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**INYUVESI  
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**Street trading as a livelihood strategy: A case study of immigrants in Durban.**

**By**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Street trading is part of the informal economy. Many people have rendered the informal sector a useful economy for making money. Trading in the Central Districts Business has remained an effective method of making a living for many unemployed and destitute migrants in Durban. Several migrants are working as street traders due to the fact that it does not require any formal education and it is also open and easy to conduct business. Durban was the first city in South Africa to have successfully implemented a policy that recognizes and manages street trading. However, migrant street traders continue to face barriers that negatively affect their trading businesses.

Using Durban as a case study, the study aims to investigate street trading as a livelihood strategy among immigrants. This study further provides reasons for street trading, assesses the livelihoods of migrant street traders, and also explores the barriers confronting migrant street traders.

This study uses qualitative data from face to face in-depth interviews with both male and female migrant street traders, from different corners of Africa. For many migrant street traders, Durban was not their preferred city of trading, however, they arrived in this city and decided to be street traders. The research revealed that traders use many livelihood strategies to sustain street trading. The core livelihoods employed by traders involve saving profit generated from trading in the streets to cover daily living expenses, customer care, advertisements, and unity. Most migrant traders contribute towards public health and the safety of the city. This research found that street traders face a number of barriers when trying to make a livelihood on the street. There exists a great deal of competition for customers among migrant street traders located in the same vicinity of trading. The study further noted that criminals mingle with migrant street traders. Many traders remain subject to harassment by the metro officials, even if they have valid trading permits. Traders continue to carry businesses without appropriate trading shelters. The development of trading shelters is urgently needed from, the municipality and government officials.

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Thank you all for the support. Your contributions do not go unnoticed.

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## DECLARATION

I Nhlakanipho Nkululeko Prince Mdunge declare that:

- I. This research is my own original work, unless otherwise indicated with references of the original source.
- II. The study has never been previously submitted for any degree or examination in any other institution.
- III. Any quotations, ideas from another author/writer have been acknowledge with reference.
- IV. This research does not have other people's pictures, graphs or information, unless noted with references.

  
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Student

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## **ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

<b>CBD</b>	Central Business District
<b>DFID</b>	Department for International Development
<b>DRC</b>	Democratic Republic of Congo
<b>HIV</b>	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
<b>HSSREC</b>	Humanities and Social Science Research Ethics Committee
<b>IEMS</b>	Informal Economy Monitoring Study
<b>IOM</b>	International Organization for Migration
<b>KZN</b>	KwaZulu-Natal
<b>NY</b>	New York
<b>SA</b>	South Africa
<b>SADC</b>	South African Development Community
<b>SAPS</b>	South African police service
<b>UKZN</b>	University of KwaZulu-Natal
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
<b>UNHRC</b>	United Nations Human Rights Council
<b>USA</b>	United States of America
<b>USD</b>	United States Dollar
<b>WIEGO</b>	Women in Informal Employment Globalizing and Organizing

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# **Chapter One**

## **Introduction**

### **1.1 Background**

Street trading is increasing all over the world and it has become a source of making a living in many developing countries. The drastic increase in street trading is due to a lack of employment opportunities, which has forced many immigrants to come up with innovative strategies for survival. The informal economy has historically been a sector that the poor and impoverished migrants rely on for sustaining a livelihood. The informal economy has many names such as the black economy, the hidden economy, and the informal sector. It is widely known to be an economy that is not taxed and not monitored by any formal entities. This sector not being monitored exposes it to many people taking advantage of the opportunity which opens doors for untaxed and unmonitored informal businesses such as street trading. Njaya (2014) refers to the informal sector as a sector that has self-employed entrepreneurs who partake in activities that take place outside state regulations and unregistered activities that involves illegality such as escaping tax.

This economy is the largest generator of economic growth which is accountable to the poor and unemployed street traders turning to the informal economy to earn a livelihood (Jha, 2018). Globally, the informal economy provides 61 percent of the world's employment opportunities, and two billion men and women sustain their livelihood in the informal economy (Skinner, Reed and Harvey, 2018). The street sector in developing countries has a higher employment rate, in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa street traders account for over 75 percent of employment (Bonnet, Vanek and Chen, 2019; Skinner et al., 2018).

In South Africa, like many other countries, the unemployed are relying on the informal economy for various job opportunities. According to Statistics South Africa (2019), in the second quarter of 2019 the informal sector recorded the largest increase of 114 000 employment gains, street trading recorded the highest gain of 95 000 jobs created. The informal economy accounts for 17 percent of the country's total employment, with over 2.8 million informal jobs provided by this sector in South Africa (Statistics South Africa, 2016).

For the vast majority of people who cannot find a job, the informal sector offers an alternative of providing them with jobs, and a way to generate an income and it also contributes to employment creation and generating of earnings (Cichello and Rogan, 2016).

The informal sector provides an unofficial social security system, it serves as an option for self-employment and it is an avenue for people with insufficient skills for the formal sector (Fourie, 2018). The informal economy has served the purpose of allowing many people to generate their household income, and a chance to become breadwinners, that are supporting a large number of dependants (Fourie, 2018).

Street trading forms part of the informal economy. According to Chakraborty and Koley (2018), hundreds of people earn money and secure their livelihood by selling a wide range of goods and services on the street. Street trading has become an important part of the informal economy and it has also become the only means of creating employment for the unemployed and poor.

Koma (2017) defined street trading as an informal type of business that offers goods and services for sale to the public without any permanent infrastructure for trading. Street trading is characterized by a low level of income, ease of entry, unskilled knowledge, self-employment that is why there exists a high number of people trading in the street (Chakraborty and Koley, 2018). The informal sector has a significant role in the sustainable development of the city (Chazireni and Chigonda, 2018). According to Chakraborty and Koley (2018), street traders are an important part of the informal economy by occupying a significant proportion of total employment in the informal sector.

Street trading includes the selling of a variety of merchandise, such as clothes, food, fruits and vegetables, traditional herbs, cultural-related items by a street trader. Street trading over time has become commonplace in several urban areas, specifically in areas with recreational and public transport facilities (Siqwana and Ndulo, 2014; WIEGO, 2015). Informal street trading is additionally characterised by an absence of formalised and rented municipality spaces, many poor people who are street traders often carry their trading business on pavements next to formalised shops (Brown, 2006; Solomon-Ayeh, 2009; Rosales, 2013).

Migrant street traders in many cities have transformed the street environment to a method of generating income and making a living from selling goods without any support from the government and banks. Sello (2012) observes that street trading involves the selling of goods for the sake of earning a living on public roads. It serves as a method of alleviation of hardships, the creation of employment opportunities and plays a significant role in contributing to the growth of the economy (Sello, 2012). It provides employment opportunities to those who are unemployed, unemployable and underemployed, by absorbing

them effectively and rapidly and further by dynamically creating jobs of their choices, ranging from selling, shoemaking, sewing, knitting, and traditional healing of the sick (Sello, 2012).

## **1.2 Motivation**

Migrant street traders carry out their trading business within an environment not conducive for conducting business because they want to make a livelihood (Peberdy, 2016). This group of street traders is people who can adapt to time and seasonal changes, and also adjust price hikes according to community requirements. Ruzek (2015) asserted that street traders shift according to the wants, desires, and needs of their target market. This is to say that poor people rely on street traders because they sell the same stock sold at formally regulated stores at a very cheap, affordable and reasonable price. Studies suggest that communities view street traders as people who understand their wants and needs since at times prices can be negotiated to what the customer requires it to be without any effort (Ruzek, 2015).

The study is about migrant street traders in Durban. Migrant traders refers to immigrant traders only; it does not includes South African traders. The study is going to use the terms migrant and immigrant. A migrant is a person who moves from his or her area to go live in an area other than that in which he or she was born. Studies suggest that a migrant is an individual who settles on a cognizant decision to leave their nation to look for better opportunities somewhere else. Before he or she chooses to leave their home country, a migrant ensures that he/she find information about that particular country they are moving to, information such as a spoken language used in that area (UNHRC, 2016). According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) (2019), a migrant is an individual who has moved and crossed a border that is far from his or her location of living despite the individual's lawful status in the area he or she has moved to, irrespective whether the movement is intentional or unintentional, the cause of the movement, as well as the amount of time intended to stay in the host country. In addition, UNESCO (2017) indicated that migrants are people who make choices about when to leave and where to go, even though these choices are sometimes extremely constrained.

Migrant street traders make a significant contribution to employment creation. A recent study conducted in Johannesburg, South Africa, Peberdy (2016) found that international migrant street traders are more likely than South Africa street traders to employ other people.

In Durban, South Africa, there are a few studies that focus on the livelihoods of migrant street traders as well as the barriers preventing them from street trading without disturbances from poor shelters, criminals and police harassment. Therefore, empirical evidence is needed. This study focuses on migrant street traders because it intends to fill the gap by specifically focusing on the livelihoods of migrant street traders, as they have a role to play in the development of the country, on nation-building, as well as ensuring the protection of public safety. Therefore, understanding the livelihoods of migrant street traders will rebalance the relationship between South African street traders and migrant street traders, will help promote nation-building and inclusive societies, and tackle growing inequalities within the street environment. This is supported by IOM (2019) who suggested that understanding the issues of migrants will encourage social and economic development. The findings of this study are expected to inform policymakers to find proper measures for managing street trading. The White Paper concurs that international migration must be managed proactively and strategically to contribute to national priorities, such as nation-building and social cohesion, inclusive economic growth and national security (White Paper, 2017).

Currently, the eThekweni informal economy has about 47 500 registered jobs in the informal sector and workers who generate roughly R36629, 59 in monthly revenue, this is an amount generated in total (eThekweni Municipality, 2017). The availability of jobs created by this sector of the economy signals the importance of the informal economy. On the other hand, street traders play the role of contributing to the revenue of the city.

Street trading is the most noticeable sector of the informal economy and plays a huge role in the total number of informal workers in South Africa. The informal economy produces more employment opportunities than the formal economy of South Africa (Jha, 2018; eThekweni Municipality, 2017). Most street traders are self-employed own account workers, they do not work on commission for formal companies and furthermore, they are not monthly wage workers (Roever, 2014).

Durban was selected as a destination of researching because it has successfully implemented methods of managing street trading, through the Durban Informal Economy Policy of December 2001. The eThekweni Municipal Council Policy of 2001 was adopted in February 2001. The policy recognized the importance of the informal economy for both job creation and income generation (Chen, 2012). The city, then, views street trading as an important part of economic planning and development rather than a poverty alleviation or welfare project

and acknowledges the interdependence of formal and informal parts of the economy (Chen, 2012). The promulgation of the policy and infrastructural development typically qualifies Durban as a city of choice for street trading by many immigrants.

Durban is credited as being the first city in South Africa to develop a policy framework for street traders, which made Durban be the first municipality to have introduced a policy for the informal economy (Rogan, 2014). Having a policy for street traders opened more room and opportunities for people to participate in street trading unregistered. The policy is befitting for South Africans with proper and approved legal documents to operate in the street and immigrants who are documented to be in South Africa, leaving out those without valid licenses to occupy the street economy.

The implementation of this policy opened room for more street traders. Durban was estimated to have 24 000 street traders in 2007 (Rogan, 2014; WEIGO, 2015). Street traders in Durban are situated in the Early Morning Market, Berea Station, Bead Market, the Herb Market, the Bovine Head, Music Bridge, Mpepho and Lime Market, Brook Street, Victoria Street Market (WEIGO, 2015). Furthermore, WEIGO (2015) found that street traders in the city sell; fresh produce, fast food, traditional herbs, traditional regalia, mealies as well as fruits, and vegetables. However, this economy faces many challenges including the provision of sufficient shelters, ablution facilities and storage, access to water and sanitation, illegal trading, theft, and damage to infrastructure, overcrowding of trading spaces, noncompliance to by-laws and regulations by traders (eThekweni Municipality, 2017).

Street trading is most dominant among people within the ages 30 – 39 years, and followed by 20-29 years old (Peberdy, 2016). Within these age cohorts, males are found to account for the largest population compared to females, and both rely on street trading as a way of generating an income to make a living (Peberdy, 2016). Males account for the largest number of street traders because the street is a cruel environment, associated with vulnerability to illness and health due to lack of shelter and exposure to harsh weather conditions (Gamieldien and Van Niekerk, 2017; Pederby, 2016). Street vendors often trade in pathways of congested traffic and air pollutants that exacerbate conditions that lead one to contract asthma and tuberculosis (Pederby, 2016).

The exact number of migrant street traders in Durban is difficult to obtain, this is because there is little information available about migrants selling in this city (Hunter and Skinner, 2001). Research has failed to investigate the actual number of street traders operating in

Durban since this investigation is an issue in many cities. According to Dube, Mkhize and Skinner (2013), the dismal failure is a result of seasonal variations, which makes it a challenge to count mobile people. Furthermore, street trades often refuse to be statistically recorded, since most of them do not have operating permits which authorize them to operate legally in the street sector (Dube et al., 2013; Peberdy, 2016). Lastly, previous harassment experiences have made vendors resort to running away from being counted for statistical reasons. Their rejection of being enumerated makes it difficult to obtain reliable numbers of street hawkers operating within the City of Durban. Tshishonga (2015) said that the street sector is a vastly unutilized resource that requires the government to render good use of it and stop regulating the sector through exorbitant taxes and unnecessary operating licenses, which hinders the smooth operations of those already in use of this good resource.

### **1.3 Aim of the study**

The overall aim of the study is to investigate street trading as a livelihood strategy of immigrants in Durban.

The objectives of the study are to:

- Describe the reasons for choosing street trading in Durban.
- Assess the livelihood strategies used by immigrant street traders.
- Explore the barriers facing migrant street traders.

The study was guided by several key questions including:

- Why was Durban selected for street trading by migrants?
- What are the livelihood strategies used by immigrant street traders?
- Which are the barriers that affect migrant street traders?

### **1.4 Theoretical Framework**

The research is guided by the sustainable livelihood framework which focuses on entrepreneurship activities that take, and promise to provide the marginalized, unemployed and poor with opportunities to make themselves a living (Tshishonga, 2015). This approach is grounded on the strong theoretical basis anchored on the asset and people-centered strategies to development (Tshishonga, 2015; Barret, Little and Carter, 2013).

According to Chambers and Conway (1992:7) a livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (stores, resources, claims, and access) and activities required for a means of living; a

livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stress and shocks, maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets, and provide sustainable livelihood opportunities for the next generation; and which contributes net benefits to other livelihoods at the local and global levels and in the short and long-term.

The livelihoods approach views the world from the point of view of the individual, household, and social groups who are trying to make a living in volatile conditions and with the limited asset. It provides a framework for understanding the opportunities and assets available to poor people and the source of their vulnerability, as well as the impact upon them (Timalsina, 2007).

A sustainable livelihood framework is an approach that seeks to fight against poverty, by highlighting how to understand, analyze and describe the main factors that affect the livelihoods of the poor. According to the Department for International Development (DFID) (2000a), a sustainable livelihood approach is a multi-dimensional approach to poverty reduction where sustainability is considered in terms of capital or assets available to individuals. Furthermore, a livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks and maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets both now and in the future, while not undermining the natural resource base.

Street vending is the option for most urban households since it is a precarious activity done by mostly the disadvantaged, impoverished and economically marginalized people (Matenga, 2018; Graaff and Ha, 2015). This is confirmation that people are sustaining their livelihood through trading on the street.

The sustainable livelihood approach depends on the reason that the benefit status of the poor is principal to understanding the choices available to them, the strategies they use to achieve their livelihoods, the results they aspire to and the setting under which they work, for example, the vulnerability context (Ellis, 2000 and Timalsina, 2012). The vulnerability context outlines the external environment wherein individuals exist. People's livelihoods and the more extensive accessibility of benefits are in a general influenced by basic patterns as well as by shocks and seasonality, which they have constrained or no power over. People's livelihoods and their access and control of assets can be influenced by situations beyond their control. The vulnerability frames the external conditions where people exist (DFID, 1999).

Shocks, seasonality, and trends contribute to their vulnerability. Economic shocks, human health shocks, natural shocks, economic shocks, conflict and livestock health shocks make

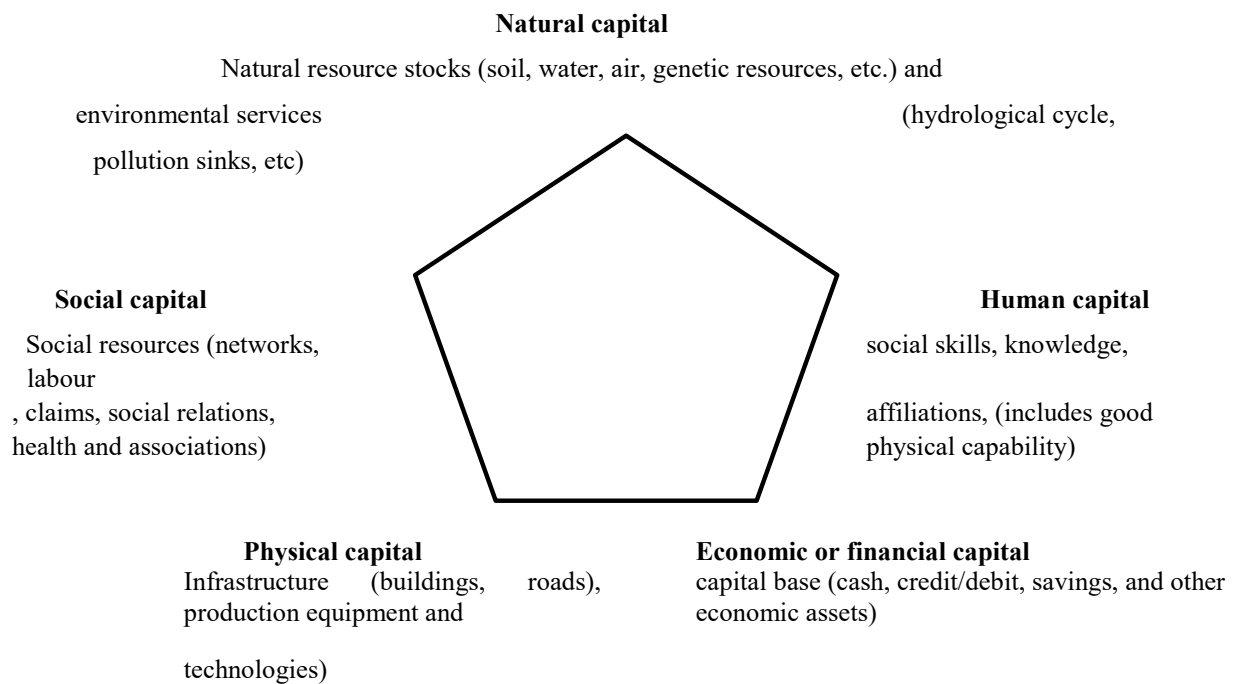


livelihoods vulnerable. Population trends, resource trends, including conflict national and international, economic trends in governance including politics and technologies trends affect livelihoods. Seasonality comprising prices, production, health, and employment opportunities might contribute to vulnerability in livelihoods (DFID, 1999; Parajuli, 2013).

The asset pentagon has five capitals, in the form of assets that are natural capital, human capital, physical capital, social capital and financial capital, (see Figure 1). According to Hussein (2002) and Morse, McNamara and Acholo (2009) who found that these assets frame livelihoods in terms of people's natural resources which include stocks (soil, water, air, genetic resources) and environmental services such as hydrological cycle, pollution sinks. Furthermore, Morse et al. (2009) asserted that social resources include networks, social skills, knowledge, labour claims, social relations, affiliations, and good health and associations.

On the other hand, the human resources capital is made up of skills, knowledge, labour which includes, good health and physical capability. Additionally, the physical resources-assets consists of infrastructure such as buildings, roads, production equipment and technologies (Morse et al., 2009). Lastly, the financial capital base asset includes cash, credit/debit, savings, and other economic assets (Morse et al., 2009). These resources allow for a relationship between street traders, the institutional framework, livelihood approaches and livelihood outcomes (Brauneis and Patt, 2015).

**Figure 1.** The five capitals of a sustainable livelihood approach (adopted from Morse et al., 2009)



Natural capital involves the land, water, and natural assets that are used by individuals to produce their methods of surviving. Sometimes these are alluded to as environment assets and are thought of jointly as involving the environment (Ellis, 2000 and Morse et al., 2009). Natural capital is not static nor is it used for survival purposes constricted to gathering activities.

Physical capital is characterised by economic production processes. Structures, water system channels, streets, instruments, machines, interchanges, are physical resources. In economic terms, physical capital is characterized as a maker of products as differentiated to a purchaser of merchandise (Morse et al., 2009). For instance, streets have numerous impacts in decreasing the spatial expenses of exchanges in assets and outputs. According to Ellis (2000) and Morse et al. (2009), they encourage the development of individuals between places offering diverse income-generating opportunities. Consequently, this is the capital that is accessible to the individuals that empower them to acquire their livelihoods.

It is frequently said that the central asset controlled by the poor is their own work. Human capital refers to the work accessible to the family, its education, abilities, and wellbeing (Carney, 1998 who cited Ellis, 2000:33-34). Human capital is increased by investing in

education and training, as well as by the abilities gained through pursuing one or more occupations (Ellis, 2000 and Morse et al., 2009). It empowers people to work and to obtain a livelihood.

Within the sustainable livelihood framework, financial capital is a category, which is defined as the financial resources that people use to achieve their livelihood objectives, such as resources, it includes available stocks, regular inflows of money (DFID, 1999). These are available to people in the form of savings, supplies of credit or regular remittances or pensions which allows people to pursue their livelihoods (Timalsina, 2007).

As cited in Timalsina (2007) social capital is the internal rules, norms and long-term relationship that facilitate coordinated actions and enable people to undertake cooperative ventures for mutual advantage. It is related to the formal and informal social relationship, interaction, membership of more formal groups, relationship to trusted networks from which various opportunities and benefits can be drawn by the people in pursuit of their livelihoods (Parajuli, 2013).

A sustainable livelihood framework is an approach through which individuals can use their choice of an asset to make a living (Tshishonga, 2015). Livelihood strategies are considered as the range and combination of activities and choices that people make in order to achieve their livelihood goals. Livelihood strategies are how people adopt different activities for survival in different socio-economic and environmental settings (Timalsina, 2007). Livelihood strategies include how people combine their income-generating activities, how they use their assets, which assets they choose to invest in and how they manage to preserve existing assets and income (Morse et al., 2009). Strategies change over time and there is an enormous diversity of livelihoods. The more choice and flexibility that people have in their livelihood strategies, the greater their ability to adapt to the shocks and stresses of the vulnerability context (DFID, 1999).

Livelihood outcomes are the achievements, more income, increased well-being, reduced vulnerability, improved food security, and more sustainable use of natural resource base (Morse et al., 2009). In addition, livelihood outcomes have a direct return on livelihood assets and hence directly alter the choice of livelihood strategies (Parajuli, 2013). A focus on outcomes leads to a focus on achievements, indicators, and progress. An understanding of livelihood outcomes is intended to provide, through a participatory inquiry, a range of

outcomes that will improve well-being and reduce poverty in its broadest sense (DFID, 1999).

### **1.5 Organization of the Dissertation**

The dissertation consists of five chapters. The first chapter introduces the research by providing background information on street trading from a global to a city perspective. It presents reasons that motivated the study as well as the aims of the study. It also discusses the theoretical framework used to understand the situation of migrant street traders. The second chapter covers an overall review of the literature on street trading as a livelihood approach amongst immigrants in Durban. The third chapter outlines the research methods and research design used in this study. It also describes the main methods of data collection and sampling procedures employed in this study. Chapter four presents the key findings from the in-depth interviews. The last chapter of the dissertation discusses the main findings in light of other research and also, provides recommendations for the future.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Literature Review**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter reviews the local and international literature relating to street traders, which is a growing phenomenon globally. As mentioned previously, street traders are generally regarded as part of the informal sector and sell a range of goods and services sometimes under what can be described as trying circumstances. The chapter starts by describing the types of street traders in terms of their mobility, the products they sell, and the infrastructure they use for displaying their trading goods. The chapter outlines the perceptions of street traders, and the role of street traders. The chapter also notes the relationships between local and migrant street traders, constraints on street trading, and the experiences of immigrant street traders in South Africa.

#### **2.2 Type of street traders and their wares**

Various types of street traders are found in virtually every country around the world. A study conducted in India highlighted two types of street traders: mobile, and fixed (those who have a stand and are located in one place, such as along a street) (Prabu, 2018). According to Prabu (2018), mobile street traders are differentiated into various types, such as those who carry their goods on their heads, use pull or pushcarts, move on bicycles, minivans and goods carriers. Recent studies indicated that those using a stand may trade on an old cart or a table and in a designated permanent area (Prabu, 2018).

Devlin (2011) examined four main categories of street traders who do business in the main business district in the city of New York, these being food, non-veteran general merchandise, First Amendment and military veteran traders. Food vendors are normally from other countries such as Middle Eastern Africa and South Asian nations (Devlin, 2011). According to Devlin (2011), non-veteran general vendors sell the same items as military veterans and are not permitted to sell their wares in the city, yet continue to do business. First Amendment traders consist of traders who sell their artwork, such as mass-produced photographs of New York landmarks or celebrities, while military veterans are people who have served in the armed forces and find themselves selling informally, often selling scarves, tourist-oriented t-shirts, and accessories such as jewellery and handbags (Devlin, 2011).

A field survey study conducted in Kumasi, Ghana, divided street traders in the main street (Kumasi Road) into two main groups: sedentary traders and footloose traders. The sedentary trader works in fixed locations using pavements, verandas, stalls, tables, and sometimes on the bare floor (Solomon-Ayeh, King and Decardi-Nelson, 2011). Most are situated in an open area, in town, they sell wares which include home-based meals. They sell cooked food, fruit and vegetables, as well as various manufactured goods, such as stationery, watches, mobile phones and electronic goods (Solomon-Ayeh, King and Decardi-Nelson, 2011). Footloose street traders have no stationary trading areas and move around the central city in search of consumers. Solomon-Ayeh, King and Decardi-Nelson (2011) found that they largely sell items such as newspapers, iced water, ice cream, biscuits, second-hand clothing and various manufactured goods, such as handkerchiefs, toilet rolls, and shaving sticks. They carry their goods on their heads, in their hands or push-carts.

Street trading in South Africa entails trading near a public road, selling goods in designated areas, mobile trading from caravans and light motor vehicles, stalls and kiosks. This also includes any roadside shop, newspaper traders, and windscreen washers. Xulu (2015) reported on the types of traders in Warwick Junction, a large informal trading area in the city of Durban, which has been allocated for the purpose of informal street trading by city officials. The study found that traders who are operating in markets, provide services such as cow heads in the Bovine Head Market, handmade jewellery in the Bead Market and others who sell incense in the Lime and Imphepo Market (Xulu, 2015).

Studies in Thailand have indicated the role of street trading as being regarded as a source of employment for those who are poor, uneducated, and recent immigrants to the cities (Maneepong and Walsh, 2013). According to Milgram (2011) women in the Philippines have made city streets their business venue for selling fresh produce, cooked food, and manufactured goods. Ethnographic field observation in East Los Angeles of street trading, found Latino migrants to be earning an income through street trading (Estrada and Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2011).

Street traders in the United States of America (USA) who work in the street trading business, provide a variety of products to their customers. A survey of street trading in the largest cities in the USA found street traders to be selling written material, being regarded as those who can operate without trading permits in the street of New York City (Carpenter, 2018;

Devlin, 2011). According to Carpenter (2018), food street traders sell sweets, produce, specialty items like lobster rolls, crabs, or pretzels and beverages.

Items provided by street traders in Ghana tend to differ from goods and services sold by traders in the USA. Anyidoho (2013) noted the types of products sold by traders in Ghana include construction materials. Ghana has a growing number of human settlements, as indicated by the growing number of construction projects for both business and residential purposes (Anyidoho, 2013). Ghanaian food trades are mainly women, who sell roasted plantain, as well as local foods such as banku, and fufu (Anyidoho, 2013).

Food street traders in South Africa sell a range of meat products including chicken feet, giblets, livers and beef kidneys (Gamielien and Van Niekerk, 2017). Siqwana-Ndulo (2014) indicated that the majority of street traders in South Africa are Black African women who trade in a range of goods, including sweets, potato chips, cigarettes, clothing, and fruit and vegetables, these being produced by someone else. Those operating near taxi ranks were found to repair cell phones, do haircuts, provide airtime vouchers, sell traditional herbs and repair shoes (DeVries, 2018). Furthermore, a study conducted by Xulu (2015) found that traders in South Africa sell products varying from beadwork, traditional arts, crafts, and cuisine, fresh produce, music and entertainment merchandise, clothing, accessories, and traditional medicine.

In countries where street trading is practiced, the infrastructure used for displaying trading wares differs considerably. Some traders allocate trading sites to themselves, some apply through the available procedures and protocols for obtaining trading infrastructure, while others share trading spaces with families, friends, and colleagues (Mitullah, 2003). A synthesis of empirical finding from Cote d'Ivoire, Kenya, South Africa, Uganda, and Zimbabwe, indicated the different structures used by traders in these countries to display trading products and services, including tables, wheel burrows, stand, counters, booths, kiosks, compartments and market stalls (Mitullah, 2003). According to Mitullah (2003) traders display their goods using mats and gunny plastic bags on the ground, while others hang their products and services over walls, stand corners and fences.

### **2.3 Perceptions of street traders**

Street traders have been viewed in many ways, with some positive and some negative. There have been more negative perceptions than positive perceptions. This is because, in many

developing countries stakeholders, have portrayed street traders as people who are causing chaos in the cities, by selling on public spaces.

### **2.3.1 Positive perceptions**

Street trading is a form of poverty alleviation. Bromley (2000) attempted to investigate the positive perceptions of street traders around the world. The study investigated street trading as a means of sustaining a livelihood for street traders and their dependents. A study conducted by Bromley (2000) suggested that without the street sector many people would be unemployed and this would result in their dependents being poverty-stricken, and the results of being poverty-stricken have the possibility of which would lead their dependents turning to crime and engaging in other illegal activities to obtain a living. Therefore, traders contribute to the livelihoods of their dependents by selling their merchandise on the street.

In some countries, street traders are positively perceived. They are positively viewed for the continuation of street trading (Bromley, 2000). Perceptions of street traders differ in terms of the contribution they make to the country, city and communities (Donovan, 2008; Bromley, 2000). Several previous studies conducted in Nigeria focus on the positive perceptions of street traders such as profit-making (Dipeolu, Akinbode and Okuneye, 2007; Anetor, 2015). According to Anetor (2015), street trading has allowed food street traders to generate monthly earnings by selling their wares on the streets. Diwakar and Renu (2014) further indicated that, in India, street trading has played a prominent role in the lives of many female street traders, by ensuring that there are generating an income and creating employment opportunities for unemployed women.

Shop owners perceive street traders as their partners, through the alliances built both by business shop owners and street traders. Forkuor, Akuoko and Yeboah (2017) argued that shop owners perceive street traders not as offering unfair competition rather as an approach for business empowerment. This is reflected in a study conducted in Mexico City, where Farkour et al. (2017) cited Cross (2009) who suggested that a special alliance exists between street traders and business shop owners, where shop owners would sometimes give street traders their products to sell on behalf of them.

Globally street traders are perceived as self-employed people. They work for themselves, rather than working for an employer (Roever and Skinner, 2016). Furthermore, Roever (2014) reported that street traders also generate a demand for services provided by the formal sector, public and private sectors, including transportation and formal shops and suppliers



from whom they source their goods. They also bring life to dull streets that have been neglected, by serving as living signs to economic activities (Bromley, 2000).

In many countries, street traders are providing gainful employment opportunities to the unemployed and the poor. Street traders in Botswana are generating an income and creating employment opportunities for the urban poor (Carol, Chicho-Matenge and Ongori, 2013). Street trading does not only provide jobs to the destitute, but it also helps those who work in industries that produce goods sold by street traders, and they buy goods from these industries to sell at their designated trading locations on the streets (Chen, 2007). In addition, the researcher argues that street traders source their trading wares from small scale farmers and other small businesses that manufacture products that are sold by street traders (Mazhambe, 2017).

Migrant street traders are often found to be providing employment opportunities to South African nationals. According to Kalitanyi and Visser (2010) African immigrants, from Somalia and Nigeria employ South Africans to sell wares on their behalf. Studies have shown that street traders from the SADC region chose to employ South African citizens than those who come from the same countries as theirs (Hunter and Skinner, 2001). Unemployment in South Africa has disempowered locals economically, and, as a result, the majority of them have found employment provided by foreigners to be an alternative to escape the economic issues facing their country. Ghanaians, have transferred their skills of hairdressing, hair-cutting, and shoe-making to South African citizens (Geyevu, 1997).

There are many reasons for the employment of South African nationals by migrant street traders. According to one study conducted among migrant street traders in Cape Town, South Africa, indicated that locals are employed because they do not have high salary expectations, as compared to foreigners. Moreover, they are easy and outgoing, and also, they are empowered and trained especially in the context of rendering trading business (Kalitanyi and Visser, 2010). According to Sidzatane and Maharaj (2013), who also found that in Durban migrant street traders have contributed to the development of the country by reducing unemployment through employing those South African citizens who previously had no source of income. In addition, informal street traders also provide informal training or apprenticeships to people who would otherwise have remained unemployed or might have engaged in criminal activities (Willemse, 2011).

Street traders often teach themselves many skills within the informal trading environment. According to Bhowmik (2005) most street traders usually start trading with little or no skills concerning their trading businesses. Street traders acquire skills informally while conducting their trading businesses (ibid). There are a number of skills that are acquired by traders in the street. Studies suggest that street traders acquire skills such as marketing, bookkeeping, entrepreneurship, and business management (Bhowmik, 2005).

### **2.3.2 Negative perceptions**

In Egypt and Algeria, street trading activities is viewed as a cause that disrupts both social and public order. The sector is considered as a challenge to the power of authorities, hence they are trying to ban or regulate it (Bouhali, 2018). This is also supported by Asiedu and Agyei-Mensah (2008) who indicated that street trading is the reason for congestion on the streets, pavements, and squares, which are made for pedestrians and not for selling. Street traders are often concentrated in areas where there is a high number of pedestrians. Bromley (2000) reported that street traders may, therefore, contribute to pedestrian congestion, which might lead to traffic accidents, air pollution, and crowded sidewalks. Furthermore, they may be a stumbling block to entrance routes of stadiums, department stores, and hospital entrances, which, in turn, increases the scale of accidents (Farkour et al., 2017; Bromley, 2000).

Street traders may often contribute to the environmental problems in the area. Previous studies suggest that environmental issues, including screaming when advertising their products as well as selling hot food that pollutes the air (Jones, Comfort and Hillier, 2003; Bromley, 2000). This is also supported by Sarpong and Nabubie (2015) who indicated that street traders pile up rubbish on the streets which often blocks major roads, and also disposes of used goods on public roads.

Selling in the street is often associated with criminal activities happening in the area (Reyes, 2013; Boonjubun, 2017; Sarpong and Nabubie, 2015). According to Arisha and El-Moneim (2019), street trading occurs in an environment that may present opportunities for crime, such as armed robbery, and mugging of pedestrians. This opportunity is caused by street trading resulting in the congestion of cities (Coluzzi, 2017).

Street traders and police officials are both involved in a number of illegal social behaviours. Many street traders are paying bribes to the police officials for trading without licences, including invading taxations, the sale of drugs, as well as selling pirated and counterfeit

goods (Reyes, 2013; Li, Ren, Hu and Wang, 2018). These social behaviours negatively portray street trading as a nuisance to city officials, and also makes street traders to be seen as criminals, and drug pedlars (Reyes, 2013; Kwankye, Nyarko and Tagoe, 2007).

Allowing of children to be street traders by parents is perceived as unacceptable behaviour, since it infringes their right to education, it exposes them to dangers of car accidents, and it also takes away the time they have to play (Bromley and Mackie, 2009). Children who are selling on the street may be involved in dangerous activities. Umar (2009) found dangerous activities such as harassment, and molestation, the possibility of learning some social vices, the possibility of the young girl be exposed to sexual abuse in the form of rape, the possibility of being exposed to dangers posed by fraudsters and ritual murderers, and the possibility of the girl child forfeiting her education. In a study conducted in Kampala, Uganda, Young (2003) found that children practice the unhealthiest lifestyles of selling in the street. Many children liked street trading because it is where they can sell their wares freely without being monitored. Researchers explain that allowing children to be street traders exposes them to abuse such as physical injuries, abandonment, sexual abuse, and child labour (Akpan and Oluwabamide, 2010).

Food street traders in most developing countries have been perceived as people who are putting the lives of people in unhealthy and risky situations (Alimi, 2016). Studies have reported that food sold on the streets contributes to the outbreaks of diseases that cause illnesses, such as cholera and diarrhoea (Muyanja, Nayiga, Brenda and Nasinyama, 2011; Alimi, 2016). This is due to the fact that food prepared on the streets gets delivered to customers uncovered, and this exposes it to flies and dust contamination that leads to the airborne pollutants (Canini, Bala, Maragiot and Mediana, 2013). This is also supported by Nurudeen, Lawal and Ajayi (2014) who found that street traders who are non-regulated in Nigeria, Africa, often sell foods that may lead to food poisoning.

Many stakeholders, including municipality and government officials, perceive street traders as negatively impacting the beauty of the cities. Farkour et al. (2017) listed three countries where street traders are portrayed as offensive and illegal invaders, who prevent the ability of the countries to modernize and achieve global status. The countries for which the information was received included Mumbai in India, Colombia in South America, and Santiago in Chile (Farkour et al., 2017 who cited Crossa, 2009).

Government authorities and developmental planners regard street traders to be problematic in the central city districts (CBD) in many countries, by presenting threats of violence, causing traffic congestion, illegally giving themselves trading spaces, and causing road accidents (Bromley, 2000; Davis, 2008; Sarpong and Nabubie, 2015). Municipal officials view street traders as a hindrance to the status of the city, which chases away potential private investment, due to the fact that overcrowding prevents the beautification of the city, by squashing many people in the same place where there is a large number of pedestrians and motor vehicles. To avoid congestions these traders should be relocated or kicked out of the cities (Sarpong and Nabubie, 2015). According to Jones, Comfort and Hillier (2003) who argued that retailers trading from formally owned stores and shops in the city centre complained that street traders are unfairly competing with them by taking their customers and businesses. They usually stand in-front and outside their stores and shops, and sell the same products they are selling at a lower rate than them.

## **2.4 The role played by street traders**

Street traders are often perceived negatively in many cities of developing countries due to the fact that they can be seen as people who are taking business away from formal traders and retail traders. However, street traders are often characterized as people who are reducing crime, paying tax, selling fresh fruits and vegetables, attracting tourists and contributing to nutritional health.

### **a. Crime Reduction**

The presence of street traders contributes to crime reduction in the City. These people are a public eye for many criminal activities taking place in the CBD, by ensuring that they report the latter to South African Police Service and Metropolitan officials. Skinner, Reed and Harvey (2018) found that multiple sidewalks with many pedestrians make the city life safer. Street traders take it upon themselves to uphold and ensure public safety and fight against criminal activities by informing law enforcement officials of any suspicious activities and creating a safe and user-friendly environment that allows a smooth flow of business (Skinner et al., 2018; Dobson et al., 2009).

### **b. Taxation**

All street traders are subject to indirect taxation through the purchases they make since everyone who buys from any formal outlet pays tax. Migrant street traders pay taxes, levies,

and fees that contribute to the growth and revenue of a country (Skinner et al., 2018). Roever (2014) in concurrence with Skinner et al. (2018) also found that street traders with trading permits pay money to have access to rented trading spaces. In Durban, South Africa, street traders pay fees, which contribute 70 percent of the country's revenue that is charged for trading in the municipality, as the street is a sub-structure of the informal economy (Robbins and Quazi, 2014; Skinner et al., 2018). Street traders are willing to pay tax and other costs charged provided that their safety is ensured and they are not evicted.

#### **c. Fresh fruits and vegetables**

Street traders sell fresh food, fruits, and vegetables, often at reduced rates and in small quantities, which may suit pedestrians. According to Skinner et al. (2018), street traders produce relatively safe food and fresh fruits and vegetables with below-average bacterial counts. The issue is not fresh fruits, rather it is government and municipal officials who dismally failed to provide proper and enough infrastructure required to allow a hygiene and environmentally friendly trading space for street traders (Skinner et al., 2018).

#### **d. Tourist attraction**

Many street traders contribute to tourism of the country by attracting tourists from many parts of the world, by selling traditional, culture and heritage-related products. Skinner et al. (2018) agreed with Kim (2012) who suggested that countries in the North need to learn from countries in the South, with regards to how the complexity of vibrant and eye-catching cities attract tourists and uplift the tourism sector of the countries since these countries have legalized street trading and are in the process of adding new street markets. Roever (2014) noted that street trading plays a very crucial role in acknowledging cultural and traditional celebrations by selling herbs, traditional craft regalia, and foods made by local and indigenous people.

#### **e. Food Security**

Food sold by street traders is often cheaper than food sold at formal outlets and is often at a higher quality, fresher and also, easily accessible. Evidence suggests that 70 percent of African households rely upon and buy their food from informal traders, particularly street traders (Skinner et al., 2018). According to Skinner et al. (2018) food sold in the street plays a prominent role in basic nutrition, by providing the body with energy. The streets have been

for quite some time a relevant place for purchasing fresh and reliable food that is of top quality at a reasonable price.

#### **f. Nutritional contribution**

Street traders who sell food, such as fish and related high protein foods play an important role in the lives of many people in rural areas who do not have access to supermarkets or other such outlets in their area. Fish is found to have been sold at a relatively very low price in the sidewalks of the street, which provided a high protein, nutritious and vitamin-rich for the poor who cannot afford to source it from formal food outlets which sell fish at a distinctively exorbitant high price (Mubaiwa, 2014). Fish sold in small scale enterprises are cheaper when compared to the one sold at huge scale enterprises, and include mutton, pork, and beef (Mubaiwa, 2014). Skinner et al. (2018) contend that the global daily energy intake received from a street trader's food amongst adults is 50 percent to 70 percent in the United States of America.

### **2.5 The nature of the relationship between South African and immigrant traders**

The relationship between South African street traders and immigrant street traders is distinctively complex and difficult to assess and understand. Vermaak and Muller (2019) found that unemployment and limited job access is a challenge for many immigrants, and this has resulted in them becoming street traders, and it has helped many to sustain a living from selling on the street. Their success in street trading has made some South African nationals to perceive them as taking away jobs from locals. According to Vermaak and Muller (2019), immigrants are more likely to succeed in the informal labour market than South African citizens.

#### **a. Competition**

There is considerable competition between South Africans and non-South African street traders which stems from the limited spaces and customers. Migrants have been accused of suffocating businesses run by South Africans and taking their customers (Tshishonga, 2015). Taking their customers and trading spaces depicts how immigrant street traders are indirectly in competition with South Africa nationals.

## **b. Migrant street traders as job creators for South Africans**

Many South Africans are poor and rely on employment provided by migrant street traders to make a living. Tshishonga (2015), Vermaak and Muller (2019) and Gebre, Maharaj and Pillay (2011) contend that migrant street traders create employment opportunities for South African nationals rather than stealing their jobs. These studies suggest a poor relationship between migrant street traders and South African nationals and results in tension from the antagonistic relationship.

### **2.6 Relationship between South African police and traders**

The presence of the South African police service (SAPS) within the city of Durban plays a very crucial role in managing street trading. Most street traders are illegal traders without documentation for trading which results in the use of law enforcement as a method of managing street trading (Bénit-Gbaffou, 2018). Previous studies suggest that the relationship between street traders and South Africa Police Service (SAPS) is usually difficult and strained, as a result of law enforcement being viewed as unsympathetic to informal street traders (Munyaradzi, 2012; Legodi and Kanjere, 2015). Some SAPS members provide protection services by illegally charging a fee to street traders operating in the inner city, which is unlawful and unprincipled (Munyaradzi, 2012; Legodi and Kanjere, 2015).

For street traders, the presence of police serves as a barrier to them being able to trade. Clark (2014) and Bénit-Gbaffou (2018) argue that street traders are abused, harassed, and brutalized, have their goods confiscated without proper permission, and take bribes to leave the traders alone. This behaviour from SAPS is ill-treatment of street traders which cannot be reported as these are the same people street traders are meant to be reporting to. On the other hand, the Metro police are responsible for matters related to the eThekweni Municipality and are responsible for enforcing the by-laws regulations within the metropolitan area (Robins and Quazi, 2014). Studies have shown that they have limited power of combating crime in the city while, they are required to provide a supportive role in public safety issues (Robins and Quazi, 2014). The Metro police also play a role in managing street trading by securing municipality property, municipality bylaws enforcement, and crime prevention. Robins and Quazi (2014) found the relationship between the Metro police and street traders have collapsed in the early-2000 when the Metro police took punitive action against street traders for some law-infringement actions occurring in Durban.

## **2.7 Constraints on street trading**

Migrant street traders are affected by some constraints that prevent them from successful trading. According to Willemse (2011) and Tambunan (2004) informal street traders suffer from three common constraints these being, policies and political, economic and socio-cultural constraints. Individuals may experience these constraints when trying to sell on the street.

### **2.7.1.1 Policies and political constraints**

Policies and political constraints are a stumbling block to many street traders and their operations within the street economy and often present challenges and difficulties (Willemse, 2011). The challenges and difficulties include limited trading spaces and participation, taxation hikes, and income vulnerability (Willemse, 2011). Poor and inadequate infrastructure was also found amongst the constraints that presented challenges of street trading within the city.

Migrant street traders are additionally affected by government policies that are implemented to address the needs of South African nationals before other nationals who do not have legal citizenship. This includes a lack of recognition, no trading permits, limited trading spaces, no immigrant street trader's rights that they can turn to address injustices (Willemse, 2011). Therefore, being limited to trading spaces and access to trading permits hinders the opportunity to officially access street trading in a city regulated by-laws.

While the street economy in South Africa is managed by policies, street traders are not guided and protected by policies. According to Ruzek (2015), workers in the informal economy are generally not covered by adequate social protection, such as the structures of the informal labour forces, and have little access to social assistance from the government. This puts street traders at high risk of being exposed to accidents without compensation and remuneration for their services provided to the public at large.

Politics is a major separating factor between South African citizens and immigrant street traders, whereby South African nationals charge the migrant high prices for storage of their goods, such as trollies, and facilities for stalls (Willemse, 2011). According to a study conducted by Willemse (2011) many migrant street traders live far from their trading locations, making it difficult to travel by public transport with their products every day,



which results in South African street traders capitalizing on their situation, and making them pay to hire storage facilities.

#### **2.7.1.2 Economic constraints**

Having no financial means serves as an economic constraint for many migrants who live in South Africa. Many immigrants who come to South Africa have no money and no formal employment opportunities, which exposes their vulnerability to street trading as a form of employment for securing an income to make a living, and to sustain their families and households (Willemse, 2011).

Finding money to start-up street trading is a problem for many immigrants who are unemployed and poor. Willemse (2011) argues that migrants have limited access to formal methods of getting money, such as loans from the bank in a country that is not their own. Therefore, they have to find alternative ways of getting credit from the informal networks to begin their businesses, which includes borrowing money from friends, family members, and loan sharks sometimes who charge exorbitant return rates (Willemse, 2011). These high rates make it difficult for migrant street traders to repay the borrowed money at the proposed times, which then results in conflicts between the loan sharks and the person who borrowed the money.

#### **2.7.1.3 Sociocultural constraints**

The existence of socio-cultural constraints is usually common amongst female immigrant street traders, who disproportionately experience social-cultural constraints to street trading (Willemse, 2011). A study conducted by Willemse (2011), argued that women especially are at most times excluded from resources, goods and services, educational and leadership programs, and decision making. The exclusion has negative consequences for female migrant street traders, as it affects their capabilities to perform their work properly and generate an income.

Women also experience socio-cultural constraints through a lack of business, financial and entrepreneurial skill that often discourages them from exposing their street trading business for opportunities for improvement (Willemse, 2011). According to Companion (2010), suggested that the market and social knowledge are a hindering factor to street trading, as women often teach themselves to street trade, and also receive instruction from other women street traders who are themselves not qualified to provide such entrepreneurship skills. Being

taught how to street trade effectively reveals skills of exploiting the street market and taking advantage of temporary opportunities that arise from time to time (Middleton, 2003).

## **2.8 Governing street trading: A case study of South Africa**

A busy sector like the street economy renders itself difficult to govern, due to the nature of its operations and easy access for business opportunities created by the unemployed and poor. Bénit-Gbaffou (2018) concurs that the city of Johannesburg perceives street trading as an uncontrollable issue, an economy that is impossible to govern and a sector of policy intervention that is bound to fail. However, on the other hand, Bénit-Gbaffou (2018) indicated that street trading can be governed through the eradication of challenges that are associated with three specific characteristics, these being, economic, spatial and social fluidity, and economic fragility.

### **a. Economic, spatial and social fluidity**

The focus of the first characteristics is on economic, spatial and social fluidity of street trading as an economy of policy intervention. Street traders are often mobile usually not found at one spatial space and time and also have adopted methods of mobility intending to dodge authorities responsible for law enforcement in the cities (Bénit-Gbaffou, 2018). Many street traders are not stationary, they come in and out depending on the nature and availability of work since some highly rely on seasonal products. The presence of social fluidity makes the street economy difficult to govern and manage (Roever, 2014; Bénit-Gbaffou, 2018).

### **b. Fragmentation and fragility of street trader mobilization**

Street trader's fragmentation and fragility of street trader mobilization, arise from individual forms of economic fragility, amongst them are independent entrepreneurs who depend on encroachment as the most effective and reliable method to secure their trading activities (Bénit-Gbaffou, 2018). This is also supported by Bénit-Gbaffou (2016) who found that street traders' fragile mobilization supposedly contains a spatial explanation, which makes it different for resident groups, as street traders do not form part of the political constituency for local area representatives. What differentiates them from formal employees, is that they do not have an employer, who will set targets and ensure that they arrive for work. However, street trader mobilization is limited by both their marginalization and oppression, due to their informality and economic fragility, the presence of competition and jealousy among them

results in not giving new traders the space to trade in and access to facilities (Bénit-Gbaffou, 2018; Bénit-Gbaffou, 2016).

### **c. Intractable issues**

There exist challenges and arguments between relevant municipalities units, departments, government, public and private sectors, all of whom are meant to be acknowledging and uplifting the street sector with various forms of supports. This is what Bénit-Gbaffou (2018:401) and Scholten (2013) contended, that challenges facing stakeholders are intractable arguments, which are meant "to defy resolution and obstruct critical debates about a problem situation because the involved actors not only have different ideas about the issue involved but also disagree about the very issue at stake". These are arguments and debates amongst sectors about who is responsible for ensuring interventions for the public concerns affecting street traders.

Street traders are faced with the challenge of being stuck between two government departments that are meant to govern and manage this informal economy. These departments are economic development and public works and infrastructure (Bénit-Gbaffou, 2018). The issue around these two government departments is who is to be held accountable for street traders since they fall both under the umbrella of economic development and public works and infrastructure.

Another concern is the discord between the national government and local government, about governing and managing street trading. According to Bénit-Gbaffou (2018), policies and different government sectors clash with one another. National policies may perceive street trading as a livelihood strategy of poverty eradication that must not be destroyed, whereas the local government sector (Matjomane, 2013; Pezzano, 2016) regards it as a form of land mismanagement, a nuisance, bringing more litter and congestion to the cities.

These debates and arguments have given stakeholders challenges with regards to the governance of street trading and have weakened the relationship and possible alliance between organizations for intervention. Street trading has been difficult to govern, due to poor alignment between the different government structures and departments, the municipality, and the private sectors, all of which are responsible for keeping street trading functioning to its fullest potential without being criticized.

## **2.9 Experiences of migrant street traders in South Africa**

### **2.9.1 Police as criminals**

Police officials have been viewed as uninvolved in criminal activities in the city. On the one hand, migrant street traders are considered criminals. For this reason, it is because migrant street traders are often involved in street trading without licenses, and they are mostly found to be trading without valid trading permits. More importantly, street traders justify themselves for trading in unregulated places, due to a shortage of trading places even in the availability of valid trading licenses (Skinner, 2008). Police officials have been seen as people who are not involved in any illegal activities when it comes to immigrant street traders. They have been seen as people who are involved in maintaining law and order, providing protection to the public and ensuring that no criminal activities are occurring in the area (Crush, Chikanda and Skinner, 2015).

The media has ensured that it hides the criminal activities of police officials against migrant street traders, by making all illegal activities of foreign street traders the centre of attention of the public (Frankental and Sichone, 2005). Police officials are in-fact part and parcel of many crimes against migrant street traders. In many, cities, migrant street traders face harassments from the police officials. This is to say that, many police official's direct harassment to migrant street traders because they have more power than these traders, and can easily hide their wrongdoings (Chiliya, Masocha and Zindiye, 2012).

Police officials harass migrant street traders when they refuse to pay bribes for illegal trading in the city. They face harassment in the form of brutal attacks, intimidation, and threats by police officials (Hunter and Skinner, 2003). A study conducted by Bhowmik (2005) on street vendors in Asia found that street traders are harassed by police because trading on the street is regarded as criminal activities and street traders are often regarded as criminals. A very recent example of police harassment against immigrant traders in South Africa was the attack of migrant traders that occurred in August 2019, in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Studies in South Africa indicate that many migrant street traders who are paying bribes for trading illegally have a huge role to play in influencing the relationships between police officials and immigrant street traders (Legodi and Kanjere, 2015). According to Munyaradzi (2012) police officials often take advantage of illegal street traders by soliciting bribes and asking for some favours from them. A study conducted in India found similar acts, whereby street traders pay weekly bribes to authorities for trading without trading licenses (Kumari,

2015). According to Legodi and Kanjere (2015) police officials usually offer protection to migrant street traders at a cost, they make them pay money to be protected, they inform street traders before evictions are conducted. Munyaradzi (2012) suggest that police officials usually sell goods confiscated from migrant street traders to their friends, and relatives.

### **2.9.2 Crime and insecurity**

Crime has an adverse influence on the migrant street traders. Studies suggest that crime, including insecurities, as well as the attitudes of authorities, negatively impact the businesses of migrant street traders (Alfers, Xulu and Dobson, 2016). Criminals are stealing from immigrant street traders who are trading in the Central Business District (CBD). Studies among migrant street traders in Durban (Vawda, 2017; Amisi, 2006) indicated that traders who are located on highly congested markets near taxi ranks and bus terminals that are crowded with pedestrians are mostly targeted by criminals, due to the perception that they are generating more profits. Many migrant street traders do not like being target spots of criminal activities since it decreases profit earnings and has the possibility of chasing away potential customers. Stealing of trading wares is associated with the loss of stock, decrease of profit earnings, and they discourage traders who are trying to make a livelihood. Loss of profit in some parts of South Africa creates a huge problem (Fatoki, 2014) and loss of earnings is most likely to perpetuate fear of street trading.

Despite the issue of criminals who often mingle with migrant street traders, the hostile attitudes of police may also be a barrier to the reporting of criminals. In their study in Johannesburg, South Africa, Akintola and Akintola (2015) noted that the unpleasant treatment of migrant street traders by the police, and their unwillingness to acknowledge and treat cases reported by migrant street traders, make it difficult for foreigners to trust law enforcement. Previous studies suggest that migrant street traders do not report crimes affecting them, because when they report to the police, they do not do anything (Crush, 2017).

There are many studies conducted on crimes committed against street traders in South Africa, however, attention is almost centred exclusively on local street traders. With a few remarkable exceptions, immigrant street traders have been viewed as people who do not suffer from crimes. Where they have been included, this inclusion has often displayed them as people who are criminals and contributors of criminal activities happening in South Africa, rather than people who usually suffer from crimes (Skinner, 2008).

Both male and female migrant street trader's biggest fear is crime and theft (Barker, 2007). However, female street traders experience higher stress levels due to working long hours (Horn, 2011). According to Siqwana-Ndulo (2014) women are more vulnerable to the serious risk of sexual assault which can expose them to HIV/AIDS especially in a country such as South Africa which has one of the highest prevalence rates. Sometimes persistent low incomes face women traders and the lack of financial security can make these women take risky decisions and be exposed to HIV/AIDS (Legodi, and Kanjere, 2015).

#### **2.9.4 Poor shelters**

Many street traders face unpleasant environmental conditions that can limit trading. Inappropriate trading shelters contribute to the loss of products and profits. As Mitullah (2003) observed that trading spaces occupied by street traders are open and often expose their trading wares to unpleasant weather conditions that negatively affect their fruits, vegetables, and clothes and this contributes to the loss of earnings made by street traders.

Many illnesses come with trading in harsh environmental conditions as a result of poor trading shelters in the city. Oyefara (2005) found that street traders often work in environments that expose them to hazards such as accidents and illnesses. In their study in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, Pick, Ross and Dada (2002) noted that street traders are exposed to biological, ergonomic, physical and psychosocial hazards. Hunter and Skinner (2003) indicated that these illnesses are a result of inappropriate shelter, exposure to the weather elements and other stressful life circumstances. The traders are at risk of eye irritation, dizziness, tightness of the chest, sore throats, colds and coughs (Kongtip, Thongsuk, Yoosook and Chantanakul, 2006). This is also supported by Gamielien and Van Niekerk (2017) who observe that street traders who are trading in the CBD are at risk of exposure to diseases such as asthma, allergies, tuberculosis and chronic bronchitis as a result of working in concentrated air pollution, and congested traffic areas.

#### **2.10 Conclusion**

Street trading occurs around the world in developed and developing countries, which have developed various ways of dealing with them, the trend being to find a way to accommodate them in a regulated manner and manage who trades, where and when. In the South African context, many street traders are immigrants, some do not have the required documentation to be in the country or to trade on the streets. These migrant street traders often have positive and negative experiences. At times, the negative experiences, influence their trading and their

customers. Despite negative experiences, migrant street traders are surviving and managing to secure their livelihoods.

## **Chapter Three**

### **Research Design and Methodology**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The overall aim of the study is to investigate street trading as a livelihood strategy among immigrants in Durban. The study relied on qualitative research methods drawing on in-depth interviews. The focus of the study was on immigrant street traders from African countries, selling their products in the city.

This chapter outlines the research methods undertaken in conducting this study. It provides the geographical contextual of the study, succinctly highlights the research design employed in this study to understand street trading as a livelihood strategy amongst migrants in the city of Durban, South Africa. This chapter also presents the sampling strategy, data collection methods, data analysis procedures, ethical considerations, and limitations of the study.

#### **3.2 Study context**

The study was held in the Durban Central Business District which is located in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. Durban is one of four major urban industrial centres in South Africa and is located in the province of KwaZulu-Natal (KZN), one of the most densely populated regions in the country (Skinner, 2008). Durban is a port city located on the east coast of South Africa. It is the third-largest city in the country, and the largest city in the province of KwaZulu-Natal, the metro is predominantly black African with IsiZulu being the most spoken language (Statistics South Africa, 2019). The number of migrants flowing in Durban's inner city has been growing drastically since the demise of apartheid. Skinner (2008) found that the number of immigrant street traders in Durban from other African countries, documented and undocumented has tremendously increased over the years.

Durban is a sophisticated cosmopolitan city of over 3.8 million people (Statistics South Africa, 2018). It has a land area of 2,297 square km with a population density of 6800 people residing per square mile, Durban is comparatively larger than some South African cities (Statistics South Africa, 2018). This huge number of the population introduces a new and additional set of service delivery challenges for the municipality and other stakeholders responsible for managing the city (Marx and Charlton, 2003).



Durban is a leading domestic destination in South Africa. It is known as the home of Africa's best-managed, busiest port and is also a major centre of tourism because of the city's warm subtropical climate and extensive beaches. Furthermore, eThekweni Municipality (2011) asserted that Durban has earned a place in the hearts of travellers for its golden beaches. The bustling harbour city, standing proudly on the sparkling coast of the Indian Ocean, swirls with the cultures and traditions of its diverse residents (eThekweni Municipality, 2011). EThekweni Municipality (2011) additionally noted that the attractive Moses Mabhida stadium has become an iconic landmark for the city, while the innovation of the beachfront has greatly expanded the promenade, which now stretches from Ushaka Marine World to Blue Lagoon, providing a rich experience for local and international tourist.

### **3.2.1 Study Sites**

The study was conducted in the City of Durban in the vicinity of the area around The Workshop Shopping Centre. This site was mainly chosen because it has shown increasing trends of street traders in Durban, South Africa, it has a facility for foreign guests, as well as street salons (eThekweni Municipality, 2011). There is a huge area outside the shopping centre that is allowed for street trading activities, and free live performances by upcoming artists. Furthermore, around the centre is a park named after the late Gugu Dlamini, an AIDS activist.

Many people are coming to the area because it is close to the old Durban bus station, Virgin Active, Flea Market, South African Police Service, Post Office, eThekweni Municipality Water and Sanitation, Kwa-Muhle Museum, Church Services, Petrol Garages Durban City Hall and the City Library. This area is also close to public taxi ranks. The area outside The Workshop has both local and migrant street traders, but it is mostly dominated by migrants. Trading business around this area is conducted on temporal camping shelters, wooden crates, boxes, and plastics.

Some migrant street traders were found on Monty Naicker Road (previously known as Pine Street, and Dr. Pixley Kaseme Street (formerly known as West Street), outside the area around the supermarket, Shoprite. The area around Shoprite was selected because it has a lot of both local and immigrant street traders in the city Durban. This area is located in the Central Business District (CBD) of Durban, where there are many pedestrians passing-by during their shopping activities. Many street traders located around this area conduct their trading business on self-made trading shelters which consist of boxes, wooden storage crates,

and plastics. These wooden fruits storage crates and boxes are also used for packing and storing of their trading wares when they are done working.

**Figure 3.1 Map of Durban Central City**



*Source: Google Maps (2019)*

### **3.3 Research Design**

The research used qualitative methods for understanding street trading as a livelihood strategy of immigrant street vendors in Durban. Qualitative methods are useful because they assess the lived and real-life experiences, feelings, and emotions, social movements, cultural phenomena, organizational functioning and interactions between these people (Cropley, 2015; Rahman, 2017). This method was adopted as a result to holistically understand the livelihood strategies and human experience of the participants in the precinct of Durban (Rahman, 2017). Qualitative methods have the advantage of obtaining detailed descriptions of livelihood strategies used for survival in the street and the challenges within the street economy. This is also supported by researchers Silverman (2010), Wilson (2014) and Tuohy, Cooney, Dowling, Murphy and Sixsmith (2013) who found that qualitative methods leave out contextual sensitivities and focus more on experiences and meanings, helping to uncover, interpret and understand the participant's experience. This was done by allowing the research participants a chance to respond to questions posed to them in a free and flexible manner. There are disadvantages to using qualitative research methods. Previous studies suggest that too much involvement of the researcher leads to subjectivity and data that is not generalizable (Queirós, Faria and Almeida, 2017). As a result, immigrant street traders in the inner-city Durban are not a representative sample of the foreigner population trading in this city.

The research was conducted in the form of a case study of the eThekweni municipality central business district of Durban, in South Africa. The type of case study that were used by the study was a descriptive case study, which focused on immigrant street traders from a range of African countries, selling their products in the city. A case study design frame was employed in this study to obtain a descriptive understanding of an individual's real-life experiences. Starman (2013) and Simons (2009) found that a case study is an in-depth exploration from multiple views of the complexity and uniqueness of a particular project, institution, program, project and a system in real life. It is a single case or a small number of cases, such as an individual case, family case, organization, and community-related case studies (Starman, 2013). The study employed case studies to find information that was missed by previous research. George and Bennett (2005) said that the potential of case studies is to achieve high conceptual validity, strong procedures for fostering new hypotheses, and usefulness for closely examining the hypothesized role of causal mechanisms in individual settings.



### **3.4 Sampling strategy**

Snowball sampling is a non-probability sampling technique. A non-probability method of sampling guided the study with regards to sampling the size and selection of research participants who participated in the study to achieve the objectives. Participants were selected using snowball sampling. According to Naderifar, Goli and Ghaljaie (2017) snowball sampling is a convenient sampling method.

To be eligible for the study, participants in this study had to come from outside of South Africa. They had to be trading in the inner-city Durban, despite being regulated or undocumented. They had to be ten females and ten males, who had a place to trade. This selection was done to investigate street trading as a livelihood strategy among immigrant street traders. The purpose was to describe the reason for choosing street trading in the inner-city Durban and also to explore the barriers facing migrant street traders.

The target population of the study included immigrant street traders, both males, and females, documented and undocumented, operating within the central city of Durban. The number of the targeted population was 20 participants, who were then interviewed using in-depth interviews to investigate the livelihood strategies used by immigrant street traders in Durban. These interviews were useful in achieving the objectives of the research. Participants of this study used English and IsiZulu in responding to the interview questions. Responses received in IsiZulu were translated into English. Most participants displayed an understanding towards the questioned posed to them.

A snowball sampling method was used in the selection of ten males and ten females. The researcher obtained participants by approaching the first participant who consented to partake in the interviews. A total number of ten males were found through the referral of other participants. The first respondent who participated in the study was approached directly. After the interview session, the researcher asked for recommendations for other potential participants to be interviewed, and the respondent referred the researcher to other immigrant street traders. This method is applied when it is difficult to access participants with the required characteristics for the research study. Naderifar, Goli and Ghaljaie (2017) point out that the existing study participants recruit future participants among their associates or colleagues.

Obtaining immigrant street traders was not an easy task because some participants were afraid of being reported for street trading without licenses, and several participants were

assuming that the researcher is working with the municipality officials. Alvi (2016) indicated that snowball sampling is useful for selecting and approaching the type of population which is not readily available.

### **3.5 Data Collection**

#### **3.5.1 In-depth Interviews**

Once a migrant street trade consented to partake in the study, they were then interviewed using an in-depth interview process of obtaining data required to fulfil the research questions and objectives. Studies suggest that in-depth interviews are widely employed as a qualitative research strategy to gather information about participants' experiences, beliefs, and views in relation to specific research questions (Lambert and Loiselle, 2008; Ryan, Coughlan and Cronin, 2009). In their study, Showkat and Parveen (2017) suggested that an in-depth interview is an important qualitative research approach that the researcher employs to collect data directly from research participants. They indicated that interviews are also of paramount importance due to them being goal-orientated, intending to get out desired information from a respondent, these may be conducted at various places such as a school, street, market, home and college (Showkat and Parveen, 2017).

In-depth interviews are also known as a one-on-one approach to obtaining information in a more detailed and understandable way from a respondent. In this study, participants were asked, encouraged and promoted to speak out in-depth about street trading as a livelihood strategy (Showkat and Parveen, 2017). In their study, Showkat and Parveen (2017) noted the advantages of in-depth interviews are that they provide much more detailed information when compared to other forms of data collection approaches for instance surveys.

A total of twenty in-depth interviews were held on the street where an immigrant street trader sold their products. In-depth interviews were held with both registered and unregistered immigrant street traders. Three in-depth interviews were conducted with unregistered women migrant street traders. Seventeen in-depth interviews were conducted with both registered men and women migrant street traders. These interviews occurred on days and times suitable for the street trader to avoid disruption of their daily hawking activities. The study was conducted in September and October 2019. All interviews of the study lasted between thirty to fifty minutes.

At the beginning of each and every interview session, the researcher highlighted that respondents can attend to customers at any time of the session. Participants were informed of voluntary participation to ensure the trustworthiness of the study. All respondents who were recruited to participate in the research study were not asked any personal information such as identity document numbers, real names, and surnames. An in-depth explanation of the research objectives was provided to participants who voluntarily consented to partake in the research study. The participants were told of confidentiality and the right to withdraw from the interview at any given moment without any negative consequences and had all right not to answer some questions posed to them and questions which appeared to invoke negative psychological emotions. After the participant indicated their willingness to participate in the study he or she was then issued an informed consent form to sign.

The researcher was non-judgemental and positive through the course of the interviews. This was done to receive useful information as possible, to be trusted by the participants and also to ensure that the participant was comfortable and flexible enough to provide in-depth information to meet the objectives of the study.

Research fieldwork was recorded digitally and it was transcribed within 24 hours of each interview. Ryan, Coughlan and Cronin (2009) highlighted that it is important to gain verbatim responses, be it in the form of a video recording or tape recording of the interview, to analyse and extract information from these interviews, and to ensure the validity and reliability of data received. Transcribing data allowed the researcher to identify communication symbols of pain, anger, and weaknesses through a tone that a street trader used when responding to the interview questions.

In-depth interviews have their shortcomings. This form of obtaining data is a time-consuming approach. Interviews being on a one-on-one basis consume ample time of the researcher for the interview session. In this study, the interview sessions of this study took between thirty to fifty minutes to conduct. This time was long for most immigrant street traders since these interviews occurred during their working time. Transcribing of information was also time-consuming since the interviewer had to ensure that he translate interviews received from IsiZulu to English thereafter he transcribed ensuring that he does not leave out any information. In addition, analyzing and reporting of information took ample time for the researcher.

### **3.6 Data analysis**

The interviews were conducted face to face with those who voluntarily consented to participate in the study. Information received from the research interview was analysed using manual thematic analysis. Maguire and Delahunt (2017) concur that thematic analysis is the process of identifying patterns or themes within qualitative data. The researcher identified patterns which in this case were important to address the key research questions. Some studies suggest that it is a method for identifying, analysing, organizing, describing, and reporting themes found from information gathered during research fieldwork (Braun and Clarke, 2006; Nowell, Norris, White and Moules, 2017).

A thematic analysis approach is a useful tool for analysis. Braun and Clarke (2006) found that thematic analysis has the advantage of being a useful method for examining different perspectives of various research participants. Several studies suggest that thematic analysis also has an advantage of highlighting similarities and differences, gathering unexpected views, forcing the researcher to adopt a well-formulated method with regards to handling information, which helps the researcher to submit a clear and well-organised study (Nowell et al., 2017; Braun and Clarke, 2006; King, 2004).

Response received from interviews were organised under key themes. According to Maguire and Delahunt, (2017), and Javadi and Zerea (2016) there are various forms of analysing data using thematic analysis. The researcher employed the six steps developed by Clark (2006) in analysing data from the research respondents. According to Maguire and Delahunt (2017), this is thus far the most influential and recommended framework, because it is a clear and usable approach when using a thematic analysis. Data obtained from the study participants were individual thematically analysed using the six steps approach to extract clear, useful, trustworthy and insightful information required for the research study. The information was analysed using themes provided in the six steps framework which includes becoming familiar with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining themes and lastly write-up (Braun and Clark, 2006).

The researcher thoroughly and diligently read and re-read the research findings that were transcribed. The information was then organized in a meaningful way to help assist the researcher to easily understand the data. This is to say that the researcher organized the information by extracting useful data related to the research objectives. Once the themes were organized, the researcher double-checked for themes that were related to each and combined

them. This resulted in themes being reviewed for coherence and relevance, which led to a summary of all reviewed themes. This summary demanded the researcher to seek the meaning of each theme. And lastly seeking the meaning of each theme resulted in the researcher writing down all themes by relating the theme to the research questions, to fulfil the objectives of the research study.

The flexibility of thematic analysis can at times for novice researchers lead to inconsistencies and a lack of coherence from information analysed in the research study (Javadi and Zerea, 2016). The researcher tried avoiding inconsistencies by being objective as possible at all times.

### **3.7 Ethical considerations**

Ethical approval was needed to conduct this study. Ethical clearance of the research was obtained from the Humanities and Social Science Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC) of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The researcher, therefore, complied with all the ethical requirements of the ethics committee. This was done by ensuring the protection of participants' rights, informed consent, anonymity, and confidentiality. Participants that were recruited voluntarily signed the informed consent form ensuring their freedom to withdraw from the research study and ample time was given to participants to reflect whether they wish to participate in the study or not to partake in the study. A letter and a research interview guide were given to participants who agreed to participate in the research study, and full explanations of the study were done before participants agreed to sign the consent forms.

Participants who understood the study and agreed to partake in the study went ahead with signing the informed consent forms with the aim of verification of their consent before the interview session commenced. Transcripts in the form of a cellphone recorder permission were granted by the respondents ensuring that the recordings had no identifiable features and their information was protected using a cell phone password of the researcher. Participants were asked not to include their real name during the time there were filling the consent form. Information and transcripts received from respondents are kept in a locked office within the university's premises. Electronic data and files are stored in a password-protected file that only the researcher has access to. All electronic data will be permanently deleted and any hard-copies will be shredded after five years.



### **3.8 Limitations of the study**

Conducting research interviews with migrant street traders was a challenging process for both the participants and the researcher. The first issue the researcher encountered was the language barrier. Migrant street traders within the vicinity of Durban are not fluent in speaking English, due to their contextual background of origin, some migrant street traders were from Congo and could speak French fluently. This problem made it difficult for the researcher to explain some questions.

Some immigrant street traders in Durban are not authorized to street trade within the inner city of eThekweni, even after a thorough explanation of the research aims and objectives they still assumed the researcher was working with the municipality and police to spy on them. This resulted in some of the migrant street traders refusing to partake in the research study. Many traders who participated helped recruit participants for the study and assured them that the researcher is not a spy and is here for academic purposes.

Some street vendors who were recruited refused to participate because in 2014 data collectors came to the vicinity and in 2015 xenophobic attacks rose. Again, in 2019 after some data collectors came to the area again there was an outbreak of xenophobic attacks against foreigners.

Many immigrant street traders agreed to participate in the study but refused to sign the informed consent form and also did not want to be recorded.

All participants of the study were situated in an environment where there was a large movement of people, loud music and the movement of cars. These distractions were not avoided because participants refused to move from their trading stations to other places where there was less noise. Interviews had to continue regardless of the abovementioned distractions.

### **3.9 Summary**

The researcher was able to overcome issues that arose during the process of data collection among immigrant street traders in the inner-city Durban. Participants who responded to the research interviews of this study were immigrant street traders from African countries, operating within the city Durban. This chapter has provided the geographical context of the study, and diligently highlighted the research design employed in this study to understand street trading as a livelihood strategy amongst immigrants in the city of the eThekweni

Municipality. Moreover, the study outlined the sampling strategy, data collection methods, data analysis procedures, ethical considerations and limitations of the study. All the 20 participants voluntarily consented to partake in the research study.

## **Chapter Four**

### **Findings**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

The aim of the study was to investigate street trading as a livelihood strategy for migrants, the reasons for choosing street trading, as well as the barriers facing them in Durban. Data were collected mainly through in-depth interviews with 10 females and 10 males who are migrant street traders using the snowball sampling technique. This chapter begins by presenting the participants' demographic details and thereafter the main themes from the interviews. It discusses the underlying reason for street trading in Durban as a destination, reasons for choosing street trading, and the advantages of street trading. The chapter assesses the livelihood strategies used by immigrant street traders to sustain their trading business that make them successful in spite of the municipality bylaws, crime, and competition. It outlines the measures used by immigrant street traders to cope with the Municipality bylaws and policies, and their contribution to keeping the environment clean. The chapter explores the barriers immigrant street traders face in Durban and the strategies they use to overcome these challenges associated with street trading. The chapter briefly provides some of the benefits of street trading. Lastly, it discusses the needs of immigrant street traders to trade without disturbances.

#### **4.2 Demographic details**

Table 4.1 presents the profile details of the female migrant participants, all of whom were from African countries, mainly the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Mozambique. The highest level of education of the female participants of the study ranged from grade 11 to college, while one woman reported having no education. Most were married, lived in households with other members, with households ranging in size from four to 12. Three female participants reported that they did not have a license for trading in the regulated municipality trading area, while two were not legally in South Africa. Among the three female whom were trading without trading licenses, one had her little daughter trading with her, who could be heard talking in the background during the digitally recorded interview. All the participants who reported to be trading without licenses were doing so without a shelter, their products being displayed on a plastic bag on the floor and on wooden storage crates.

**Table 4.1: Profile of Female Traders**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Name (Pseudonyms)</b>	<b>Race</b>	<b>Country of Origin</b>	<b>Education</b>	<b>Marital status</b>	<b>Household size</b>
1	Marget	African	Zambia	Grade 11	Married	11
2	Kembo	African	Congo	Matric	Married	10
3	Mungala	African	Congo	Matric	Married	9
4	Kassongo	African	Congo	Grade 11	Married	6
5	Shamen	African	Zimbabwe	College	Married	6
6	Marth	African	Mozambique	Grade 10	Single	4
7	Maria	African	Congo	Grade 12	Married	7
8	Pete	African	Mozambique	Grade 10	Single	12
9	Maria	African	Mozambique	None	Separated	9
10	Susan	African	Mozambique	Grade 7	Single	5

- The names used in this study are pseudonyms.

Table 4.2 presents the profile information of the 10 male participants who were all from African countries, mostly Ghana, Guinea, Malawi, Nigeria, and Senegal. Their highest level of education ranged from Grade 6 to university, with most having completed their secondary education. Most migrants reported that they were single, with only four having ever been married. They indicated that they were living in households with other members, with household sizes ranging from two to 50. All of the men participants reported that they were legally in the country.

**Table 4.2: Profile of Male Traders**

No.	Name (Pseudonyms)	Race	Country of Origin	education	Marital status	Household size
1	Joe	African	Senegal	Form 2	Single	5
2	Dame	African	Senegal	Matric	Single	12
3	Mussah	African	Nigeria	Degree	Widowed	50
4	Emeka	African	Nigeria	Secondary	Single	28
5	Jhoni	African	Guinea	Matric	Single	10
6	Cheikh	African	Malawi	Grade 6	Single	2
7	Alexis	African	Ghana	Matric	Married	4
8	Okafor	African	Ghana	University	Single	15
9	Diaye	African	Senegal	Grade 8	Married	9
10	James	African	Malawi	Form 3	Married	5

- The names used in this study are pseudonyms.

Two migrant street traders indicated that they are working for someone who was also a foreigner. Eight participants noted that they have trading permits obtained from the municipality that allows them to trade legally, but two said that they do not have trading sites. They further highlighted that while the area they are situated in is not demarcated for street trading, they do not have any issue with the police. All participants were trading on self-built shelters that were built from camping and base tents, being temporal and removed daily after work.

#### **4.3 Reasons for coming to Durban**

##### **4.3.1 Durban as a preferred destination of street trading**

The study found that immigrant street trades came to Durban in search of business opportunities available in this city. In the interviews, the researchers explored the participants related to Durban as the preferred destination, why they were involved in street trading and the advantages of trading in Durban. Many participants came to Durban because they knew other immigrant street traders who were already living and working in this city. One participant reported that he came to Durban because he had heard that it was cheaper than other cities in South Africa, such as Cape Town and Johannesburg.

*“The person who received us stayed in Durban, that is why we came straight to Durban” (Kembo, 2019).*

*“I just like Durban, things are cheap here compared to Johannesburg and Cape Town” (Maria, 2019).*

Many immigrant traders indicated that they had come to Durban because they had friends, and had heard from them that there were employment opportunities in the city. However, they were disappointed on arrival to find that there were very few employment opportunities available for them in this city.

*“There were some of my friends I use to contact before I came here. I was thinking when I come here I was going to find a job” (Jhoni, 2019).*

One participant reported that he was attracted by the favorable weather conditions suitable for outdoor activities, such as street trading, throughout the year. The weather was his main reason for migrating from his own country to Durban.

*“I choose Durban because of the weather, I am telling you it is the weather” (Dame, 2019).*

A participant noted that her reason for coming to Durban was that she was called to work as a domestic worker at a home located in KwaMashu township, but she left the job because she was not paid enough to cover her living expenses. She then decided to become a street trader, since this was the only alternative job available to her. She further said that the person whom she worked for sometimes came to her trading place to ask if she could come back, but she refuses because the salary has not increased. Some participants argued that they did not choose Durban as their destination of street trading, but they arrived in this city and after their arrival, they had no other options other than street trading in Durban. This is because they did not know any other cities they could go to.

*“I did not choose a town, I arrived in Durban” (Maria, 2019).*

#### **4.3.2 Street trading as a choice**

The streets of Durban are crowded with immigrant street traders selling their different products. They are crowded on the streets because this is the only means of employment for the majority of foreigners from African countries to earn an income. Many immigrants did not choose street trading as a career, they did it because when they arrived they did not have

any formal employment. Unemployment forced them to be street traders. Some participants did it because their partners were already street traders in Durban, and this opened an opportunity for them to be street traders too. They are now able to put food on the table and pay rent and other household bills. Most of the traders reported that they worked on the streets to fight poverty, with several participants noting that it was not a matter of being able to choose a job that they liked or wanted, rather street trading was the only option available to them regarding gainful employment. Many traders confirmed that they chose street trading because it is the only job they can do with their own hands, as they have never worked before or acquired a formal skill for employment purposes. They noted that they are trading because they cannot find jobs in their own countries due to the harsh economic conditions.

*“Because in our country there are no jobs, and things are not good. I came here open to any type of employment I did not choose to be a street trader. I am looking for money, you see. I am not looking for employment that is good or bad. I came here to South Africa to find something that will make me money so that I can be able to take care of my children”* (Shamen, 2019).

One of the traders noted that he chose street trading because he wanted to work for himself, without having an employer. He noted that he does not like sitting at home and doing nothing and wants to take responsibilities by himself without the assistance of anyone, the desire for self-employment, therefore, made him become a street trader.

*“Because life is not easy, and I wanted to work for myself. I don't like sitting at home. I just wanted to work on my own without having a boss or a manager and to take the responsibility of all my needs”* (Joe, 2019).

Another participant also said that she did not have the option of choosing the type of job she wanted to do. However, she took a job that was available to her. A job of street trading. She became a street trader due to the fact that she was unemployed. She further uttered that she could not find formal employment and therefore decided to employ herself, to generate money for covering her living expenses. Such as food to eat.

*“I did not have the option of choosing, because life forced me to be on the street. As a person who did not have a job, I saw the need to sell on the street. I decided to become a street trader because I wanted to get money to buy something to eat”* (Martha, 2019).

One of the migrant street traders highlighted that immigrants are blocked from getting employment opportunities in South Africa. He termed being blocked as a “red-tape”, and also noted that migrants departed from their home countries because of psychological and economic issues caused by years of unemployment. He felt that despite being qualified and having the necessary skills required to obtain a particular job in South Africa, immigrants will not get that job as they are locked out of formal employment due to citizenship. He indicated that employment in South Africa is selectively reserved for South African citizens, with no employment available for them as migrants from African countries.

*“Most of us.... Firstly, there is a red-tape for foreigners living in South Africa. Some of us left our countries due to economic reasons or different reasons. This is because we might be going through psychological issues, so we just wanted to get out of our home environment to a new place. Once we got in South Africa we realized that we cannot secure ourselves a job due to a red-tape that is preventing foreigners from being employed” (Mussah, 2019).*

He also added that being unemployed has left them with no option but to resort to street trading as a way of obtaining a livelihood. Additionally, when immigrants arrived in Durban, he indicated that they found the area around the Workshop (shopping centre in central Durban) vacant and deemed it a suitable space for rendering trading business. As a group of unemployed migrants, they applied through the right channels and were granted permission to do business. Thereafter, they started street trading.

*"Us as migrants we have no choice, but to try something else, it is either you are going to become a street trader and sell water in the street or find something to survive that will make you a living. Some people who are trading here at the Workshop found this place open at the time of their arrival in Durban. Then there was an opportunity for people to come and trade here at that time. Some of us applied for trading permits and trading sites, the municipality permitted us to use the space we then started selling our items” (Mussah, 2019).*



### 4.3.3 Trading in Durban an advantage

According to the participants, trading in Durban is an advantage due to the easy accessibility of many people. As the city is busy with a large population, attracting many visitors to the area from different parts of the world. Most importantly the city attracts tourists who support migrant street traders. Some participants indicated that those who come to the city buy from them because they admire the service they provide. Migrant street traders provide a variety of services to the public, such as manicure and pedicure, haircuts and make-up services. Many participants offer their services at a cheap rate compared to formal outlets.

*“Working in Durban is an advantage because it is a busy place, many people come to us in the Workshop because of the work we are doing. We are offering them our cheap services, which allows them to look beautiful due to our stunning nails. A lot of people admire looking beautiful. The services that we offer even attracts the tourists to come to get their nails done by us people working at the Workshop” (Marget. 2019).*

Some of the immigrant traders said that Durban is a calm and collected city that is not overcrowded, it is open to their trading business and also provides them with many trading opportunities. However, trading in this city is not easy, but they are striving hard despite the challenges that prevail. A migrant street trader said that street trading is not an advantage for her because she is not generating enough money to cover all her expenses, and she also noted that she does not have anything else to do as she is poor and unemployed. Street trading is the only gainful employment opportunity available for her. She added that the money she is generating from the street is little to the extent that she cannot even afford to go home when death occurs. For example, a family member passed on and she was not able to go home attend the funeral, in addition, she was not able to send money to her family back home to cover some of the burial costs. She further asked what she is going to eat if she does not sell her products on the street. The participant indicated that she has children that she sends remittances back to her home country. This money she sends home allows her children to attend school. The money she sends home also plays a role in buying groceries for her family.

*“It is not an advantage, but what am I going to do because I am very poor? If I should not sell what will eat? My children are at school, I am able to send them the little money I make out of selling. If I do not sell in the street, my children will go hungry and starve” (Pete, 2019).*

## **4.4 Livelihood strategies used by migrant street traders**

### **4.4.1 Saving**

All participants reported that saving money to sustain their trading businesses was the common livelihood strategy for them. This is to say that profit generated through trading was saved to cover living expenses, as well as trading costs, such as paying rent and buying more trading stocks. Some traders noted that not enough money is made from selling in the street, but they are trying with the little money they are generating in a day.

*“We survive through saving money that is earned from selling in the streets”*

(Maria, 2019).

One immigrant street trader highlighted that he needs to make sure that he has ‘capital’ first before venturing into the informal economy of street trading. Once that money is available, it can be used to open a business, which will generate profit. Profit made is then used to sustain the business by ensuring that trading merchandise is always available, and to obtain a livelihood. The following quotes reflect the guideline provided for making earnings, and how he uses the profit earned:

*"In business ... You must make sure you have capital first, and after you have capital, that is when you can start selling for profit earnings. Profit generated from selling here is the money you must use, so that means you don't need to use capital, you use profit. For my needs, I use profit generated so I make sure capital is still available" (Dame, 2019).*

It can be seen from the above quotation how a migrant street trader goes about saving and using the earnings generated from selling in the street. The guideline also provided that a person may use saved profit for their own needs, and can still be left with more profit if managed properly.

### **4.4.2 Self-motivation and customer care**

All immigrant street traders indicated that they use respect as a strategy of ensuring that they keep their trading business running. Many traders said that they stick to punctuality by showing up on time at work. Some participants noted that they have a sound work ethic that allows them to arrive for work every day, and avoid being absent for no valid reason at work.

*“Because I respect my job, whenever I get tired I rest. If I feel I am strong and have the energy I come to work every day, I don’t have a problem”* (Kembo, 2019).

Many migrant street traders pointed out that they rely on the courage to keep their trading business running. They further highlighted that it is not going well in the streets, as they do not make a lot of money due to their expenses. Several participants indicated that they do not make money on the streets because life is harsh and even brutal, but it is important to remain stronger in order to make a living. One female participant had the following to say in relation to courage:

*“I use courage to keep me going. Here in the street, nothing is going well, because there is no money”* (Martha, 2019).

One participant noted that he sustains his livelihood through perseverance and endurance, as street trading is an unpredictable business that is subject to fail anytime. He also added that he cannot sit at home and do nothing because of a few bad days. He pitches up for work even in the face of struggles, such as a day that has no customers buying from him. Bad days do not deter him from trading daily.

*“Nothing much. I rely on perseverance, and endurance, because sometimes it is on and off in this place, customers sometimes come, sometimes they do not come, but I cannot just sit at home and do nothing, you need to keep on coming. Do you understand? That is how I am making a living”* (Alexis, 2019).

A clothing street trader explained that he has been using the same strategy for many years, a strategy that has ensured him a smooth operation of his business. He has been relying on this method of buying low and selling high, patience as a strategy has kept him surviving in street trading. He highlighted that he has never lost hope in himself because he has been going for many years. He made an example that he has been on his trading tents for more than four hours and has not sold anything since morning. Not selling anything on a specific day does not promote that he must quit his street trading job, but it pushes him to continue selling and looking for customers. He believes in himself, because he trusts that one day he will succeed, in the presence of low-profit days. In addition, he added that rainy and sunny days do not prevent him from coming to work.

*“I am a one strategy man. I have applied the same strategy for years, even now I am still using that strategy. A strategy of buying at a cheap rate and selling at a high rate. This patience has kept me going for years. As you can see I am sitting right here with you since morning, and I have not sold anything, so I believe that maybe in a few hours I will sell one or two things. I cannot be deterred by rainy and sunny days that negatively affect my trading business”* (Cheikh, 2019).

A participant reported that she attracts customers to buy from her by being friendly. She further explained that she uses patience to her advantage and in this way, she always has customers coming to her. In addition, she indicated that she is always nice to her customers. This helps her to establish and secure long-term relationships with customers. A happy client will always come back, she added. She also relies on civility and politeness, as a means of ensuring that customers are happy.

*“I am friendly with everybody. You see when it comes to customers, you have to be patient, if you are very rough or something is not good you will not have more customers coming to buy from you. If a person comes to my table and feels like buying something, I ensure that I wear a smile on my face, and also ensure that I make them feel welcomed, you see, patience is all I use”* (Shamen, 2019).

According to many participants, they ensure that they maintain a positive attitude towards their customers, since having a good relationship with customers always attracts more clients. In addition, if customers are ensured a good relationship and a positive attitude they are likely to become life-time and long-term customers.

#### **4.4.3 Advertisements**

Some participants have the trading infrastructure, such as shelters and tents, while others do not have, but rely on other forms of displaying their trading products. The participants mentioned that they are forced to sit on a mat because they do not have a proper trading place and enough funds to rent one, with one trader indicating that she has a child to take care of and needs to buy food for both of them. A participant who trades with her daughter reported that she is not making enough money to hire a nanny or send the daughter to school. The best option for her is to carry her child along. She indicated that the child eats what she eats. The study also found that some immigrant street traders use business cards to advertise their businesses. Furthermore, the participants also revealed that they advertise their trading

business on social networks, such as Facebook and WhatsApp. These various forms of the medium of advertisements have played a huge role in attracting customers for many migrant street traders. Participants who rely on social media advertisements receive phone calls from customers who wish to make business with these street traders. Development is present even among migrant street traders. Two female participants said the following:

*“I am always working with my baby here. I use a mat to sit and advertise my trading wares, as you can see. I have nowhere to sell my stock other than here. I am trying to get money to provide food for my child, she eats what I eat”* (Marth, 2019).

*“We make business cards for advertisement, and also we advertise our business on a Facebook page and other places so that people can contact us through our cell-phone numbers and keep our business running”* (Marget, 2019).

A participant noted that he uses ‘word of mouth’ to advertise the water that he sources from where it is cheap and sells it at a much higher price with the aim of generating a profit. He also added that he buys his water for R5 and sells it for R10. He adds a markup price of R5, which generates R5 profit for him. He mentioned that he gets his stock from Shoprite because it is cheaper than other retailers.

*“I go to Shoprite where they sell at a cheaper price and buy water from there and I come to the street, where I know people are thirsty and sell it for R10. I stand here and call customers to buy my water, as you can see they are thirsty. That is how I survive in street trading”* (Jhoni, 2019).

#### **4.4.4 Money management**

Several participants indicated that they rely on self-discipline, respect, self-control and taking responsibility for managing their money. Many immigrant street traders reported that they are taking responsibility for their money by not spending it on alcohol, as they believe that alcohol wastes money. Some migrant street traders observed that they are making enough money to cover their living expenses. One trader said that he is generating enough money to take care of his family and child. Many participants reported that managing money has played a role in the growth of their trading businesses. Their trading businesses have grown over the years. Further, managing money has prevented a number of their businesses from falling apart. One participant had the following to say:

*“I am married. This differentiates me from the rest of the street traders. I know how to run my business and ensure that it does not fall. I do this by not spending money on alcohol. I do not like to drink alcohol, I feel like it takes a lot from a person. Any money I get here is enough for me because I only support myself and my child and my wife” (Diaye, 2019).*

Another participant noted that they sustain their trading business through ‘hustling’, which means he puts in more working hours than the other migrant street traders. He does this to meet his monthly targets. He begins his day at 7:00 am and end his day at 7:00 pm. A migrant street trader indicated that hard work has sustained his trading business. He further said that getting employment in South Africa is not easy, especially for foreigners, as employers prefer employing South African citizens than foreigners. His exclusion from formal employment opportunities has motivated him to become a profitable street trader, as he knows there is no employment for him, besides selling on the street. Being unemployed has forced him to work hard.

*“Hustling I can say. I open at 7:00 am and close at 7:00 pm. Here in South Africa, life is very hard for many of us. We as migrants are struggling to find gainful jobs in South Africa. The only alternative for obtaining a living is to become profitable street traders” (Cheikh, 2019).*

#### **4.4.5 Good Relationships**

Most immigrant street traders at the workshop noted a good relationship between the traders. They have good interaction and trust as they are sharing trading sites on rented shelters and tents. Those migrant street traders who have trading shelters and tents share with those who do not have places to trade. It is evident that these good relationships play an important role in creating unity among traders. Other participants highlighted that they are storing their trading wares in the same storage facilities. They also emphasized their unity, by highlighting that they work together, even when attracting customers, and they also sell for one another when the other is busy. In addition, many participants noted that they assist each other when catching and beating criminals who steal their trading products in the area.

*“We keep our things in the same storage, my brother. Us as foreigners we are united, we work together, even the phara’s [street criminals] we attack them together” (James, 2019).*

The migrant street traders ensure that they maintain good relationships among themselves. They work collaboratively with one another in relation to their trading business matters, and this creates a strong bond among them. The researcher observed a group of female migrant street traders around the Workshop who were sharing trading tents in their business. These traders were conducting the same business with no sign of animosity.

#### **4.5 Metropolitan and Municipality bylaws**

Trading in the streets of Durban is regulated and guided by municipality bylaws that consider street trading on unregulated areas illegal. Street traders come up with many strategies to cope with municipality bylaws, policies and the metropolitan police. They have developed methods to cope with the bylaws of the municipality to stay on the right side of the law. Many participants noted that they get their trading permits from the municipality through an application process, which allows them to trade on municipality designated areas.

*“We follow proper procedures to get the license to trade. Before you sell here you must get a permit. If you do not have a permit you are not allowed to trade here. Everyone is allowed to trade here whether you are a South African citizen or a foreigner you are allowed to undergo the same procedures to get the trading permit, so we all follow the same procedure to obtain trading licenses”* (Mussah, 2019).

One participant noted that she is trading in a municipality demarcated area for street trading. She further noted that every person selling in the area near and around her location is permitted by the authorities, and has a trading license to work there. As a result, the police do not come to where she is trading.

*“The police don't come to this place because this place is already registered under the municipality. Everyone found in these tents got permission to do any business related to the trading of legal goods”* (Marget, 2019).

Another participant agreed that she is on the right side of the law, due to her permit, and even acknowledges the presence of the police, and that the Municipality officials are understanding of their trading business, and plays an important role in their street trading business, by ensuring that they are protected from criminals. She added that the Municipality officials are helping them with shelters for street trading.

*“The Municipality is okay when they come they just point, even the police when they come they are willing to understand what is going on and what is happening, and they help us a lot” (Mungala, 2019).*

Some participants of the study do not own trading shelters, they rely on shelters owned by other migrants. Many female participants reported that they do not have an issue with the metro police and municipality bylaws, as they are trading in a place that is rented by somebody else, they pay rent to the owner of the trading shelter.

*“We don't have a problem, because when they come they always ask about the owner, we have the owner who is a permit holder, we pay rent to him” (Kembo, 2019).*

A migrant street trader that is trading outside shops on the pavement close to the road conducts her trading business on a plastic bag on the floor. She highlighted that she is always running away from the metropolitan officials as she does not have a trading permit and she is located in an area that is not demarcated by the municipality for trading activities. She avoids the metro police to protect her trading products from being confiscated.

*“I am always running away from the police because I do not have a trading permit” (Marth, 2019).*

One participant mentioned that bylaws policies are hard to abide by. This is because previously, with his tent partner they were operating in the area that was not regulated by the municipality for running a trading business, and as a result, the police used to confiscate their trading products, and force them to pay bribe money for operating in an area unregulated for street trading. He further indicated that paying bribe money to the metro police resulted in the loss of profit. Sometimes they never had enough money to pay the metro police, and the metro police would brutally assault them for not having money and trading illegally without trading permits.

*“Dealing with the bylaws is hard stuff. Before, when we were selling in the road the police use to take our stuff, they use to charge us for selling in the street and all those things, and sometimes we lose” (Jhoni, 2019).*

A participant said he does not have any problem of abiding with the bylaws, but he only has an issue with the municipality officials who makes him pay rent for trading on the street. They are monthly levies paid for street trading in Durban. He further noted that he is located



in an area which is demarcated for street trading and that traders at the Workshop are not like street traders, this is because he believed that other street traders outside the area near the Workshop are not paying rent to the municipality and he felt that for this reason, he should also not pay.

*“This place is like we are in an agreed contract with the municipality, so we don’t have any problem with the metro police. We are only dealing with the municipality, we pay rent here every month so we are not like street people out there” (Emeka, 2019).*

Many participants who are without trading permits and are trading on the pavements outside shops noted how they respected the bylaws and policies. According to them running away from the police was a way of showing respect. They felt that avoiding the Metropolitan officials was a sign of respect towards policies and bylaws. They knew that trading without a license was prohibited and against the law, but they continued. They justified the continuation of street trading on their poor economic status and unemployment status. A female participant stated the following:

*“Of course, I respect them, when they come, I pack up my belongings, and leave. They are doing their job” (Maria, 2019).*

#### **4.6 Keeping the environment clean in the protection of public health**

All street traders who work on municipality demarcated areas with trading permits said that they have signed a lease agreement with the municipality that has terms and conditions related to street trading. They are entitled to the municipality services provided to keep the city clean in ensuring the protection of public health. Furthermore, they said that there is a municipal street cleaning team that regularly clean areas where street traders are located. In addition, they noted that this team ensures that it sweeps, litter is removed from the area, and the beige disposal bags are changed daily. Many immigrant street traders keep their trading places in the city clean by sweeping, picking up paper thrown by their customers and disposing them in refuse bags. They also indicated that they use the bins provided by the municipality to avoid littering on the ground.

*“The municipality provides service delivery, such as plastic bags for litter, because we pay for everything in this place, and we pay monthly. There is a refuse bin for us to put things and not to litter things around and on the ground.*

*There are also the state people who normally clean the environment, you will never find this place dirty and messed up. You will never find The Workshop dirty” (Mussah, 2019).*

One participant noted the municipal street cleaning team is responsible for the daily cleaning of public places in the city, and usually come in the afternoon and early in the morning to clean the area. She felt that the area is being cleaned because they as immigrant street traders are paying the municipality. She further indicated that she cleans her trading places before she begins work and she also cleans at the end of the business day.

*“Whenever we are done working here they are sweeping because we are paying the municipality and the municipality is making sure that this place is kept clean. Once we are done working here on our tents, we make sure we clean our place and then go home” (Marget, 2019).*

Many participants observed that in keeping the city clean, the municipality has provided infrastructure, which includes public litter bins and litter removal services. A participant indicated that he uses a bin to throw his refuse rather than throwing it on the floor to ensure that he keeps the environment clean.

*“If I drink I put inside the bin, and after I have used something that belongs in the bin, I ensure that I throw it inside the bin” (James, 2019).*

A participant stated that he cleans the area around him despite the presence of the municipal cleaning service team. He also observed that the municipality team is not cleaning like they used to do previously. He included that as immigrant street traders they ensure that they take a stand against crime happening in the area by reporting criminal activities to the police. In the past, they hired a private security company, which was owned by foreigners, to protect themselves and their trade. One participant from Guinea indicated the following:

*“We doing our best, we are the ones who are cleaning. I can say we are cleaning even in the presence of the municipality cleaners. They don't clean nice like before, we are cleaning and we are even fighting for crime by calling the police if we see some criminal activities and all those things. Previously we use to hire our security, we hired someone like us who is going to be our security for us. At once we hired the whole security company to come to ensure our safety around this place and all those things” (Jhoni, 2019).*

## **4.7 Barriers affecting migrant street traders and how they overcoming them.**

### **4.7.1 Customer competition**

All participants suffer a number of barriers when street trading in the inner-city Durban. Many female participants noted that there is a high competition among migrant street traders who are selling the same items in the city. Several migrant street traders reported that it is a highly competitive market when it comes to their business, as they have to share customers because they are many among them who are in the same business. This type of competition often results in the loss of profit.

*“The challenge we are currently facing is that this business of the nails; there are many people doing this business. The biggest challenge is our client, we are sharing the client because they are many people doing the same business”*  
(Marget, 2019).

Most of the migrant street traders indicated that they are currently faced with a problem of having to fight for customers among one another. They observed that this type of competition is unpleasant and sometimes jeopardizes their trading business, especially when they are busy arguing as to who saw the customer first. This results in a loss of potential customers because while they are arguing the customer leaves and goes to another person delivering the same service somewhere else.

*“We are having a challenge of fighting for the client. Sometimes, when they are calling that other side and you are calling this side the client gets confused and just stand in the center and do not know which side to go to. This has been the most challenging thing we are faced with in the area”* (Mungala, 2019).

Several of the participants noted that the presence of competition among foreigner street traders results in lower prices for their products. They have no choice but to decrease their prices as there are many people doing the same business. If one of the street traders is cheaper than the others, there is a greater chance that customers will go to the cheap one. A participant observed how her trading business is going down whereas the prices of the products she is using are increasing. The price increase of products she is buying has a negative effect on her business, as she is forced to keep her prices low to attract more customers, and if she increases her prices, the customers complain and go to other services providers.

*“The products we are buying are becoming expensive each and every day, while, the service we are rendering is getting down because of competition, but the product is coming up. The products are increasing, our service is going down” (Marget, 2019).*

Most migrant street traders observed that they use several strategies to overcome barriers affecting them, such as an issue of all traders being in one area and selling the same products. A participant said that to overcome the barrier of competition she ensures that she delivers the best service because she wants to attract more and loyal customers. In addition, she noted that she avoids doing bad things to her customers, like having a poor attitude towards them, as it leads to a loss of potential customers.

*“We make sure we do a good job, provide a nice service, and get nice products for our customers so that the client will come back to us. We do not do things that will chase our clients. Loss of clients will lead to poverty” (Marget, 2019).*

The migrant street traders all said that they ensure that they provide a service to the best of their ability, by lowering their product prices, displaying positive attitudes to their customers, and focusing on their own business. This has assisted many of them to overcome the existence of competition amongst each other within the street economy.

#### **4.7.2 Crime and a lack of security**

All participants highlighted that they are confronted by criminals who steal their trading items. Crime in the street has been a long-standing barrier faced by migrant traders. This barrier has been ignored for a long time by police officials. One participant stated that the biggest challenge he is faced with is ‘Phara’s’ (criminals) who are stealing from them as traders. Some migrant traders reported that crime puts their lives in danger.

*“Sometimes all these phara’s [criminals], are stealing out our trading things. They are stealing from us” (Alexis, 2019).*

A migrant street trader indicated that her challenge is criminals, who previously used to steal from their stalls. She was unhappy with the robberies that were happening in her area, as it resulted in a great loss of stock and decreases the profit she was trying to make. She further reported that she is scared as criminals often leave her in an uncomfortable situation. She is no longer trading well because of criminals stealing from her.

*“There are many, because the criminals come and rob us of our items, and they leave us in uncomfortable situations” (Susan, 2019).*

Many migrant street traders reported that they are not effectively protected by police officials and that their trading environments were not secured from criminals. Several participants complained that the lack of security in the area chases potential customers away, which results in a reduction in their profit, due to insecurity on these streets.

*“Security, there is no security in this area” (Jhoni, 2019).*

One participant observed that criminals used to rob their customers and also use to keep the area in an unpleasant state, by gambling in the area. He further said that as migrants they previously paid a security company who ensured their safety. In addition, he indicated that he acknowledges that now it is better than before as a result of greater security and the presence of the police. He feels more protected than previously.

*“A challenge in this area is the presence of criminals around this area. Back in the days, we use to have securities that we paid to protect our customers from not being robbed here. Otherwise, before it was very messy due to the fact that they use to play gambling and rob people around here, but now it is much safer” (Mussah, 2019).*

Criminals mingle with street traders and steal their trading products, many participants have accepted that there is nothing they can do in relation to criminal activities occurring in the areas, due to the fact that they are foreigners. They contend that local citizens are taking advantage of migrants because they assume they cannot report them to the relevant officials. Many participants indicated that sometimes when they find a person stealing their items, they hit that person because this is the only option they think they have.

*“There is nothing you can do because, at the end of the day, we are foreigners in a foreign country. So, when they come they come with that kind of aggressiveness whatever they see they take it and they run away with it. There is no way we can deal with it. Sometimes when we catch them we hit them, but not all the time” (Alexis, 2019).*

A secure working environment for every business is a necessity, with many traders noting that they are trying to keep their trading environment safe by inviting law enforcement into the area whenever a crime occurs, and keeping up on crime trends and spreading the word

among them. A participant reported that criminals usually spoil his day by stealing from him. He further, observed that criminals are intentional in doing the wrongs things in the area. He complained that his trading area lacks security, hence it is unsafe. However, he reported that he is surviving notwithstanding criminals stealing his trading products.

*“We are trying our best, sometimes they can spoil our day for nothing because these boys are doing the wrong things. Sometimes they steal our goods, it is unsafe here. Despite being unsafe, we are trying”* (Jhoni, 2019).

#### **4.7.3 Poor working conditions**

All migrant street traders observed that they work in poor conditions and have little access to formal trading stores. The municipality provides them with trading shelters that are not convenient for carrying trading business. Harsh environmental conditions, such as rainy and extremely hot days results in loss of profit. Many migrant traders noted that they are experiencing harsh weather conditions due to their open and small shelters.

*“When it is raining you see this shelter is too small and not helpful. My tent is open, it cannot protect my trading things from the sun and wind”* (Shamen, 2019).

Some of the participants also indicated that they are faced with the issue of harsh weather conditions. These harsh weather conditions prevent participants from trading without disturbances. Many participants complained that they are affected by criminals who are stealing their trading products. They added that working in the streets is not easy due to the brutal environmental conditions.

*“You know working in the street, it is not easy. Sometimes it rains, and windy. Sometimes they are stealing the things”* (Maria, 2019).

One female participant indicated that the presence of rain and too many hot days interferes negatively with her trading business. She complained that her trading shelter is not enough to cover her trading items from harsh weather conditions. Because the sun heats her items to such an extent that they result in the colour of the products fading, which in turn results in a loss of money to buy more products.

*“Sometimes, there is rain, sometimes I experience wind. When the sun is too much we don't have enough shelter to protect our products. Some of our things get faded through the sun” (Okafor, 2019).*

A participant reported that when it is windy she has no option but to pack her trading wares and go home, and when there is rain, then there is a small probability that she makes any money. There is nothing she can do about the poor condition of her rented shelter, as that is beyond her control since the trading shelters are rented from the municipality, which is responsible and has the power for upgrading and changing them.

*“When it is windy and raining I close and go home. I cannot work in the rain. What are we going to do? There is nothing” (Maria, 2019).*

#### **4.7.4 Xenophobia**

The upsurge in violence against migrant street traders in Durban by local people is a barrier faced by many participants. A substantial number of migrant street traders observed that violence towards them from South African citizens has been going on for many years in South Africa, with little attention having been paid to this. Some participants noted that they are working in fear of their lives because of the attacks that might occur and the recent outbreaks, this is in reference to the renewed xenophobic attacks on migrants that took place in September 2019 in Johannesburg, due to the belief that foreigners are to be blamed for drug trafficking in South Africa. Most of the participants of the study indicated that it is painful to witness their brothers and sisters being killed because they are trying to make a livelihood by selling on the streets.

*“I do not have any problem affecting me in this area. One thing I do not like is the xenophobic attacks of migrant street traders from South African locals. I do not know why these attacks happen, because we are all Africans. I believe that some people from South Africa do not know that we are one person. If you can go to other countries, you become a foreigner there. This thing of xenophobia towards our brothers and sisters is very disturbing” (Joe, 2019).*

Some of the participants observed that the issue of xenophobia for many immigrant street traders is beyond their control, and they are unable to challenge it because they are strangers in a foreign country. All of them have accepted that local citizens are not happy about us trading in the vicinity of the area around the shopping mall. Many participants noted that the

government does not want to support the call for an end to attacks against migrant traders by local citizens. A male trader indicated that he does not have any means of addressing xenophobic attacks by South African citizens against foreigners, as it is not his home country. He also expressed how worried he is about the issue of attacks, and that there is unnecessary racial segregation among Africans with the same skin color.

*“I do not deal with the xenophobia experienced by foreigners. There is nothing I can do because this is not my home country. What worries me a lot is that Africa has no borders, we are all Black, and there is no need for the separation of people. If you can go to Europe there is no border and there are all white. But come to South Africa there is a border separating Black people, in an Africa continent”* (Joe, 2019).

#### **4.7.5 Harassment**

Most participants reported that they are harassed by the police. For instance, migrant traders without trading licenses noted that they face the wrath of police because they are trading in unregulated municipality areas and are not on the municipality’s street trader register. A lack of trading licenses exposes immigrant street traders to punitive measures that include evictions. A participant complained that the police perform raids, chase their peers, which in-turn affects both traders with and without trading permits. This results in the loss of goods, customers, and negatively affects their business and lead to a loss of profit.

*“The challenges sometimes I encounter is the metro police who usually harass people when they are raiding for those people who do not have trading permits. This harassment affects all of us because the people are running up and down they make the business to be quite by chasing our customers”* (Okafor, 2019).

Many migrant street traders without trading licenses indicated that they do not have pleasant working experience in the area, due to the metro police that often raids their stands. Some participants noted that the municipality sometimes delays them from commencing their job in the early morning hours, and sometimes they have to start operating their business in the afternoons due to the raids that have been taking place in the morning. Most participants observed that these raids target them at a time that is busy with customers buying. Many participants said that they are illegally trading because they want to make money to provide for their families.



*“My problem is the municipality, we are not working properly because of them. They are raiding our trading products. Sometimes I come and start working after they are done and have left the area. Sometimes they come two, or three times a day. The moment I start working they are raiding again. They usually come at a time where people are buying the most and you have to pack and run. We working here because we want to pay rent, and there is no money” (Pete, 2019).*

Municipality authorities are a major source of insecurity and harassment for traders within the city of Durban. A participant noted that when the authorities raid the city, he ensures that he stays around to keep an eye on his trading wares. He observed that sometimes having a trading license is an added advantage, as he can continue selling while other traders are being dealt with by the authorities. He contends that during the raids is his best time to capitalize on attracting as many customers as he can.

*“When the people are running up and down, because of the metro police. I make sure that I am around, and watch after my business because I have a trading license. Sometimes it is an advantage for us those who have a permit” (Okafor, 2019).*

#### **4.7.6 Passport**

Many illegal migrants come to South Africa in search of employment opportunities and financial gains, with several migrant street traders noting that they do not have valid travel documents that cover the length of their intended stay in the host country. They have entered the country illegally and this entry is a violation of the country’s immigration policies. Some participants reported that once they have illegally entered the country they find it difficult to leave, as they do not hold the required departure documents. Many participants highlighted that they illegally cross the border in large numbers of people. One participant said the following:

*“Here there is no problem. Our only problem we have is the problem of the paper, like the paper we need when we have to go home and need when you have to come back to South Africa” (Joe, 2019).*

#### 4.7.7 Unfair employment treatment

Several participants who are employed by other foreigners reported that they are experiencing unfair employment treatment by working long hours in return for low wages. Some traders noted that their employers sometimes act in bad faith by not paying them their salaries on time, and if they complain, they are threatened with being chased out of work and sent back home. It appeared that migrant street traders who work for other foreigners were brought to South Africa by their bosses. Many participants observed that they are treated with disrespect by their employers. They are verbally abused and this lowers their self-esteem. One participant from Malawi who works for another foreigner said the following.

*"I am having an issue with my boss. Sometimes the boss just talks "nonsense". He speaks in a manner discouraging to work for him, and he sometimes just say whatever he feels like saying" (James, 2019).*

Concerning being disrespected by their employer, a participant noted that they keep quiet and if he has done something wrong he apologizes. He does this in order to maintain their employment from the person who invited them to South Africa and gave him employment.

*"When my boss talks whatever he likes I just keep quiet. If maybe I have done something wrong I just say sorry" (James, 2019).*

It would appear that responding in a manner deemed as respectful to their bosses gives them protection from being chased away from their jobs, and allows them to stay in this country. They also do not want to create further friction so they try and not say anything that will shatter the peace.

#### 4.7.9 Counterfeit goods

Many migrant street traders conceded that they are selling goods such as replica name branded footwear and clothing-related items. Most participants admitted that the merchandise they are selling is counterfeited goods and replica items of the original trademark, which by law, is illegal, and an infringement of the original trademark's rights. Some participants said that most street traders sell products they are not licensed to sell. Some migrant street traders noted that they are selling counterfeited goods because they are trying to make a living.

*"One challenge I have noticed that affects most of our brothers selling in the street is that they are selling items they unregulated to sell. They are selling these items because they are trying to survive. They are selling goods that only*

*big shops have permission to sell. Big shops like Louis Vuitton and Adidas”*  
(Mussah, 2019).

Many participants observed that customers believe that counterfeited products are fake. A street trader said that sometimes he has to use shortcuts to get low-quality stock, by sourcing it from Wholesalers in China. He noted that these stocks are bought in large quantities by a few traders who have access to the fake designer wholesalers. He further added that once they have bought the stock they then come and sell it to their partners, who are ‘foreigners and some local citizens’. The traders who have ordered and bought these items sell the fake designer goods to their customers.

*“Selling something without permission to sell it, people will assume that you are selling fake items. The only challenge we have is that sometimes in order for our brothers to survive they have to go under those dark routers where you don't buy quality products. At the end of the day, we are trying to survive, by selling whatever we are selling to get money to buy food for our families back at home”* (Mussah, 2019).

Some participants added that customers see that they are selling fake designer clothing, as they are selling it outside on the streets and not inside the mall. Customers will rather go to the shops in the mall to buy the same products at a higher price as compared to the price sold by migrant traders on the street. According to this participant, he considers what he is selling as not illegal, due to the assumption that he believes his stock is the same as the ones sold in the regulated stores and shops inside the shopping center.

*“People see what we are selling as fake, even if we are selling the original garment. They see it as fake because we are selling outside on the street. They prefer to source the same item we are selling at the shop, sold at a bigger price. They buy it at shops because they thinking the item sold by us is not the original item”* (Emeka, 2019).

A participant said that they are trying to clean their stall from replica name branded clothes. They are doing this by trying to find other products they will sell, other than counterfeited goods. He further suggested that South Africa needs to establish factories and Wholesalers that will produce and sell local brands, as this will allow them as clothing migrant street traders to buy from these local factories and wholesalers to sell at their designated trading

places. This will help create employment opportunities for everyone and generate a profit for the country.

*“Most of us are trying to clean our stalls from those name brands, majority of people are coming out of selling those name-branded clothes because nobody wants to have a criminal record because they are trying to survive. What I think, we need a South African government to first start opening factories in South Africa where we are going to buy our stock from. These factories must sell South African produced products only” (Mussah, 2019).*

#### **4.8 Benefit of street trading**

##### **4.8.1 Living expenses**

Migrant street traders provide many benefits to their families and themselves. This is done through the small money generated from selling on the street, they are making a living to support their families, pay for school fees, put food on the table for themselves and also pay their accommodation. Many migrant street traders reported that they are greatly benefiting from street trading, although they are generating less money.

*“We benefit from the small money we are generating. With the little money we are making on the streets we are able to help our families, especially our children who get the opportunity to go to school because of the money we are sending them, and also, we are able to buy food and pay rent where we are living, due to street trading” (Marget, 2019).*

One migrant street vendor reported there is not much benefit on street trading, due to the fact that he works to pay rent, eat and live a normal life, but emphasized his disapproval of how there is no benefit for him from street trading. Because selling on the streets gives him a chance to live a normal life of paying bills only.

*"There is not much benefit, there is no benefit. Because by the end of the day you work, you pay rent, you have something to eat. It allows one to make a normal living, you know" (Alexis, 2019).*

Many migrant street traders who sell branded clothing items said that selling on the street benefits them by securing them a living, and enables them to support their wives and children. A migrant street trader indicated that providing for his family excites him because it

puts a smile on them. Seeing a smile on my family makes me to street trade more. A participant reported that selling on the street is a benefit for him, he has no problem with it. In fact, he enjoys it.

*“Selling here, the benefit is, I do not know for other people, but from my side, it is fine, because I know how to live my life, and I know how to support myself and my wife and my child. So, I do not have any problem” (Diaye, 2019).*

#### **4.8.2 Reduction of poverty**

The study found that street trading played an integral part in the lives of many migrant street traders in Durban, by contributing to the expansion of economic opportunities, such as providing employment opportunities for those who are unemployed. Some participants observed that street trading is a benefit because it helps decrease unemployment and poverty, which affects many people. In addition, they noted that street trading benefits many migrant street traders by providing an income to open other small-scale enterprise businesses on top of their street trading business.

*“Benefits, it helps to reduce unemployment and poverty rates of the country. It helps to provide income for some low and small-scale business” (Mussah, 2019).*

#### **4.8.3 No benefit**

Some migrant street traders felt that street trading does not benefit them, rather it provides them with a living, and affords them something to eat, as they do not generate any profit. One migrant indicated that there is no benefit for him from selling in the street, as he does not generate enough money to meet his expectations, and he added that one day he wishes to have his own shop that will be better than his current trading shelter.

*“There is no benefit here, we just do it for food, no profit, no nothing, we get nothing from this my boy, and it is bad” (Marth, 2019).*

*“I can say there is no benefit, we are all hoping one day to have a shop, something better than here. That is in our mind, what we can get next, not to be here forever, we know one day we will be leaving this place, that is what on our minds” (Jhoni, 2019).*

## 4.9 Solutions for migrant street trader problems'

### 4.9.1 Shelters

The biggest challenge facing immigrant street traders operating in Durban is the issue of not enough trading spaces and shelters, with most noting that they are trading on sites that have poor shelters and self-built tents. Some participants observed that removable trading tents expose them to evictions for planned developed by the city. Many migrant traders reported that they have trading permits that regulate them to trading in the vicinity around Durban, yet there are not given trading places and shelters to use for displaying their trading products, and rely on their temporary trading facilities, such as tents. Many migrant street traders indicated that they do not need any funding from the government and municipality, they need proper shelters that will protect their trading products from harsh environmental conditions.

*“Particularly for us who are permits holders, if they can provide us with better shelter if possible, or just a tent which will look nice. I am not saying they can be able to give us loans to do something like that. We only asking for proper shelters” (Okafor, 2019).*

One participant indicated that as a taxpayer, the municipality may intervene in their trading careers by providing a proper trading shelter, as inadequate trading shelters disturb their daily trading activities and result in a great loss of earnings. This further results in closure of their tents on very rainy and windy days. He noted that having a trading shelter would play a role in protecting his trading wares from being exposed by the rain and other brutal weather conditions.

*“They have to intervene, we paying them. I consider myself as a taxpayer because as a person who has a trading permit I pay tax. They are certain things that do not favour us because we do not have shelter, we have to get our own tents. At the end of the day when it is raining it affects us a lot. So, if they can get trading shelters for us, that one would be ok. When it is raining we would know at least our things do not get wet” (Alexis, 2019).*

### 4.9.2 Protection

The streets of Durban are a source of insecurity, which affects the informal businesses of many migrant street traders. All participants noted that security and safety is a major concern in the informal sector, and the lack of security intimidates them and their customers. The

participants noted that they do not need funding from the Municipality and government as an intervention strategy, rather they need to be protected from criminals, and assured a level of hygiene by cleaning their trading sites. We need people who are going to fix leaking water in this area since we cannot do it ourselves. The municipality must do something.

*“The help we need is not about money or anything. But we only need security and care. Security and to keep this place clean. You see how behind our store how it is dirty, you see by yourself. There is water here leaking, nobody fixes it. It is almost seven years this water has been here nobody fixes it”* (Jhoni, 2019).

One participant further indicated that he wants the government to protect them as foreigners because they are vulnerable to criminal activities in the area. The government must ensure that he instructs police officials to monitor the city 24hours. In addition, relevant stakeholders must hire private securities to patrol around the city especially in areas where street traders are located at. This will help decrease criminal activities happening in the area.

*“To protect us. The government to protect us, the foreigners”* (James, 2019).

#### **4.10 Summary**

The results of the study suggest that Durban was not necessarily their choice as a destination of street trading, but it was a destination where they had arrived at, which left them with no option but to stay and street trade in this city. Unemployment, poverty, economic and psychological issues were found to be the main reasons for street trading in Durban. Several livelihood strategies to sustain a living in the inner city were used by immigrant traders, such as respecting their customers, saving earnings from the profit generated, distributing business cards for advertisement purposes, and working collaboratively with each other when confronting issues. The study also highlighted some of the barriers that affect many vendors in the city. There were, four major barriers that were identified, such as a lack of a secure working environment, police harassment, xenophobia, and customer competition. These had a negative impact on their trading business and resulted in the loss of customers, inadequate safety, confrontation from authorities, and ultimately, the loss of earnings. The last part of this chapter indicated measures to be put in place to assist migrant street vendors to do away with all the challenges that interfere with their trading business.

## **Chapter Five**

### **Discussion and conclusion**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

Migrant street traders relocate to Durban for many reasons and they often struggle to find formal employment. Street trading creates employment opportunities thus allowing them to generate an income in the city Durban. Furthermore, it ensures that most families earn their livelihoods by offering services, and selling a variety of goods on the street, pavements, sidewalks, and other municipality designated areas. The aim of the study was to investigate street trading as a livelihood strategy among immigrants trading in Durban. This chapter presents a discussion of the research results, in relation to the existing literature of immigrant street traders in Durban. Street trading is an important sector of the informal economy to address the issue of unemployment for many migrants who leave their countries of origin with the expectation of finding gainful employment opportunities to improve their livelihood. Selling in the street has remained the most effective method which provides employment and income to a significant number of migrants in Durban. This chapter provides recommendations to address barriers faced by migrant street traders.

#### **5.2 Discussion**

All migrant street traders from the study who come from different African countries migrate to Durban for many reasons. The findings of this study reveal that Durban was not a destination of their choice, rather it was a destination that they arrived at and started street trading. Some foreigner street traders came to Durban for no particular reason (Hunter and Skinner, 2001). Many participants indicated that they came to Durban because they had heard that Durban is cheaper comparatively to Johannesburg and Cape Town. Durban is cheap in terms of affordable places to rent, reasonable trading rent and trading wares due to the fact that it is near the harbor. A substantial number of participants had become traders in Durban because of their friends who were already trading in the area. They were informed by their friends that Durban has many trading opportunities. According to Gebre et al. (2011) many immigrant street traders chose Durban after someone they knew recommended the city to them. The study also found that the long summer season in Durban made it a desirable trading destination. They also indicated that even winter in Durban is not as cold as their home countries, it is favorable for trading. A smaller proportion of the participants in this study noted that they came to Durban to work as household maids. They reported that during



their time as household maids they were unhappy with the salaries they were paid. As a result of this unhappiness, they had to quit their jobs and resort to street trading. In addition, some migrant street traders indicated that their reason for coming to Durban was not planned. There were not able to identify a specific reason for leaving their home countries. In support of these findings, a study by Hunter and Skinner (2001) found that migrant street traders come to Durban for arbitrary decisions.

Street trading has helped a large portion of vendors to sustain their livelihood. Trading in the street has been their major strategy to improve their livelihood. The results from the study have shown that street trading was their only option of generating an income in the face of high unemployment and poverty. This is to say that most migrant street traders did not choose to be street traders. Migrant street traders come from other African countries where there is also a high unemployment problem. The study also revealed that many participants left their home countries because unemployment forced them to become street traders. All participants who participated in the study indicated that they choose street trading because they wanted to make money to take care of their families, hence, they chose street trading. A study by Gamieldien and Van Niekerk (2017), indicated that all street trades wanted to start trading because they wanted to earn an income for survival. Some migrant street traders noted that they became street traders due to the fact that they wanted to work for themselves. This means that many migrant street traders wanted to be their bosses and managers of their own businesses. They wanted to be their bosses because of flexible working hours determined by themselves, and also have the power to set their salaries. According to Gamieldien and Van Niekerk (2017), street traders revealed that they chose to enter the street trading career because they wanted to be self-employed and they did not want to answer to someone else's.

Street trading was found to be an advantage in various forms for many migrant street vendors trading in Durban. Most participants observed that they are trading in Durban because of the large population in this city. In South Africa, Durban is reported to be the second-largest populous city compared to many metropolitan areas in the country (Statistics South Africa, 2019). Due to a large population, many migrant street traders find it easy to attract customers. During the interviews, participants observed that Durban is a tourist attraction city. They also stated that most tourist who comes to Durban support their trading business, through sourcing their products.

The participants of this study used many livelihood strategies to sustain themselves with street trading. Saving money from selling on the street was found to be a major livelihood strategy for many migrant street traders. Results from this study indicated that several participants preferred saving the profit generated from selling their wares. Profit earned was used to cover their living expenses and unexpected emergencies that could arise. They also reported that they used the profit they saved to pay the rent for trading to the municipality.

In the interviews that were conducted, some participants noted that having the right attitude towards street trading has played a prominent role in helping them sustain their trading business. According to Sarpong and Nabubie (2015), street traders work at least ten to twelve hours a day. They further ensure that they show up for work consistently and also, they avoid being absent for no valid reason. In Cape Town, female street traders maintained their trading business by having self-determination towards achieving positive results in their work (Sassen, Galvaan and Duncan, 2018). The study found that many migrant street traders ensured that they are calm, they also treat customers with politeness and friendliness. Faced with limited options, participants relied on the courage to sustain their trading business. Many participants were able to sustain their business through hard work, perseverance and sheer determination. Gamieldien and Van Niekerk (2017) found that many street traders have perseverance and confidence in their abilities when street trading.

The interviews revealed that many migrant street traders used a number of livelihoods to keep their trading business running. Previous studies suggest that livelihood strategies are a combination of activities and decisions that people make to achieve their livelihood goals (Timalsina, 2007). Participants reported that they use mats for advertising their trading wares as a means of attracting potential customers. Some participants indicated that they post advertisements for their business on social media. These findings are in line with those of Klaeger (2012), who found that roadside traders in Ghana hang their trading products on poles that are visible to attract customers from a great distance. Mramba, Apiola, Sutinen, Haule, Klomsri, and Msami (2015), also indicated that street traders rely on some promotion strategies, including displaying goods on the ground and marketing products to their customers. Others noted that they used business cards to advertise their trading business. These forms of advertisements have helped them a lot for a number of years by attracting a substantial number of customers to come to buy from them. Marketing is used to inform people and invite potential customers (Pride, and Ferrell, 2016; Kotler, 2009; Mramba,

Apiola, Kolog and Sutinen, 2016), a modern-day form of inviting potential customers is using social marketing, such as the internet.

Many migrant street traders who were interviewed were found to have had established good relationships among each other. This is in line with the social capital of the livelihood sustainable approach. Two goals of the social capital enable people to undertake cooperative ventures for mutual advantage, namely social relationships, and interaction (Parajuli, 2013; Timalsina, 2007). The study observed that participants are sharing trading tents. Most migrant street traders reported that they are sharing tents, they even share the amount due for rent. They noted that they store their trading wares in the same storage facilities. The study found that some participants work together when taking the law into their own hands, like hitting criminals who are caught stealing their trading products. This is unacceptable behavior but they continue doing it, to save their wares from being stolen.

Some participants revealed that they rely on the same strategy that has sustained them for many years. A strategy of buying at a cheap price and selling at a relatively higher price, and also believing in themselves through self-confidence when approaching customers. Several participants were found to be sustaining their trading business by not wasting money on alcohol. They indicated that they avoid buying alcohol with money generated from street trading. Some migrant street traders in the inner-city Durban revealed that they sustain their business through hustling, by adding many hours to their work.

To trade in Durban, they require permission from the relevant authorities. Many immigrant street traders revealed that they have trading permits and trade in demarcated municipality sites in line with municipality bylaws and government trading policies. They noted that they follow proper procedures for obtaining their trading licenses, which is granted to everyone despite nationality. Some participants were found to be trading in places owned by others, so whenever authorities came and asked them to produce their licenses they would refer them to the owner who happens to have a trading permit and ownership of the shelter. A participant reported that they pay rent to the municipality, therefore they have no problems with the authorities.

Although the findings have indicated that many migrant street traders have trading shelters and permits, and also have no issue with the municipality bylaws and policies. Some were found without trading permits and trading in unregulated municipality areas. They noted that they are always running away from the Metro Police. They said that when the metro police

are raiding, they pack their mats and run away with their items, and come back once the metro police have left. Those who run away from the authorities also revealed that they would sometimes start working at 1:00 pm because at this time the metros would have done with their daily raids. According to them raids normally occur in the mornings. This is consistent with other studies, which have found that some street traders do not have shelters (Dube, Mkhize and Skinner, 2013).

The study found many measures undertaken by street traders to keep the city clean and ensuring the protection of public health. Participants highlighted that they sweep before they begin trading and also, they sweep after they are done working at their trading sites. Many participants revealed that they pick up litter thrown by their customers and other pedestrians and put it in the rubbish bags and bins provided by the municipality. This is supported by the eThekweni Municipality (2011) who states that every street trader must clean its site at the end of each trading day, and also carry their trading business in a way that does not pose any threat to public health and safety. The findings of this study suggest that the team in the municipality that is responsible for cleaning the city always maintains cleanliness where traders are located. This cleaning usually takes place in the morning before business and in the afternoon after business. This is confirmed by all participants of the research who indicated that the municipality cleans the area every day except for the weekends.

Participants of the study were found to be experiencing many barriers in inner-city Durban. The major barriers that interfere and disturb their trading business from growing were barriers like customer competition. Many participants in the study noted that they are fighting for customers. This is because migrant street traders are carrying the same business in one location, this, in turn, creates a reduction in prices of the products sold to attract more customers. This form of competition often negatively influences their trading because they are likely to experience a loss of profit. Competition among street traders is a problem as it can result in price fluctuations and little profits (Cohen, 2010).

Poor working conditions resulting from not having trading shelters and tents were noted among the barriers affecting the participants of this study. Many participants of the study indicated that they are trading without shelters provided by the municipality. Some migrant street traders noted that they have trading permits, however, they do not have places to trade. According to Nkrumah-Abebrese and Schachtebeck (2017), street traders are faced with a lack of basic trading infrastructure.

Xenophobic attacks were noted amongst a few participants who were interviewed. They indicated that xenophobic attacks did not directly happen to them, but it happened to one of them. The outbreaks of xenophobic attacks against foreign nationals in South Africa have been common in the recent past. A study by Ngcamu and Mantzaris (2019), found that current xenophobic attacks against foreigners lie on the reason of economic competition between migrant street traders and local traders. This competition has a negative impact on street trading. Discrimination and xenophobia serve as a threat to the lives of foreign nationals, they feel intimidated, and this leads to a loss of profits (Tshishonga, 2015).

Harassment from authorities was found to be among the major contributing factors in disturbing their trading business. It was noted in the interviews that many migrant street traders are harassed by police and metro police. Many migrant street traders reported that they face confiscations, evictions and have to pay bribes for trading without licenses. In their study of the informal economy in Durban, Dube, Mkhize and Skinner (2013) observe that traders operating in the city center are harassed by the police, these harassments often lead to the damage of their goods, and in the loss of profit. Due to having no foreign passports, many migrant street traders reported that they are even experiencing the issue of not being able to go back to their home countries. They cannot go back to their homes because crossing borders requires a foreign valid passport, which they do not possess.

The research observed that there were participants who were employed by other migrants to sell their merchandise for them in the street. Many migrant street traders who were working for other migrants indicated that they are being unfairly treated by their employers. This unfair treatment from their bosses was highlighted as a barrier that psychologically disturbs them and prevents them from enjoying their jobs. The study found that some participants are constantly receiving criticism, insults, name-calling and negative judgements from their bosses.

Selling counterfeit items because there was no license to trade the original garment or trademark was observed among the barriers faced by migrant street traders, in Durban. Many participants indicated that their clothing-related merchandise usually gets seized by authorities because it is regarded as being fake and a replica of the original trademark, which can be sold provided they had a permit regulating them to do so. Some of the migrant street traders noted that many people do not want to buy their wares anymore. This is because they deem it not the original item, they rather buy the items sold on the street at formally

registered stores at a comparatively high price than the ones of many migrant street traders. This serves as a barrier to them because they are not able to make a profit anymore, as customers are no longer buying their clothing. The study observed that migrant street traders who are selling counterfeited items do not perceive it as a crime, they think it is a practice that is acceptable, due to the fact that many of them are selling counterfeited products and they are not charged for their practices. A study by Hepworth (2014) found that migrant traders are occupying public trading spaces selling counterfeited goods under everyone's nose without the fear of consequences. The study further indicated that the selling of counterfeited goods and selling illegal and illicit goods without a visa and a trading license is criminal behavior which may lead to serious repercussions (Hepworth, 2014).

Many migrant street traders face many barriers in the streets, they were found to have measures put in place to overcome their issues. All migrant street traders reported that they rely on an impeccable work ethic of delivering the best service ever to their customers. Several migrant street traders reported that they encounter criminals who steal their trading items. Interestingly, some migrant street traders revealed that they do not do anything when it comes to criminals who steal from them. This was because many of them were not legally in the country and whenever they reported a case of crime to the relevant authorities they do not take any action, after minutes they would see the person they had reported passing-by the area.

Participants of the study revealed that the issue of inappropriate trading tents and shelters was resolved by closing down the business for the day when faced with heavy rainfall. They complained that the shelters provided by the municipality were not enough to protect their items from being damaged by the rain. Those without trading permits reported that there is nothing that they can do concerning not having places for trading. They indicated the reason for this was solely because they do not have the documents authorizing them to be in South Africa. Hence, they cannot apply for trading places, due to the fact that an Identify Document is required to apply for trading permission.

Many participants noted that they do not report the issue of xenophobic attacks that once occurred in the city. They did not report it because they believe that they do not have the power to report matters in a foreign country. Metro police are duty-bound to raid places unregulated for trading activities. Those who complained about police brutality and

harassment did not report this issue because they were based in areas that were not authorized for trading in the area.

A substantial number of migrant street traders indicated that they need the South African government to open factories that will manufacture and sell South African made products so that they can buy from these factories and wholesalers and sell these local goods on the streets. Though traders develop a coping mechanism, they were still affected by the aforementioned barriers.

Regardless of the barriers that affected them, street traders were found to be benefiting from selling their products in the inner city of Durban. They were able to generate the money needed to support their families by sending remittances back home. These findings concur with the findings of Vawda (2017), who conducted research on Malawians and Senegalese Muslim trading in Durban, South Africa. Vawda (2017) found that nearly all migrants send remittances back home. They were able to pay rent and also buy food for themselves. They were able to send their children to school. Some were able to live a comfortable life. Many unemployed migrant street traders benefited from trading otherwise they would be unemployed. This suggests that the street sector provides migrants with employment opportunities. Some participants noted that they benefited from street trading as they were able to generate a profit that assisted them in opening their small-scale businesses.

Despite many participants benefitting from street trading, the study revealed that some migrant street traders reported that they do not benefit from street trading. They indicated that they are not benefiting from street trading because they are not generating enough profit to cover their daily living expenses. Failing to make profit results in poor management of their business which sets them up for failure in the coming future. Some participants noted that they do not make sufficient money that they are not even able to go home when an emergency arises, such as the death of a family member.

In respect to what migrant street traders needed from the government to help them alleviate their trading business. The study found that several participants particular those with trading permits needed better trading shelters and not self-installed tents. This will assure them that they are trading in a conducive environment. It will also protect their trading items from being burnt by the sun and will further ensure that they do not close on rainy days. Municipality officials and other responsible agencies can provide protection for migrant street traders concerning safety and security on the streets.

### 5.3 Recommendations

Migrant street traders play a role in the informal economy of Durban. The study recommends the following, in line with the findings of the study. More future research should focus on immigrant street traders, especially those who are trading in the corridors, shelters and including those that use mats on pavements to display their products, as there seems to be limited attention given to them.

The lack of proper trading facilities for migrant street traders disturbs their trading business. The municipality and relevant stakeholders need to re-look and find new trading locations that will be conducive for street trading in the city. Finding new locations will help open new trading opportunities for traders without shelters and those who are sharing. It will also help remove street traders who are trading on the roadside outside shops in the CBD.

Traders who are trading in shelters in the city mentioned that trading shelters are not protecting their items from the rain. Planning and development stakeholders in association with other relevant agencies must upgrade the already available shelters into shipping containers that have doors and windows. This will help assist protect their trading products from being negatively impacted by the sun and also protect it from the rain which forces them to close their business.

It was found that migrant street traders experience xenophobic attacks from local South Africans. This suggests that there is a need for an intervention program to integrate and unite all street traders operating in the inner city so that they can work together as a team. It was also revealed that street traders are not protected from criminals who often mingle with them. It is therefore suggested that law enforcement should treat every case reported in the manner stipulated on paper, irrespective of nationality.

It has become evident in the study that police officials demand bribes, and harass foreign street traders, especially those who are trading in unregulated areas and do not have trading permits. This indicates that the government needs to provide an anonymous reporting site, where those who fear to go to the police station, can report their unfair treatment. This will assist those who are abused because they do not have documents authorizing them to be in South Africa.

There has been little education provided to migrant street traders. Educational interventions to improve street traders are rare (Wongtada, 2014). There need to be training sessions for



migrant street traders concerning the policy that govern street trading. And also, they must be educated about rights available for them as immigrant street traders in South Africa. Education will help provide them with knowledge since they appear as people who do not know their trading rights.

Migrant street traders indicated that they need the South African government to build wholesalers that will sell goods produced from South Africa only. These factories and wholesalers must have regulatory policies for selling of goods bought from them. This will help migrant street traders to source their goods from these factories and wholesalers and sell them in their designated areas. Further, this call will help provide job opportunities for both South Africa nationals and migrant street traders.

#### **5.4 Conclusion**

Street trading is a sector that provides employment opportunities for a significant number of immigrant street traders in the inner-city Durban trying to make a living. Numerous benefits for street trading in the city came up. It was found that participants benefited through supporting families back in their home countries, paying school fees for their children, paying rent where they are trading and also where they are living. They also benefited by the reduction of high unemployment rates among them, as the street provided them with employment. In some cases, profit generated from trading in the street assisted them in establishing what they referred to as small-scale side businesses other than trading.

This study shows that immigrant street traders are using several livelihood approaches to sustain their business in inner-city Durban. The livelihoods have ensured that they provide them with the support they need to sustain their trading business, in the face of harsh conditions they are experiencing on the streets. Provided with the needed basic needs they will strive in street trading.

Many foreign street traders are experiencing many barriers that disturb their trading business. This includes xenophobic attacks from local citizens who usually attack them for many differing reasons. Another barrier is the ongoing brutality and harassment by the police for trading in unregulated trading sites and trading without permits. Some participants also raised the issues of criminals, lack of protection from responsible authorities, lack of proper trading infrastructure such as poor shelters, and unfair employment treatment from their employer, such as name-calling.

This study revealed that many migrant street traders do not obey and respect policies and regulations put in place in this country to govern street trading. They cross borders illegally and without proper documents which creates a problem for them to go back to their countries of origin and to get trading permits in South Africa. Even though there were many issues to trading in the inner-city Durban, immigrant street traders revealed that they have solutions to the issues affecting their livelihood.

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## **APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW GUIDE**

### **Interview Guide**

#### **Research demographic questions**

- What is your nationality?
- What is your country of origin?
- What is the highest level of education have you completed?
- What is your marital status?
- What is your household size number?

#### **Research questions for interview**

1. Why did you choose street trading out of all the careers available?
2. What made you select Durban as your destination of street trading?
3. How is street trading in Durban an advantage?
4. Which livelihood strategies do you employ to sustain street trading?
5. How do you cope with the Metro police and Municipality bylaws policies?
6. How do you ensure cleanliness and congestion in protection of public health?
7. Which are the barriers that effect you as a street trader?
8. How do you overcome the barriers mentioned above?
9. What is the benefit of street trading?
10. How can the Municipality and government intervene in street trading?

## **APPENDIX 2: INFORMED CONSENT**

### **UKZN HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (HSSREC)**

#### **APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL For research with human participants**

#### **INFORMED CONSENT RESOURCE TEMPLATE**

Note to researchers: Notwithstanding the need for scientific and legal accuracy, every effort should be made to produce a consent document that is as linguistically clear and simple as possible, without omitting important details as outlined below. Certified translated versions will be required once the original version is approved.

There are specific circumstances where witnessed verbal consent might be acceptable, and circumstances, where individual informed consent, may be waived by HSSREC.

#### **Information Sheet and Consent to Participate in Research**

Date: Day.... of..... 2019

Dear potential participant

My name is Nhlakanipho Nkululeko Prince Mdunge from School of Built Environment and Development Studies, College of Humanities, Howard College Campus, a master's candidate in population studies, at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

You are being invited to consider participating in a study titled, "Street trading as a livelihood strategy: A case study of immigrants in Durban". The study aims to investigate street trading as a livelihood strategy of immigrants in Durban. The study is expected to enroll 20 participants, 10 males and 10 females, documented and undocumented who are migrant street traders operating within the central city of Durban. It will involve in-depth interviews with individuals. The duration of your participation, if you choose to enroll and remain in the study, is expected to be 1 hour and 30 minutes. The study is funded by the researcher.

The study may involve invoking emotions and discomforts. The study will not provide personal benefits to participants. The study will seek to add a contribution to the academic debate of street trading as a livelihood strategy amongst Durban migrant street traders. And also provide solutions for intervention by the government and municipality officials in South Africa.

The study has the potential to invoke undesired changes in thought processes and emotions and discomfort. As the study deals with experiences facing migrant street traders, these experiences are usually transient. If any risk could occur to participants, the researcher will refer participants to two local health care facility within the city of Durban, namely; Lancers Road Clinic and Addington Hospital. These two health care facilities are available to provide support and medical assistance for free to the public.

This study has been ethically reviewed and approved by the UKZN Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (approval number HSSREC/00000039/2019).

In the event of any problems or concerns/questions you may contact the researcher by emailing [215045932@stu.ukzn.ac.za](mailto:215045932@stu.ukzn.ac.za) or call on +27 711 2935 49 or the UKZN Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee, contact details as follows:

**HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION**

Research Office, Westville Campus

Govan Mbeki Building

Private Bag X 54001

Durban

4000

KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA

Tel: 27 31 2604557- Fax: 27 31 2604609

Email: [HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za)

Immigrant Street traders' who will partake in this study will be selected based on a snowball sampling technic. This approach will be employed to help the researcher identify more migrant street traders needed to participate in the research interview questionnaires. The researcher selects a person who meets the selection criteria of the study, who in turn will refer the researcher to another person who meets the same selection requirements for the research study.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary, and the researcher will not be providing any payment to participants.

Participants are allowed to withdraw from the study at any given time, and in the event of a refusal of participation, the participants will not incur any penalties.

The researcher would high appreciate being informed if the participant voluntarily decides to withdraw from the study there are no potential consequences to occur. This is done to ensure an efficient organization of the study.

The researcher will only terminate a participant from the research study if they disappear without noticing the researcher of the reason of disappearance. And disappearing for more than a week. This will be done to ensure the continuation of the research interviews.

There are no costs that might be incurred by participant as a result of participation in the study, participants will not benefit directly, get incentives or reimbursement from the study for their participation. Since the interviews of the study will occur at their designated trading area.

Participants who will choose to participate in the research study will not be asked any personal information such as identity document numbers, and real names and surname. A brief explanation of the research objectives will be provided to participants who wish to partake in the research study.

All results will be treated as strictly as confidential and there are no foreseeable dangers associated with the study

Information and transcripts that will be received from respondents will be kept in a locked office within the university's premises.

Electronic data and files will be stored in a password-protected file that only the researcher has access to. All electronic data will be permanently deleted and any hard-copies will be shredded after five years

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**CONSENT (Edit as required)**

I (.....) have been informed about the study entitled "Street trading as a livelihood strategy: A case study of migrant street traders in Durban" by Mr. Mdunge Nhlakanipho.

The study will employ a snowball sampling strategy. This is to mean I understand my participation is evaluated and fit for this study.

I understand the purpose and procedures of the study.

I have been given an opportunity to answer questions about the study and have had answers to my satisfaction (Yes/No).

I declare that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without affecting any of the benefits that I usually am entitled to (Yes/No).

If I have any further questions/concerns or queries related to the study I understand that I may contact the researcher at [215045932@stu.ukzn.ac.za](mailto:215045932@stu.ukzn.ac.za) or call on +27 711 2935 49.

If I have any questions or concerns about my rights as a study participant, or if I am concerned about an aspect of the study or the researchers then I may contact:

**HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION**

Research Office, Westville Campus  
Govan Mbeki Building  
Private Bag X 54001  
Durban  
4000  
KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA  
Tel: 27 31 2604557 - Fax: 27 31 2604609  
Email: [HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za)

Additional consent, where applicable

I hereby provide consent to:

Audio -record my interview / focus group discussion      YES / NO

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of Participant**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of Witness**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

(Where applicable)

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Signature of Translator  
(Where applicable)

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Date