customers prefer your producers' products to other competitors at the trade fair? ☐ Yes ☐ No

23. Explain your response to the question above  
.....  
.....

**E. THE PRODUCER AND BUSINESS**

24. How would you rate the producers' growth of business starting from 2003 to 2006?

Business growth	Response ( put X where appropriate)
declined	
No change	
Slightly changed for the better	
Moderately changed for the better	
Greatly changed for the better	

25. In your view, what changes has attending the trade fair brought to the producers  
.....  
.....

26. Please circle the answer that best describes participating in the trade fair

1=useless, 2=not bad at all, 3=helpful, 4=beneficial, 5=very beneficial

a) How would you rate the usefulness of participating at the trade fair?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

b) Does participation get producers more customers?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

c) Did participation help improve the quality of clothes produced?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Please indicate as follows for the question below

1=not at all, 2=likely, 3= more likely, 4= definitely.

d) Would you encourage producers to participate again?

1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME**

APPENDIX J (i)      QUESTIONNAIRE FOR INDEPENDENT CLOTHING  
EXHIBITORS- English Version

Exhibitor’s business location (town) .....

A.            PERSONAL DETAILS

1. Position in organization
- Owner ☐
- Employee ☐
- Purely for this display and the fair? ☐
- Other – specify .....

2. Gender .....
- F ☐
- M ☐

B.            DESCRIPTION OF BUSINESS

3. How many employees do you have?
- 0 ☐
- 1-2 ☐
- 3-4 ☐
- >4 ☐

4. How many did you start with initially?
- 0 ☐
- 1-2 ☐
- 3-4 ☐
- >4 ☐

5. How many years has the business been operating?
- .....
- .....

6. How did you finance the start-up for your business?

.....

.....

7. Where do you produce your goods? (Indicate by placing an **X** where appropriate)

Place	Response <b>X</b>
Own home	
Council stalls	
Make shift stall	
Own building	
Rented rooms	
Other (specify)	

8. Which clothing products do you produce?

Rate the last two on a 1-5 scale, 1=least, 2=not sure, 3=good, 4=better, 5=best

Type of clothing (Detailed description)	Response	In greatest demand from customers (1-5)	Quality Perception (1-5) (Through observation by researcher)
Ladies clothing			
Men's clothing			
Traditional Leather skirts (Mothikga/Phaenyana)			
Traditional leather trunks (motseto)			
Children's clothing			
Beaded headbands			
<b>Accessories:</b> Bangles, necklaces, earrings			
Traditional beaded girls kilts (makgabe)			
shoes			
Other ( please specify)			

**C. BITF FACTUAL EXPERIENCE**

9. What year did you first exhibit at the trade fair?

.....

10. Has this been continuously? ☐ Yes ☐ No  
(If yes, how many years were missed?)  Years

11. Did you arrange the whole display yourself? ☐ Yes ☐ No  
If no, explain  
.....  
.....

12. Did you engage a professional to display your exhibits? ☐ Yes ☐ No  
If yes, what benefits does it have?  
.....  
.....

13. How did you first get to know about Botswana International Trade Fair?  
.....  
.....

14. What were you told about the objectives of the trade fair?  
.....  
.....

**D. BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATING IN BITF**

15. What benefits do you experience by participating in the fair?  
.....  
.....

16. Are your expectations of the trade fair met? Explain your response.

.....

.....

17. How much (on average) did you earn per month before you first exhibited?

.....

.....

18. How much average annual profit did your business make in the last year?  
(Please indicate by X where appropriate)

Amount	Response X
<P500.00	
P501-1000	
P1001-P2000	
P2001-P4000	
P4001-P9999	
>P10 000	

19. How much of this would you relate to participation in the trade fair, and why?

.....

.....

21. Did you make good sales in this year's trade fair? ☐ Yes ☐ No

22. What would you say about the new contacts for your business from this fair?

.....

.....

**D. TRAINING**

23. Have you had any training on clothing production? ☐ Yes ☐ No
24. If so, how do you think the training prepared you to participate in the trade fair, in terms of competition and quality of clothing?  
.....  
.....
25. Do you get any assistance from government officers? ☐ Yes ☐ No
26. If yes, which department(s) and what kind of assistance did you receive from the government officer(s)?  
.....  
.....

**E. CUSTOMERS and MARKETING**

27. How do you let people know that you are exhibiting products at the fair?  
.....  
.....
28. Besides the BITF, do you have other channels for marketing your products?  
☐ Yes ☐ No
29. If yes, which are they?  
.....  
.....
30. Can you suggest still other means (besides the trade fair) by which you think can promote your products but you are not using?  
.....  
.....

31. How do you get to know if your products satisfy your customers?  
.....  
.....

32. Among your products exhibited, which ones are most appealing to customers, but are not purchased; what do they say are the reasons?  
.....  
.....

33. Where are your customers located? (Please indicate by X where appropriate)

Locally where I produce	In other towns or villages	Outside the country

34. How has your distribution of your products to the customers changed since you exhibited?  
.....  
.....

35. Why do you think customers prefer your products to other similar products from competitors?  
.....  
.....

36. Have you developed any new products in the last two years as a result of the show? ☐ Yes ☐ No

37. Explain your response to the last question.  
.....  
.....

38. How has attending the Botswana International Trade Fair changed the number of your customers? (Please indicate by X where appropriate)

Change in the number of customers:	Response X
Declined	
No change	
Slightly changed for the better	
Moderately changed for the better	
Greatly changed for the better	

39. Do you need to expand your business premises (or have you in the past 2 years)? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Explain.....  
.....

40. How much has your production amount changed since attending your first trade fair? (Please indicate by X where appropriate)

Change in production	Response X
Declined	
No change	
Improved slightly	
Greatly improved	

41. What additional business assets have you bought in the last 2 years? Include the general costs incurred.  
.....  
.....

42. What guides you in pricing your products?  
.....  
.....

43. From your observation, how do your products compare with those of your competitors in terms of price?  
.....  
.....

44. Are you intending to do any thing about it?  
If yes, what is it? ☐ Yes ☐ No

.....  
.....

45. Overall, is your attendance at the fair worthwhile? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Please rate on the scale below with an X to indicate your interest to participate again basing on your perceptions.

1. not at all	2. only satisfactory	3. fairly worthwhile	4. definitely worthwhile

46. Make suggestions as to how the Fair could benefit you more?  
.....  
.....  
.....

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME.

Lefelo la kgwebo (Motse/ toropo).....

#### A GA MONG WA KGWEBO

1. Maemo a gago mo kgwebong: Ke mong wa kgwebo ☐
- Ke mohiriwa ☐
- Ke yo o baakanyang motlaagana wa disupiwa fela ☐
- Fa go le tiro e nngwe e o e dirang, tlhalosa .....
2. Bong Rre ☐ Mme ☐

#### B. TLHOLOSO KA KGWEBO

3. O nale badiri ba le kae? Supa ka **x** mo lebokosong go tlhopha karabo.
- Ga ke a hira/ thapa ope (0) ☐
- Ba le fa gare ga bongwe le bobedi (1-2) ☐
- Ba le fa gare ga boraro le bona (3-4) ☐
- Ba feta bone (>4) ☐
4. O simolotse ka badiri bak e kae? Supa ka **x** mo lebokosong go tlhopha karabo.
- Ga ke a simolola ka ope (0) ☐
- Ba le fa gare ga bongwe le bobedi (1-2) ☐
- Ba le fa gare ga boraro le bone (3-4) ☐
- Ba feta bone (>4) ☐
5. Kgwebo ya gago e nale dingwaga di le kae e ntse a dira?

.....

.....

6. O bone kae madi a go simolola kgwebo ya gago?

.....

.....

7. O direla dithoto tsa gago kae?

Lefelo	Karabo x
Mo lwapeng la me	
Mo motlaaganeng wa khansela/goromente	
Mo motlaaganeng wa sebakanyana fela	
Mo kagong yame	
Ke hirile kamore	
Tlhalosa fa go na lefelo lengwe le le sa kwalwang	

8. O dira diaparo dife ?

Supa ka sekale se se la telang mo di ntlheng bofelo fela ;

1= go le go nnye thata; 2= ga ke itse; 3 =go a kgotswafatsa; 4= go siame

5=go a kgatlhisa

Mofuta wa diaparo	Karabo x	Tseo di batliwang thata ke bareki; dirisa sekale (1-5)	Boleng jwa tsone ka tebo ya matlho; dirisa sekale(1-5)- (Go ya ka tebo ya mosekaseki)
Diaparo tsa bomme			
Diaparo tsa borre			
Mothikga kgotsa phaeyana			
Motseto wa letlalo wa borre			
Diaparo tsa bana			
Serwalo sa tlhogo sa dibaga			
Maseka			
Manyena/malengana			
Makgabe a dibaga			
Ditlhako			
Tse dingwe tse di sa kwalwang (tlholosa tsweetswee			

## C. MAITEMOGELO A DITSHUPO

9. O simolotse go supa dithoto tsa gaga ka ngwaga o fe?.....

10. Ao supa ngwaga le ngwaga o sa tlodise? Ee ☐ Nnyaa ☐  
Fa karabo e le nnyaa, o tlodisitse dingwaga dile kae ?  
.....

11. A ke wena o neng o ipaakanyetsa disupiwa mo motlaaganeng ? Ee ☐ Nnyaa ☐  
Fa karabo e le nnyaa, tlhalosa  
.....  
.....

12. A o dirisitse mongwe yo o nang le boitseanape ba go baakanya disupiwa ? Ee ☐ Nnyaa ☐  
Fa karabo e le ee, tlholosa gore o bona maduo fa kae?  
.....  
.....

13. O simolotse go itse jang ka di tshupo tse  
.....  
.....

14. O ne bolelelwa mailaelo a fe a ditshupo  
.....  
.....

**D MOSOLA WA GO TSENELELA DITSHUPO**

15. O bona mosola ofe ka go tsenelela ditshupo?  
.....  
.....

16 A o kgonne go fitlhelela ditsholofelo tsa gago ka go tseneela ditshupo? tlholosa.  
.....  
.....

17. Pele ga o tsenela ditshupo, o ne o amogela bokae ka kgwedi?

.....

.....

18. Mo ngwageng ee fetileng, kgwebo ya gago e dirile dipoelo tse di kae?

Supa ka letshwao **x** selekanyo sa dipoelo tsa gago

Selekanyo	Karabo <b>x</b>
>P 500.00	
P501- 1000	
P1001-P2000	
P2001-P4000	
P4001-P9999	
>P10 000	

19. Mo dipoelong tse o di boneng, ke selekanyo se fe se o ka se nyalanyang le ditshupo? Ka goreng

.....

.....

20. A o kgonne go dira dithekiso tse di nametsang/ kgotswafatsang mo ditshupong tsa ngwaga o? Ee ☐ Nnyaa ☐

21. O ka akgela jang ka bareki ba basha ba o ba boneng ka go supa mo ditshupong ?

.....

.....

## E. THUTUNTSHO

22. A rutilwe ka go dira diaparo ?

Ee ☐ Nnyaa ☐

23. Fa o rutilwe, o bone thuto ee e go thusitse jang gore o tsenelele ditshupo, bogolo jang ka go gaisana le ba bangwe le ka boleng jwa diaparo ?

.....

.....

24. A o nale le thuso eo e bonang go tswa mo maphateng a puso ?  
Ee ☐ Nnyaa ☐
25. Fa karabo e le ee, ke maphata a fe aa go thusang, gape ke thuso ya mofuta o fe e o e bonang ?

.....

.....

## F. IPAPATSO LE BAREKI

26. O itsise bareki ba gago jang gore o ya go supa diaparo kwa ditshupong?  
.....  
.....
27. Kwa ntle ga ditshupo, a go nale methale mengwe e o e dirisang go bapatsa dithoto tsa gago? Ee ☐ Nnyaa ☐

28. Fa karabo e le ee, ke efe methale eo?

.....

.....

29. A o ka akanya methale mengwe e o sa e diriseng mme e kja rotloetsa go bapatsa dithoto tsa gago? Tlhalosa

.....

.....

30. O itse jang gore dithoto tsa gago di kgotsafatsa bareki bag ago?

.....

.....

31. Mo dithotong tse o di supileng, ke dife tse di kgatlang bareki, mme basa kgone go di reka? Mabaka ba re ke eng?

.....

.....

32. Bareki ba gago ba bonwa kae? Supa ka **x** go tlhopha karabo

Mo gae/ fa ke direlang teng	Mo metseng e mengwe kgotsa ditoropo tse dingwe	Ka kwa ntle ga lefatshe la Botswana

33. Kanamiso ya thekiso ya dithoto tsa gago go ya bareking e fetogile go le kae ka ntlha ya go tsenelela ditshupo?  
 .....  
 .....
34. O a kanya gore keng bareki ba kgatlhegela dithoto tsa gago go fetsa tsa ba o gaisanang le bone?  
 .....  
 .....
35. Mo dingwageng tse pedi tse di fetileng, a o kile wa dira dithoto tse disha e le ka ntlha ya go tsenelela ditshupo? Ee ☐ Nnyaa ☐
36. Tlhalosa karabo ya gago ka botlalo  
 .....  
 .....
37. Go tsenelela ditshupo go fetotse jang palo ya bareki ba gago ? Supa ka letshwao **x** go bontsha phetogo

Palo ya bareki	Karabo <b>x</b>
Ba fokotsegile	
Ga gona phetogo	
Phetogo e botoka go le go nnye	
Phetogo e boto g mo go golwane	
Phetogo e botoka thata	

38. A o eletsa go godisa kgwebo ya gago, kgotsa o setse o e godisitse mo dingwageng tse pedi tse fetileng? Ee ☐ Nnyaa ☐  
 Tlhalosa.....  
 .....

39. Go dira dithoto tsa gago go fetogile go le kae fa o sale o simolola go tsenelela ditshupo ? Supa ka letshwao **x** go bontsha phetogo

Phetogo ya dithoto	Karabo <b>x</b>
Go fokotsegile	
Ga go na phetogo	
Go tokafetse go le go nnye	
Go tokafatse thata	

40. O rekile dithoto tse dife mo dinwageng tse pedi tse difetileng? Supa ka madi a o a dirisitseng

.....

.....

41. O thusiwa ke eng go baya ditlhwatlhwa tsa dithoto tsa gago?

.....

.....

42. Mo tebong ya gago, dithoto tsa gago di gaisana jang le tsa bagwebi ba o gaisanang le bone?

.....

.....

43. A o nale maikaelelo a go dira sepe ka se? Ee ☐ Nnyaa ☐  
Fa karabo e le ee, ke eng se o batlang go se dira?

.....

.....

44. A go tsenelela di tshupo go na le mosola? Ee ☐ Nnyaa ☐  
Supa ka letshwao x go bontsha kgatlhego ya go tsenelela ditshupo gape

Ga go na mosola	Go a kgotsofatsa	Go kgotsofatsa thata	Go kgotsofatsa mo go tona thata

45. Ntsha megoplo e o eletsang e ka thusa go tokafatsa ditshupo go re di go solegele mosola go feta?

.....

.....

.....

**KE LEBOGELA NAKO E O E MPHILENG GO BUISANA LE WENA**

## **APPENDIX K: PICTURES**

### **Focus Group Discussions- (a) and (b)**



### **(c) Garments produced**



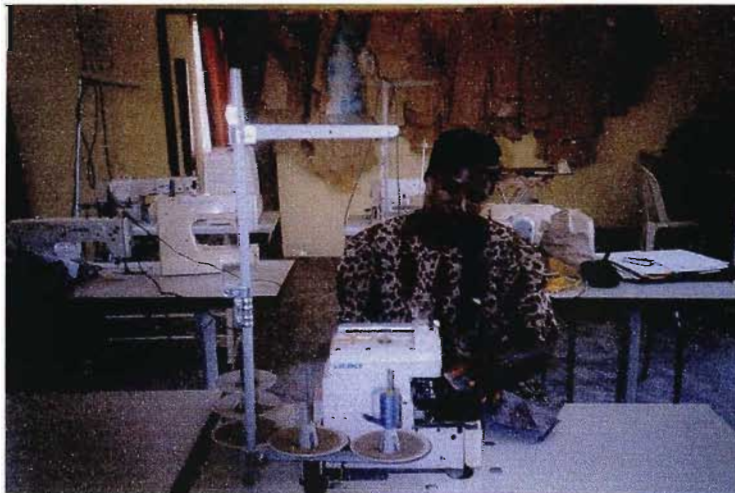
**(d) Shoes Produced**



**(e) Place of production**



**(f) Machinery used**



## **APPENDIX L: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR THE HOME ECONOMISTS**

**Introduction:** Researcher's name, institution and an explanation on the study, what it is about and how participants would benefit from it.

- To establish the impact of the Botswana International Trade Fair (BITF) on the informal small scale clothing producers.
- Present a request for permission to record the proceedings of the focus group discussions.

### **1). Knowledge about BITF**

You have been participating in the BITF for a longer time, could you please tell me what do you know about the Botswana International Trade Fair?

What are its objectives?

Why do you choose to exhibit in the BITF?

### **2). Intended benefits to informal small scale clothing producers**

What are your department's objectives to participate in the BITF?

What do you hope to achieve through this?

Why do you encourage informal small sale clothing producers to partake in the BITF?

### **4). Preparations for BITF**

How do you prepare for BITF?

What does the preparations entails? (*in terms of producers, logistics*)

How often do you meet with informal small scale clothing producers and when?

### **5). Assistance to informal small scale clothing producers**

What type of assistance do you render to the informal small scale clothing producers? *(training, information dissemination (type), feedback, selection of products for exhibition)*

How does the assistance you render affect participation at BITF? *(the link)*

To what extent do producers contribute to decisions on the type of exhibits?

What are your views concerning your answer? *(producers' decisions on type of exhibits)*

6). **Impact of BITF**

How do you think BITF impacts on informal small scale clothing producers?

*(financial, customers, quality of products)*

7). **Quality of products**

What can you say about the quality of the products exhibited at BITF from informal small scale clothing producers?

Have there been changes and what type of changes are these? *(quality and quantity of products)*

What could have influenced these changes?

**APPENDIX M: STATISTICAL TABLES**

**Table M.1: Changes brought by participation at the trade fair and number of times exhibits were sent.**

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	11.266(a)	3	.010
Likelihood Ratio	15.132	3	.002
Linear-by-Linear Association	.179	1	.672
N of Valid Cases	17		

a 8 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.41.  
p=0.010

**Table M.2: Improved quality of products due to exhibition and producers' intention to relocate**

Chi-Square Tests					
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.697(b)	1	.404		
Continuity Correction(a)	.000	1	1.000		
Likelihood Ratio	1.153	1	.283		
Fisher's Exact Test				1.000	.574
Linear-by-Linear Association	.656	1	.418		
N of Valid Cases	17				

a Computed only for a 2x2 table  
b 3 cells (75.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .47.  
p=0.404

**Table M.3:** Improvement in quality of products and gaining more customers because of participating at BITF

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	4.477(a)	2	.107
Likelihood Ratio	4.539	2	.103
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.690	1	.194
N of Valid Cases	17		

a 5 cells (83.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .24.  
p=0.107

**Table M.4:** Relationship between intention to expand business and assets bought in the last two years

Chi-Square Tests					
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.008(b)	1	.929		
Continuity Correction(a)	.000	1	1.000		
Likelihood Ratio	.008	1	.929		
Fisher's Exact Test				1.000	.735
Linear-by-Linear Association	.007	1	.931		
N of Valid Cases	17				

a Computed only for a 2x2 table  
b 2 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .94.  
p=0.929

**Table M. 5: Relationship between current number of employees and the intention to expand the business**

**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.236(a)	2	.539
Likelihood Ratio	1.884	2	.390
Linear-by-Linear Association	.993	1	.319
N of Valid Cases	17		

a 5 cells (83.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .35.  
p=0.539

**Table M.6: Relationship between trade fair customers demand improved quality of clothing and new customers follow producers up after exhibition**

**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	8.169(a)	2	.017
Likelihood Ratio	5.431	2	.066
Linear-by-Linear Association	.003	1	.960
N of Valid Cases	17		

a 5 cells (83.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .12.  
p=0.017

**Table M. 7: Relationship between gained customers due to participation in exhibitions at BITF and increased production because of exhibiting**

**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.970(a)	4	.137
Likelihood Ratio	7.736	4	.102
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.657	1	.056
N of Valid Cases	17		

a 8 cells (88.9%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .12.  
p=0.137

**Table M.8:** Relationship between gaining more business contact because of BITF exhibitions and assigning much of the business profits from exhibiting at BITF

**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	20.570(a)	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	19.502	4	.001
Linear-by-Linear Association	10.979	1	.001
N of Valid Cases	17		

a 8 cells (88.9%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .12.  
p=0.000

**Table M 9:** Relationship between business profits assigned to exhibition at the trade fair and gaining customers due to participation at the trade fair

**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	20.570(a)	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	19.502	4	.001
Linear-by-Linear Association	10.979	1	.001
N of Valid Cases	17		

a 8 cells (88.9%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .12.  
p=0.000

**Table M .10:** Relationship between business profits assigned to exhibition at the trade fair and increased production because of exhibiting

**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	9.652(a)	4	.047
Likelihood Ratio	10.589	4	.032
Linear-by-Linear Association	7.139	1	.008
N of Valid Cases	17		

a 8 cells (88.9%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .06.  
p=0.047

**Table M.11:** Relationship between length of professional experience and quality of products

**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	4.363(a)	5	.498
Likelihood Ratio	5.156	5	.397
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.494	1	.222
N of Valid Cases	14		

a 12 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .29.  
p=0.498