

can be unfavourable for traders (Roever, 2014). These moneylenders often charge very high interest rates that are effectively debt traps, further undermining traders' ability to save or turn a profit (Roever, 2014). Njenga and Ng'ambi (2017) claim that women are more likely to borrow from friends, relatives, informal microfinance associations and moneylenders.

The study conducted by Roever (2014) identified macroeconomic pressures such as rising prices of inputs and sluggish demand as constraints on traders. The combination of increased supply prices and decreased demand limits the amount of working capital available to traders, which limits the amount of stock they can purchase and increases the need to borrow from informal moneylenders (Roever, 2014). In an informal economy monitoring study conducted in Durban, 54 percent of respondents indicated that the demand for their products had decreased in the preceding year while 63 percent indicated that supply prices had increased in the same period (Mkhize et al., 2013). These results suggest that street traders experienced a decrease in demand and an increase in supply prices (Mkhize et al., 2013). Most traders are unable to increase prices because of intense competition in the sector for their customers and expectations from their customers to negotiate lower prices (Roever, 2014).

Competition is a major challenge for street traders that results from a proliferation of street traders in one location selling the same goods and services (Tissington, 2009). In addition to increased competition from other traders, there is competition from supermarket chains and malls (Roever, 2014). The higher the competition, the more challenging the growth path for enterprises, especially those at the bottom of the earnings distribution (Roever, 2014). Women in the informal economy face multiple forms of competition from formal businesses and their male counterparts, who often have bigger businesses (Njenga & Ng'ambi, 2017) Competition among local and foreign street traders is fierce in South Africa, with some organisations formed specifically to counteract the competition from foreign traders (Lund & Skinner, 1999). Lindell (2010) has noted the worrying manifestation of increased xenophobia accompanying an increase in competition.

3.4.4 Social constraints

Street traders are socially excluded through discrimination, criminalisation of their work and mistreatment by law officials (Sassen et al., 2018). Street trading and the individuals who participate in it are commonly perceived as a public nuisance, an obstruction to pedestrians and traffic, associated with crime and grime and a threat to emerging world-class cities (Tissington,

2009). This negative perception is often held by stakeholders who are considered by the city as key to city regeneration or are overtly included in city policies (Tissington, 2009). These negative perceptions can lead to exclusionary policies and practices, including harassment, relocations and evictions (Roever & Skinner, 2016). Comparing IEMS data collected in five cities examining the impact of these exclusionary practices on the day-to-day lives of traders, the paper suggests that the biggest impact was on the productivity of traders (Roever, 2014). For example, female traders in Ahmedabad complained about abuse from local authorities suggesting that police confiscate their goods or, as a way of exercising their power, allow thugs to harass them (Roever, 2014). Roever and Skinner (2016) suggest that the exclusion of street traders is facilitated by governments. In all five cities examined in the IEMS study, by-laws limit the activities of street traders and the power to impose sanctions is conferred on local authorities (Roever, 2014). Street traders are excluded from decision-making processes that affect their trade, such as spatial planning, policy revisions and city regeneration projects (Kroll et al., 2021). Women are further excluded from these processes as they rarely have a voice within trader organisations or participate in negotiations with the government. This reflects societies where women are seen as subordinates and, following their low status in society, this results in under-representation in policy spaces (Njenga & Ng'ambi, 2017).

Street traders from foreign countries experience social marginalisation in the form of xenophobia (Sassen et al., 2018). Xenophobic attacks on foreign-owned businesses may have an economic dimension because their businesses are specifically targeted for looting and robbery (Mothibi, Roelofse & Tshivhase, 2015). A study conducted for the Centre for Applied Legal Studies (CALS) explored the lived experiences and socio-economic circumstances of street traders in the inner city of Johannesburg. Among the findings was the issue of tension between South African and foreign traders (Tissington, 2009). South African traders were under the impression that foreign traders were taking their customers and limited trading space, leading to tension and violence (Tissington, 2009). Mothibi et al. (2015) suggest that there may also be a gender dimension to xenophobic violence where foreign business owners are targeted for sexual and gender-based violence. Migrant women are more likely to work in less regulated or less visible occupations such as domestic work, hairdressing and informal trading. Eligibility for work permits in South Africa requires proof of employment and, since most women worked in the informal sector, they are consequently excluded (Mbiyozo, 2018). Female migrants are at a heightened risk of experiencing

sexual violence, forced labour, exploitation and abuse in various forms (Mothibi, 2015). Mbiyozo (2018) argues that female migrants in South Africa face triple discrimination through xenophobia, racism and misogyny, increasing their vulnerability.

Crime has been cited in several studies as one of the major risks faced by street traders (Lund & Skinner 1999). One such study was carried out in Durban in 1997. The study revealed that theft and violent crime were among the biggest concerns of street traders in the area, and particularly affected women and their trade (Lund & Skinner, 1999). More recently, 63 percent of respondents who were part of the IEMS study in Durban indicated that theft was a serious problem, alleging that thieves stole their stock or robbed their persons directly (Mkhize et al., 2013). Instead of protecting traders, the police accepted bribes from thieves and drug dealers to release them (Mkhize et al., 2013).

Street traders face a myriad of constraints that in one way or another limit their ability to effectively pursue their livelihood. The constraints mentioned above are not independent of each other but instead reinforce each other. For instance, social exclusion and negative perceptions of street traders may be reflected in policy. The challenges experienced by street traders thus form a web of constraints that limit productivity and ultimately the ability of traders to pursue their livelihood.

3.5 Responses to constraints

Street traders face a number of problems while pursuing their livelihood, with some of their challenges experienced on an individual level and others experienced as a collective. In this study, collective challenges are considered as challenges collectively experienced by traders related to workplace (e.g. harassment) and regulatory issues (e.g. licensing) imposed by the city/policymakers. Individual challenges are experiences that are not shared and can be overcome through individual coping mechanisms. Responses to such challenges can vary from individual responses to collective responses. In a study conducted in Ghana, it was found that, regardless of the challenges that street traders faced collectively, their responses were mostly at the individual level. This was especially the case for female traders (Anyidoho, 2013). For example, traders took out individual loans when in financial need or found alternative trading spaces when evicted (Anyidoho, 2013). Similarly, Lalthapersad-Pillay (2004) found that street trading in Johannesburg was an individualistic activity among female street vendors. However, Roever (2014) notes that

although individual coping mechanisms are the most common way of overcoming challenges, collective action plays a more significant role in responses to regulatory challenges.

This section of the study explores collective responses used by street traders to deal with collective challenges. Street traders are increasingly using collective action to overcome their challenges, participate in decision making and make their voices heard (Yasmeen, 2003). A 2003 study conducted in India on the innovative organising strategies of street vendors found that street traders used their collective voices to overcome challenges such as lack of access to secure and affordable trading spaces, lack of social protection and lack of access to financing (Yasmeen, 2003). A study conducted by Bhowmik (2007) found that street traders were organised into unions to overcome the problems of evictions and confiscation of goods. These street traders were localised bodies who represented the needs and interests of street traders in negotiations with local authorities and affiliating themselves with political bodies to advance the interests of street vendors (Bhowmik, 2007).

A study conducted in 10 cities around the world found that organisations were instrumental in addressing issues related to infrastructure and crime (Roever, 2014). One of the organisations in Durban advocated for street lights to be installed in crime hotspots and another formed a valuable relationship with the police to overcome crime (Roever, 2014). A study conducted by Motala (2008) investigated three case studies of informal trader organisations; their strengths, weaknesses and effectiveness in representing street traders. In the case of the Gauteng Hawkers Association (GHA), it was reported that it was securing additional trading spaces for its members and negotiating with Shoprite/Checkers to have their traders erect and operate trading kiosks in front of the supermarkets (Motala, 2008).

The challenges that street traders face while pursuing their livelihoods are diverse and intersecting. While they may respond to some issues as individuals, collective action plays an important role in overcoming collective issues. Street traders undertake collective action to overcome certain challenges, participate in decision making and gain a more respectable position in society and the economy (Motala, 2008).

3.6 Street traders organising in the informal sector

It is widely acknowledged that informal sector workers could benefit from participating in collective organisations (Hendriks, 2017). Informal workers, especially women, need to organise to overcome structural disadvantages, gain power through solidarity and participate in decision-making processes (Chen, Bonner & Carré, 2015). According to Carré et al. (2018), workers in the informal economy face unique challenges. Many of these challenges stem from the institutional treatment of informal workers such as exclusion from representation in law, social protection and labour standards. On the other hand, some of these challenges relate to the type of work, the position of the workers in social and economic hierarchies, and gender (Carré et al., 2018). For a long time, the general perception among government and economic institutions was that informal workers have limited agency (Akorsu & Odoi, 2017), especially given that, globally, labour force movements have focused on organising workers in the formal economy (Goldman & Creation, 2003).

Trade unions are well-known, established workers' organisations that exist to protect the rights of workers against the actions and interests of their employers (Hendriks, 2017). Trade unions usually organise in the formal sector where workers are easily identifiable and can be classified based on their positions. Such workers enjoy social security such as legal protection and pensions (Hendriks, 2017). They have a measure of contractual protection and guaranteed income at regular intervals and can usually be found in concentrations at physical locations that are easily accessed, such as factories, towns and cities. All these factors, along with laws that protect their right to organise, make formal workers suitable for organising into trade unions and harnessing their collective bargaining power. Informal workers are not as easily organised as formal workers because they are not easily identifiable and cannot be classified based on position (Hendriks, 2017). Where informal workers are concentrated in numbers they may have multiple occupations, making it difficult to organise according to occupations or along lines of similar interests (i.e. they lack common cause). Those in a similar occupation are sometimes geographically scattered or isolated (Carré et al., 2018). Policy makers and trade unions commonly do not see informal workers as workers at all but rather as entrepreneurs or business owners (Chen, 2013). Trade unions thus find it difficult to organise informal workers, opening the door for informal workers to organise themselves (Hendriks, 2017).

3.7 Street trader organisations in South Africa

Street trading has become a major source of livelihood for approximately two million people in South Africa (Horn, 2014). However, the informal economy in South Africa is important, making up 34 percent of the workforce or about five million workers (ILO, 2018b: 30). Despite being relatively small, the sector continues to grow as the formal sector fails to provide sufficient work opportunities (Nkrumah-Abebrese & Schachtebeck, 2017). Collectives have more voice and political leverage in democracies than individuals (Hendriks, 2017). Various organisations were formed in South Africa to present a strengthened and cohesive front in the face of new informal trading by-laws, harassment by police and linear market distribution channels (Tissington, 2009). Evidence of street trader organisations is scant as only a few studies have been conducted in this area (Skinner, 2008a). Existing evidence suggests that organisation densities are low among street traders (Skinner, 2008a). Similarly, Roever (2014) suggests that street traders are large in number, however, organisations are usually small and less visible. Two surveys on street traders in South Africa found that only 15 percent of the street traders in Johannesburg were part of an organisation while in Durban the figure was 12 percent for men and 16 percent for women (Lund, 1998). Despite low densities, street trader organisations still play a vital role in representing and advocating for street traders (Hendriks, 2017).

The Informal Traders Management Board (ITMB) represents street traders in the Durban (eThekweni) metropolitan area. The ITMB was established in 1995 at a gathering of smaller organisations that recognised that street traders needed one voice (Motala, 2002). The main objective of the organisation was to create a unified voice among traders to engage local government to respond to challenges experienced by street traders and improve their working conditions (Motala, 2008). The ITMB also aims to educate street traders about their rights and to develop skills and empowerment programmes that will assist members to grow their businesses (Mkhize et al., 2013) As of 2010, the organisation had approximately 2 000 members, 70 percent of whom were said to be women (Mkhize et al., 2013).

A South African study conducted for the ILO explored the strengths, weaknesses and bargaining power of three well-established street trader organisations, one of them being the ITMB (Motala, 2002). The ITMB experienced challenges that undermined their capability to serve their members and the organisation was not found to be representative of women's needs (Motala, 2008). The

ITMB cited the lack of infrastructure as one of their key challenges, For instance, the ITMB did not have offices and their meetings were held in hired municipal halls and from their trading spaces (Mkhize et al., 2013). Additionally, lack of resources, lack of technical abilities and conflicts of interest were found within the ITMB (Motala, 2002). Despite challenges, the ITMB was effective in negotiations and representing its members. The ITMB was found to effectively represent street traders in a street trader forum initiated by the local government. The ITMB successfully negotiated more trading spaces, increased access to storage facilities and issues of traders' safety and security (Motala, 2008). The Self-Employed Women's Union (SEWU) was an organisation that exclusively represented women and that sought to empower female traders and create a supportive network for them (Motala, 2008). The organisation made great strides in terms of supporting female traders, including providing skills programmes for traders, contributing to policy formulation and creating spaces for participation in international networks (Motala, 2008). Although it styled itself as a trade union for women informal traders, SEWU could not register as a trade union with the Department of Labour because its members were not in formal employment. It is no longer active due to a lack of funding.

3.8 Barriers to organising

The South African informal sector faces a number of barriers to organising among street traders similar to other countries. In South Africa, these barriers include the precariousness of street trader activities, capabilities and skills, limited financial resources and time as to organising (Tissington, 2009). Lund and Skinner (1999) also point out that informal workers are not homogeneous within a group; there are gender, class, racial and cultural divisions. Similarly, the women street traders in this study are also not a unified group, but have different interests, causing some to compete while others cooperate (Lund & Skinner, 1999).

3.8.1 Economic barriers

Motala (2008) suggests that street traders, especially women with families, are reluctant to dedicate time to participate in organisations because of the uncertain returns. Time has an economic value in street trading. In a study conducted in Johannesburg and Durban, street traders revealed that time spent on organisational activities could mean a potential loss of income (Lund & Skinner, 1999). In the same study, leaders complained that traders only came to meetings when there were urgent matters and did not attend for housekeeping matters that are essential to building the

organisation (Lund & Skinner, 1999). Time is one of the most primary barriers to organising and maintaining an informal traders' organisation (Lund et al., 2000), especially for women. Women have to divide their time between domestic and labour market responsibilities, which means they do not have enough time to dedicate to organisational matters (Lund et al., 2000). Female traders tend to bring their children to work when they cannot afford childcare facilities and thus are unable to balance trading and taking care of children with attending to organisational matters (Lund et al., 2000). The still-existing spatial division of apartheid has left many traders living far from city centres (Turok, 2012). Transport costs add an extra financial burden to survivalist street traders (Lund & Skinner, 1999). Along with this, the precarious incomes of street traders make it difficult to organise and sustain organisations (Lund & Skinner, 1999).

3.8.2 Previous experience with organising bodies and corrupt practices

According to Tissington (2009), there is often a lack of trust between street traders and leadership due to past disappointments. Lund and Skinner (1999) report a common experience among traders of fraudulent 'fly-by-night' organisers who make promises under false pretences and do not deliver. Organisers suggest this is a major obstacle in recruiting street traders who have become suspicious of joining organisations (Lund & Skinner, 1999). In a study examining the organisational strategies of four organisations in South Africa, interviewed members suggested that there were a number of corrupt activities within their organisations (Motala, 2002). For example, a member of the ITMB, one of the organisations under study, allegedly obtained premises from the council to use as storage facilities but instead operated his own business from the storage facility (Motala, 2002). These corrupt practices make traders wary of affiliating themselves with organisations (Lund & Skinner, 1999). The result of this is that street trading becomes an individualistic activity that is not conducive to strong, sustainable organisations (Tissington, 2009).

3.8.3 Lack of knowledge of the existence of organisations

Existing research suggests that many traders do not belong to any informal organisation (Skinner, 2008a). In a study conducted by the CALS in 2007, it was discovered that most traders were not affiliated with any organisation because they had never heard of any street trader organisation (Tissington, 2009). The study further notes that those who were aware of these organisations or were members were often male street traders who had been trading for longer (Tissington, 2009).

3.8.4 Lack of resources

Organisations must be able to recruit new members to sustain themselves and grow while serving the needs of existing members (Lund et al., 2000). For this to happen, organisations need to hire full-time organisers who would be responsible for the efficient completion of these tasks (Lund & Skinner, 1999). The money brought in through membership fees is may not be enough to pay full-time organisers, especially in those organisations that serve poor traders (Lund & Skinner, 1999). Organisations also find it difficult to pay staff salaries, meeting expenses and fees for adequate meeting spaces (Bonner & Spooner, 2011). Funders of non-governmental organisations are less willing to fund organisations that are not moving towards financial independence, presenting a challenge for organisations working with economically disadvantaged people (Lund et al., 2000).

3.8.5 Cultural barriers

South Africa is a country known for its cultural diversity. Many of these cultures are still strongly patriarchal, where masculinity is associated with dominance and femininity with being subordinate to males (Sathiparsad, Taylor & Dlamini, 2008). Lund and Skinner (1999) suggest the plea to respect culture is used by both men and women to keep men in dominant positions within organisations. This leads to an environment where women's gender-specific needs are not adequately met and their issues are not adequately dealt with (Lund & Skinner, 1999).

3.8.6 Internal divisions

In the South African context, tensions between foreign and local traders have been known to result in violent clashes (Goldman & Creation, 2003). In a study investigating how the interests of women were promoted in informal trader organisations, it was found that divisions between foreign and South African street traders were centred on economic issues (Lund & Skinner, 1999). Many South African traders felt threatened by competition from foreign traders, suggesting that foreign traders traded better than them (Lund & Skinner, 1999). Xenophobia is rife among street traders because of the shortage of legal trading spaces, and higher education levels and business skills among foreign traders (Bénit-Gbaffou, 2018). These tensions result in a lack of representation of foreign street traders in the organisations (Tissington, 2009). Female migrants seem to face greater levels of discrimination and may be further marginalised and lack representation as foreign nationals who are also females (Mbiyozo, 2018). Since street traders regularly negotiate or engage with local government, this presents a further challenge for

foreigners as they are not part of a constituency that is represented in government (Goldman & Creation, 2003).

Class and racial divisions result in organisations representing the needs of one group over another (Lund & Skinner, 1999). Lund and Skinner (1999) found that, although there were females in leadership positions in Cape Town, they tended to support the interests and needs of ‘better off’ coloured traders rather than traders of other races. Street trader organisations represent heterogeneous groups with different interests, who are often divided by their differences in race, class, gender and nationality (Motala, 2002). Divisions and hierarchies in the informal economy are shaped by differences in interests among members, gender, race, ethnicity and resources constraints (Lindell, 2010). The potential of informal organisations to defend collective economic interests is undermined by internal divisions, poverty and vulnerability to elite capture (Lindell, 2010). As a result, street trader organisations are too marginalised, divided and disempowered to be able to withstand police harassment or challenge restrictive by-laws (Tissington, 2009).

3.9 Organising female street vendors: An empirical case

The Self-Employed Women’s Association (SEWA) is one of the most documented informal sector associations studied in India and the world. SEWA is a national union of women working in the informal economy, established in 1972 (ILO, 2018a). It operates in 14 states of India and has approximately 1,5 million women members working in the informal economy in various occupations (ILO, 2018a). SEWA does not only function as a union but comprises several membership-based organisations, including cooperatives (Sankrit, 2015). SEWA struggles and advocates for worker’s rights while the cooperatives and other collective organisations advance economic opportunities and development for its members (Sankrit, 2015). SEWA defends the rights of its members against poor working conditions, lack of social protection and low wages (ILO, 2018a).

SEWA identifies several barriers or constraints to organising street vendors in India, namely, illiteracy, poverty, cultural barriers, family/community pressures, discrimination, violence and abuse from higher authorities and castes (Sankrit, 2015). There are more street vendors in India than there are organisations with the capacity to serve them (Sankrit, 2015). The lack of organisations is partially ascribed to traders being dispersed and scattered, heterogeneity of traders and the lack of time to participate in organising activities (Sankrit, 2015).

Despite these challenges, SEWA has enjoyed many successes over the years. As a response to the harassment and abuse of female vendors by male vendors and the police, SEWA established the first market for female traders called Mahila Bazaar in Delhi (SEWA, 2012). This required four years of negotiations with municipal authorities, the police and the traffic department to obtain all the necessary permissions and documentation to establish the market (SEWA, 2012). More than 200 female traders from different areas in Delhi now trade in the bazaar with dignity and without harassment. SEWA continued to improve the market and provide water and gender-sensitive toilet facilities for women (SEWA, 2012). The bazaar is a rare example of a successful attempt at collectively mobilising, advocating and negotiating improvements for female traders despite the organising difficulties experienced.

3.10 Conclusion

Street traders have long been considered by governments and other actors to have no or limited agency and have been regarded as a type of worker that could not be organised. However, street traders have demonstrated their agency through collective organisations. These organisations have assisted traders to overcome or cope with some of the challenges they faced and increased their bargaining power, voice and political leverage. Women dominate street trading in terms of numbers, particularly survivalist street trading. as workers placed in a more vulnerable position, participation in trader organisations has the potential to empower women and contribute to their increased well-being in the workplace. Women face several barriers that can hinder their full participation in trader organisations. The literature shows that, by responding to the gender-specific needs of women, supportive organisations create a better working environment that allows women to exercise their agency and improve their well-being.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE POLICY ENVIRONMENT

4.1 Introduction

Urban informality has been conceptualised as a sign of backwardness and underdevelopment. This conceptualisation was, in most cases, based on experiences in the global North (Bénit-Gbaffou, 2018). Street trading policies in African cities have emulated the colonial policy framework that was designed to control and regulate the growth of indigenous businesses (Mitullah, 2003). These outdated and restrictive policies make street trading illegal, associating it with dirt, obstruction and a public nuisance (Mitullah, 2003). The dominant repressive approach to street trading adopted in African countries clashed with national agendas that have embraced street trading as an important feature of African cities (Bénit-Gbaffou, 2018).

In apartheid South Africa, street trading was similarly characterised by repressive policy measures that often led to violent evictions of black street traders in urban centres (Rogerson, 2016a). According to Maylam (1995), the laws governing trading in South Africa were derived from the colonial era when urban spaces were controlled by white people. Rate-paying property owners elected municipal councils and, since few blacks owned property, municipalities largely represented the interests of white property owners. The municipality controlled trading, whether by shops or street trading, through the issuing of a limited number of trading licences (Matjomane, 2013). Before apartheid, a limited number of Indian and coloured traders managed to obtain licences in Natal and the Cape, but the Transvaal and Orange Free State placed severe restrictions on even the entry of itinerant Indian traders into those provinces. Under apartheid laws, African street vendors were not allowed to trade in white urban areas unless they were employed by white persons or white businesses (Skinner, 2008b). In the 1980s, traders were prevented from erecting fixed stands by laws that required them to move their goods at least 25 metres every 15 minutes (Skinner, 2008b). Other laws prohibited trading in areas that were mostly occupied by whites (Matjomane, 2013). With few exceptions, national and local government policies led to the total or partial inclusion of street traders in urban areas (Skinner, 2008b). In 1991, the country moved towards an attitude of deregulation by introducing the Businesses Act, Act 71 of 1991 (Tissington, 2009). This Act not only deregulated street trading but also recognised it as an important contributor to the economy and individual incomes (Tissington, 2009). The dawn of democracy

saw a more tolerant policy environment towards street trading in major South African cities such as Cape Town (Rogerson, 2000).

This historical background of street trading policy in South Africa is a useful departure point for analysing the policies currently in place in South African cities. The following sections explore policies influencing street trading at the national, provincial and local levels.

4.2 Policy environment at the national level

South Africa adopted a more liberal approach to street trading in the mid-1990s, following the passing of the Businesses Act of 1991 (Skinner, 2008b). The Act restricted local authorities from creating and implementing policies that would prohibit street trading. As a result, there was a sharp increase in the number of street traders across South African cities (Skinner, 2000). In the years following the democratic transition, the role of small businesses in creating employment and economically empowering the black majority received much attention (Skinner, 2000). The 1995 White Paper on the National Strategy for the Development and Promotion of Small Business committed to creating an enabling environment for small businesses, including survivalist activities (RSA, 1995). The White Paper specified support strategies for other non-survivalist small businesses, placing this responsibility on local governments (Skinner, 2000).

The Businesses Act was amended in 1993 to give greater autonomy to municipalities to formulate by-laws regarding street trading in their cities (Skinner, 2008b). This amendment implied that municipalities could now decide what trading was permitted, including declaring some areas as trade-free zones (Skinner, 2000). The amended Act gave municipalities the power to confiscate goods and fine street traders who were perceived as illegal (Matjomane, 2013). Matjomane (2013) argues that allowing local government to declare some areas as no-trading zones was a continuation of the colonial and apartheid laws. The White Paper indicates the importance of providing support networks for traders in the informal economy to create a conducive environment for their economic success (Van Heerden, 2011). The National Small Business Amendment Act, Act 26 of 2003, emphasises the role of the Minister of Finance in creating an environment that would be conducive for the economic success of small businesses (RSA, 2003). The amended Act states that the minister should assemble an advisory body to represent the interests of small business owners (RSA, 2003).

By 2012, the informal sector was receiving increased attention from the national government in a series of fresh initiatives aimed at stimulating the economy and addressing the need for policies specific to the informal sector (Rogerson, 2016b). The initiatives by the government have been described as simultaneously representing neglect, support and suppression (Skinner, 2018). The National Development Plan (NDP) predicts that 11 million jobs will be created by 2030 and anticipates that 1,2 million to 2,1 million jobs will come from the informal sector (NPC, 2012). According to Skinner (2018), the NDP does not explicitly mention strategies for the informal sector, how existing informal sector workers will be supported or how barriers of entry will be dealt with to help generate new jobs. The plans and proposals in the NDP are based on the formal sector small, medium and micro enterprises (Fourie, 2018).

The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI)¹ established a new Informal Business and Chamber Support directorate in 2012, which was seen as DTI recognition of the role of the sector in job creation (Rogerson, 2016b). The directorate established a reference group that was to focus on establishing a National Informal Business Development Strategy (NIBDS) aimed at guiding government intervention in the sector (Rogerson, 2016b). The DTI staff, together with local government, formal and informal sector businesses, reported back to the reference group and DTI launched the National Informal Business Upliftment Strategy (NIBUS) in 2014 (Skinner, 2018). Also in 2014, the Department of Small Business Development (DSBD) was launched. It would take over as the lead department implementing the NIBUS.

Another division of the DTI was simultaneously preparing legislation to replace the National Small Business Amendment Act of 1993. The draft Business Licensing Bill was released in March 2013 (DTI, 2013). The draft bill requires all businesses, no matter how small, to be licensed. Foreign businesses could be granted licences if the applicants had a business permit or refugee permit (DTI, 2013) According to Crush, Skinner and Stulgaitis (2017), permits were to be applied for in their home countries and only granted if applicants could demonstrate that they had R2,5 million to invest in South Africa. The Bill proposed that much more power be given to inspectors and licensing authorities than had been granted by the 1993 Act, no limits were to be set on fines and those who contravened the Act would face a sentence of up to 10 years (Skinner, 2018). The Bill was widely criticised, with some organisations alleging that the proposed measures were punitive

¹ In June 2019, this department was renamed the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition (DTIC).

and would result in the criminalisation of the informal sector (Skinner, 2018). Criminalisation of informal sector activities has led to some municipal regulations that give power to authorities but render informal workers powerless (Sassen et al., 2018). The Bill has also been criticised for being anti-foreign. Skinner (2018) suggests the xenophobic sentiments in the bill highlight the need for greater research on the contribution made by foreign nationals to the informal economy.

The launch of the NIBUS was a turning point for informal sector policy, as the national policy initiative was the first initiative with a specific focus on the informal economy (Skinner, 2018). The document acknowledges that the government overlooked the informal sector in the past. It envisions a policy and regulatory environment that supports and promotes the development of informal businesses (DTI, 2014). The strategy is based on the idea of a development continuum where informal businesses would graduate from being survivalist to joining the mainstream (DTI, 2014). Formalisation seems to be a strategic objective, although the terms ‘upliftment’, ‘transitioning’ or ‘graduation process’ are preferred in the document to describe a process of progression where informal businesses will eventually become formal SMMEs and benefit from government programmes (Skinner, 2018).

The NIBUS requires informal business owners to comply with some form of registration or licensing to qualify for government support (Skinner, 2018). Government support could include access to suitable trading stalls in good locations, access to financial services such as business finance or insurance, access to water and electricity, government subsidies, skills development initiatives and assistance with formal supply chains (Fourie, 2018). Fourie (2018) suggests that while formalisation could be fruitful, formalisation should not be a policy objective but a means to aid the pursuit of better livelihoods. Formalisation must also not be used as a way of controlling or regulating but for supporting informal workers (Fourie, 2018). Forced formalisation with unsuitable by-laws and regulations would be detrimental for many informal workers (Skinner, 2018). South African policies tend to focus on formalising informal businesses and this may be linked to the sector still being viewed as a problem that should be brought under control by being formalised (Fourie, 2018).

The COVID-19 global pandemic has had a devastating impact on the South African informal economy. The government had to change and improve the regulatory environment to respond to the crisis. Hard lockdown regulations implemented by the government meant that street traders

had to stop operating and lose all income (Wegerif, 2020). After civil society organisations pushed for the government to allow traders, particularly food vendors, to operate again the national government responded by amending regulations in April 2020 (Wegerif, 2020). The amendments allow informal fruit and vegetable traders to operate with written permission from their respective municipalities (Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs, 2020). The DSBD issued a directive that all informal traders had to obtain a permit as per the provisions of the Businesses Act of 1991 (Rogan & Skinner, 2020). According to Wegerif (2020), Some food vendors were able to get permits and start operating, some traders were refused permits and there were reports of traders who were arrested and harassed by law enforcement despite having permits (Wegerif, 2020). In addition, some municipalities did not have existing permit systems and struggled to devise them in the middle of a pandemic. As the lockdown went to lower levels, regulations were eased and informal traders were allowed to operate under strict conditions and with written permission from municipalities.

The DSBD launched a number of initiatives to support SMMEs, including spaza shops. However, informal workers have not benefited equally. Despite the acknowledgement that the sector has been negatively impacted by the pandemic, relief measures have reached a small number of predominantly male recipients (Rogan & Skinner, 2020). The national disaster regulations were imposed without proper consultation with municipalities and other stakeholders, leading to confusion and heavy-handed enforcement (Kroll et al., 2021).

4.3 Policy environment at the provincial level: Western Cape

The Western Cape Government (WCG) requires all businesses to register with their local municipalities and acquire business licences, including those businesses that need to comply with health and safety regulations (WCG, 2019). This complies with the Businesses Act of 1991. The provincial government does not engage directly with informal sector business owners as informal trading is controlled and managed by municipalities (WCG, 2019).

4.4 Policy environment at the local level: City of Cape Town

Informal sector activities play a significant role in Cape Town's economic life. Although precise data is scarce one estimate suggests that the informal sector contributes 18–20 percent to the city's GDP (Oldfield, 2014). Informal trading in Cape Town is visible in many areas in and around the

city. Most prominent in the inner city are street markets offering goods and services to tourists and locals (Rogerson, 2018). The Businesses Act is the overarching national legislation and gives local authorities the power to formulate their own by-laws. This has led to South African cities adopting different approaches to street trading (Skinner, 2008b). In 2003, the CoCT acknowledged and embraced street trading by introducing the Informal Trading Policy and Management Framework (Bamu & Theron, 2012). The document consists of plans that the City had for informal trading and proposes what is conceptualised as a developmental approach to the regulation of informal trading (Bamu & Theron, 2012). The policy document provides more details regarding the management of street trading and emphasises a developmental and facilitative approach, a move away from the restrictive approach of the past (CoCT, 2003).

Regarding regulation and management, the policy discusses the different roles and responsibilities of different departments at the management, operational and support sector level (CoCT, 2003). The policy is clear on trading zones: trading is permitted within the CBD or tertiary economic centres, pedestrian malls, designated trading areas and appropriate markets. This placement is said to provide traders with more trading opportunities to facilitate growth and diversity (CoCT, 2003). The rules and criteria regarding the allocation of trading bays are clear. In line with the Businesses Act of 1991, trading bays are allocated to bona fide traders, excluding those who operate in brick & mortar premises (CoCT, 2003). Preference is given to unemployed, previously disadvantaged individuals and those who operate for four days per week rather than casual traders (CoCT, 2003).

In compliance with the 2003 policy document, the City introduced a by-law on street trading in 2009, which came into effect in 2010. The new by-law is similar to its predecessor regarding trading zones, hygiene, waste removal and certain offences (Bamu & Theron, 2012). The by-law introduces new provisions such as special events, the freedom to trade, public, adoption of trading plans and participation before a trading plan is adopted (Bamu & Theron, 2012). In terms of the freedom to engage in informal trading, the by-law states that “Informal trading is permitted in any area within the jurisdiction of the City, subject to any trading plans adopted by the City, the provisions of this by-law and any other applicable law” (CoCT, 2009: 5). The City should adopt trading plans, particularly with regard to significant overlaps between the formal and informal sectors. The City is obliged to consult with all affected parties, including formal and informal actors before adopting a trading plan (CoCT, 2009).

According to Bamu and Theron (2012), the 2009/2010 by-law is an improvement over its predecessor because it allows for appeals against decisions made regarding by-laws. Therefore, theoretically, it gives a voice to informal traders and protects their interests. Indeed, the by-law states that “A person whose rights are affected by a decision taken by the City in terms of this by-law under a duty or power which has been delegated or sub-delegated, may appeal against that decision in terms of section 62 of the Systems Act” (CoCT, 2009: 13). The by-law also states that the City may prohibit informal trading to host a special event, notwithstanding the terms of a trading plan adopted in that trading area (CoCT, 2009).

In 2013, the city introduced an Informal Trading Policy to repeal the Informal Trading Policy and Management Framework of 2009. The amended policy emphasises that the CoCT takes a developmental approach to informal trading (CoCT, 2013). As part of its development approach, the City aims to assist the informal sector to prosper by focusing on planning and development, policy issues and institutional arrangements (CoCT, 2013). In terms of planning and development, the document acknowledges the role of the informal economy in stimulating employment and economic growth. It states that development interventions should be specific to the sector and individual traders to maximise profit and growth. The document further states that the City will provide the appropriate level of infrastructure and this shall be accompanied by a maintenance plan (CoCT, 2013). The document states that regulations will be adopted to promote the sector and the adoption of such regulations will be agreed upon in engagement forums (CoCT, 2013). Regarding institutional arrangements, the by-law suggests that a multi-stakeholder forum be initiated by the City to identify problems and solutions and set the direction for the development of informal trading. In addition, engagement forums will relay information to the sector through representative organisations (CoCT, 2013). The section further states that “Support to and assistance with the establishment of trader associations as well as other stakeholder bodies shall be offered. These organisations will represent their constituents at the engagement forums” (CoCT, 2013: 11).

The informal sector in Cape Town is regulated by the Informal Trading Policy of 2013. However, there have been calls to amend informal trading by-laws, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. Kroll et al. (2021) suggest that by-laws and policies should be reviewed to create a more supportive environment for informal traders.

Municipalities had to come up with interventions to support the local economy and improve the regulatory environment in response to the COVID-19 pandemic (Hlati & Maziwisa, 2020). Like other metros, the CoCT fast-tracked and decentralised the procurement of trading licences to allow the sector to continue operating. State officials and researchers came together to interpret and oppose the lockdown regulations imposed by the government (Kroll et al., 2021). A notable intervention by the CoCT was the facilitation of an SMME COVID-19 Safety Toolkit to assist businesses to take the necessary precautions to operate safely (Hlati & Maziwisa, 2020). The toolkit included three litres of sanitiser, masks, a winter cap, social distancing mats and information on how to safely operate during COVID-19 (CoCT, 2020).

4.5 Conclusion

The approach to street trading in South Africa has evolved from control and restriction to acknowledgement and acceptance. The CoCT has demonstrated a commitment through its policies to the development of street trading. The policy approach of the CoCT to street trading has been internationally commended (Van Heerden, 2011). While in most countries the approach is still one of control and restriction, South African cities like Cape Town have embraced street trading and sought to facilitate the sector's growth and development (Van Heerden, 2011).



CHAPTER FIVE: METHODOLOGY

5.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the research process in detail, beginning with an explanation of the study design, followed by the chosen research method and the justification for the use of this method. The chapter also discusses the sampling technique and sample size, the data collection methods and instruments used in the data collection process as well as the data analysis process and the ethical considerations that guided the study and the researcher.

5.2 Study design

A research design refers to a logical plan of how the researcher intends to collect and analyse data to answer the research questions (Ragin & Amoroso, 2011). Study designs vary but are dependent on the research problem or question and the evidence required to adequately answer the research question (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). According to Miller and Salkind (2002), various components influence the construction of the research design, including methods of data collection, access to organisations or respondents, type of data, number of cases and source of data (Miller & Salkind, 2002). The researcher adopted a qualitative research design. Qualitative research asserts that human behaviour is subjectively meaningful for the people who engage in it. Thus, the goal of the qualitative researcher is to study human behaviour from the perspective of the insider (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). Qualitative research was found to be suitable for this study because it allowed the researcher to have a detailed encounter with the object of the study (Babbie & Mouton, 2001).

This study sought to explore the collective constraints encountered by female street traders and how collective action is used to overcome these constraints. The qualitative approach allowed the researcher to study the experiences, behaviours and attitudes of female street traders in their natural setting. Participants were required to respond to questions by providing detailed accounts of their own experiences. The researcher aimed to capture these interpretations to better understand their behaviour, decisions and actions as individuals and within their organisations (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). This approach enabled the researcher to explore in-depth and understand the experiences of participants to provide a thick description of these experiences.

5.3 Research method: Case study

The study aimed to present a “detailed and intensive analysis of a single case” (Bryman, 2012: 66). The case study research method allows the researcher to closely examine a single case in a specific setting (Bryman, 2012). In most cases, this method involves the selection of a small number of participants as study subjects, in a small geographical area. A case study method intensely analyses the persons, decisions, events, projects, institutions and other systems that are studied holistically using one or more methods (Thomas, 2017). A case study method was seen as appropriate for the current study, which investigated not only individuals and institutions but the greater system they find themselves in, including the policies and by-laws that govern them. This study is based on a single case of female street traders who are members of a street trader organisation in the Cape Town CBD – the Grand Parade United Traders Association (hereafter ‘GPUA’).

5.4 Study area

The Grand Parade, colloquially known as ‘the Parade’, is a large public space located in central Cape Town between the Cape Town City Hall and central library to the south, the Castle of Good Hope to the east, and the Golden Acre shopping centre and main Cape Town bus terminus to the north. The Grand Parade is bounded by Darling, Castle and Lower Plein Streets (see Figure 2).

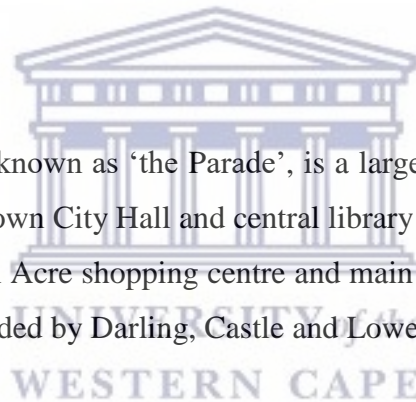




Figure 2: Case study boundary of the Grand Parade, Cape Town

Source: Author, adapted from Google Maps.

Soon after the Dutch trading company, the VOC (Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie, or the United East India Company in English) arrived at the Cape in 1652, it began to build a fort where the Grand Parade is located today, to secure the site against its European rivals. After the decision was taken to build a more secure castle to guard the harbour, the fort was abandoned and the garrison gradually moved to the castle site to the north. The fort site was then used as a parade ground for soldiers (Abrahams, 1996). In the almost four centuries since, the parade grounds now named ‘Grand Parade’ were used as a public square for civic functions, bi-weekly market stalls, a popular meeting place for all classes, and political rallies throughout the 20th century, including the mass rally addressed by former president Nelson Mandela in 1992 after his release from prison (Abrahams, 1996).

In the present day, most of the space is used as a parking lot, the biggest in the city. On Saturdays and Wednesdays, a large part of the Grand Parade is transformed into a market, which retreats to a much smaller peripheral space occupied by small-scale traders on the other days (Thompson, 2017). The CoCT manages the space by leasing out various spaces to six different trader organisations (Thompson, 2017). The small-scale female traders and their organisation were the focus of this study.

5.5 Data collection instruments

Qualitative research makes use of flexible and explorative data collection methods to allow the researcher to change data as the study progresses to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomena under study (Welman, Kruger & Mitchell, 2005). Interviews are usually one-on-one discussions between an interviewer and an interviewee to collect data on specific topics (Harrell & Bradley, 2009). The qualitative instruments of interviews and fieldwork observation were used in the data collection process. Using semi-structured interviews allowed the researcher to probe and delve deeper into the topic to gain a deeper understanding of the answers provided (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). As a result, the reporting and analysis of data reflect the views and experiences the participants shared. The interview method also allows the researcher to probe further to clarify vague responses or enable participants to elaborate on incomplete answers (Welman et al., 2005). Through semi-structured interviews, the participants may share interesting ideas and themes that were not part of the interview schedule (Bryman, 2012). Non-participant observation involves the researcher acting as an outside observer without becoming involved in the activities taking place (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). The researcher observed the participants carrying out day-to-day activities in the places where they work. Participants were then invited to share their insights about social relations and how they interact with their physical, social and cultural environments (Babbie & Mouton, 2001).

5.6 Sampling procedure

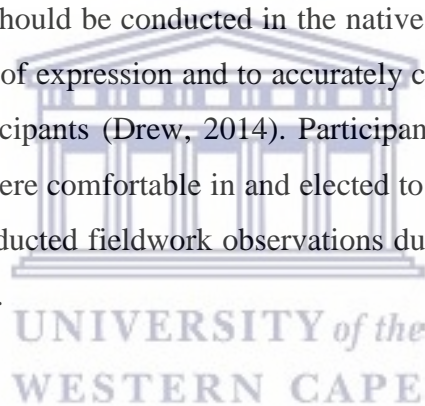
Sampling is the process of selecting participants to be part of a study from the defined study population (Flick, 2007). Based on the research questions, the relevant population for this study was female street traders of all races, nationalities, age groups who are members of a trader organisation in the Grand parade. Snowball sampling was used to select the study sample. Snowball sampling involves the researcher initially approaching a few members of the relevant target population. These individuals then act as informants and refer the researcher to other members of the same population for inclusion in the sample (Welman et al., 2005). Each located subject identifies another subject until the process is complete (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). The leader of the GPUATA was approached for an interview and asked to refer the researcher to other members of the organisation. The researcher was then introduced to another member of the

executive who identified other members of the study population. Each identified subject was asked to suggest other relevant traders. In total, eight interviewees were identified in this way.

5.7 Data collection

Primary data is original data collected by the researcher, using first-hand sources (e.g. interviews) for his or her study (Welman et al., 2005). Primary data enables the researcher to collect data that is specific to their study. The questions asked by the researcher are tailored to elicit relevant information for the study (Miller & Salkind, 2002).

Primary data was collected for this study in eight interviews conducted with female street traders in September and December of 2019. These included one key informant interview with the leader of the GPUITA and one executive member, who were also street traders at the Grand Parade. Whenever possible, interviews should be conducted in the native language of the participants to create a conducive environment of expression and to accurately capture, beliefs, views, opinions and attitudes expressed by participants (Drew, 2014). Participants were encouraged to express themselves in a language they were comfortable in and elected to be interviewed in English and/or isiXhosa. The researcher conducted fieldwork observations during the interview sessions and outside of the interview sessions.



5.8 Data analysis

Qualitative data analysis can be defined as “the classification and interpretation of linguistic or visual material to make statements about implicit and explicit dimensions and structures of meaning-making in the material and what is represented in it” (Flick, 2013: 5) Thematic analysis is one of the most common approaches to analyse qualitative data. Thematic analysis refers to the process of extracting key themes from collected data (Bryman, 2012). Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest a six-phase method for thematic data analysis. As this method was used in the study, the phases are summarised below.

Phase One involves the researcher familiarising themselves with the data by re-reading text data (i.e. transcripts) and listening to audio data. Data should be actively, analytically and critically read while searching for emergent themes and meanings (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Data familiarisation in this study was accomplished, firstly, through the interview process and secondly, through listening to the audio data while transcribing and taking notes.

Phase Two involves generating new codes. Codes identify and provide potentially relevant and interesting labels for the raw data or notes collected during fieldwork (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Codes can either be derived from the data (inductive) or derived from the literature of theory (deductive). While the former arises from collected data the latter is usually based on pre-set coding schemes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Codes in this study were developed from a pre-set coding scheme based on specific research questions that the researcher sought to answer.

Phase Three is the process of generating and constructing themes by combining and categorising codes into particular themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In this study, some themes were identified and constructed based on patterned responses or the prevalence of responses and others because of their significant relation to the research question.

Phase Four involves reviewing developing themes in relation to the coded data and the entire data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This step requires the researcher to check themes to see if they work in relation to the data. If not, the researcher may need to discard some codes and combine, separate or refine some themes. This step is done until a coherent and distinctive set of themes emerges (Braun & Clarke, 2006). To complete this phase in the study, the developed themes were checked against the coded extracts and the entire dataset to determine whether they were relevant to the research subject.

In Phase Five, the researcher must assign names and definitions to themes and clearly state what makes each theme unique. Each theme must have a clear purpose, focus and scope and build and develop on the previous theme (Braun & Clarke, 2006). When combined, themes must provide a coherent story about the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In this study, themes were identified and grouped according to the research questions. The themes were named in relation to the research questions to create a coherent story that met the research objectives.

Phase Six comprises writing a report to provide a convincing, coherent, clear, yet complex story based on the data. Themes should be presented in a logical, meaningful manner in the report (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

5.9 Ethical considerations

Ethical behaviour is important in the research process. Certain ethical standards must be upheld by the researcher when working with human subjects. Informed consent, privacy, anonymity and

confidentiality were taken into consideration in this study. Because participants must be given as much information as possible about the study to make an informed decision about whether to participate, consent forms explaining the nature, purpose and significance of the research were issued to prospective participants. Consent forms were read out and explained to participants to ensure full understanding. Participants were also informed that participation in the study was voluntary and that they could withdraw from the interview at any point. Participants were assured of confidentiality and anonymity and the following measures were explained.

- Information disclosed by participants during the interview process would not be shared with unauthorised persons.
- All interview transcripts, audio recordings and field notes were safely held and could only be accessed by the researcher.
- All participants were given pseudonyms to protect their identity and ensure anonymity.
- Pseudonyms, numbers and letters were used to identify transcripts to avoid linking participants' identities with their responses.

Permission and ethical consent to conduct this study were granted by the University of the Western Cape's Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences.

5.10 Limitations of the study

As the study was conducted with one organisation in the Cape Town CBD, the findings cannot easily be generalised to all trader organisations in the Cape Town CBD or traders in other areas. A major limitation in the study was that interviews had to be conducted in the traders' stalls during trading hours due to their lack of free time, which was disruptive to participants. Another major limitation was the refusal of some traders to participate in the study because they considered the interviews to be disruptive. Although it was beneficial that access to traders in the organisation was gained through the leader of the organisation, this also presented a possible limitation as traders feared that their livelihoods would be at risk if the information they shared reached the leader, the organisation or the City. Although precautionary measures were always taken in the field, the researcher became a victim of theft during the interview process and interviews had to be stopped due to safety concerns.

CHAPTER SIX: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and analyses the research findings collected during the research process. The findings are presented and structured according to the research objectives. After presenting the shared challenges experienced by female street traders in the Cape Town CBD, the chapter presents a brief profile of the GPUTA and discusses the findings on the role of organisational membership in mitigating and overcoming shared challenges and findings on the barriers to organising that were revealed in the study. A summary of the findings concludes the chapter.

6.2 Research findings

As mentioned in Chapter One, this study aimed to explore how female street traders in the Cape Town CBD organise and use collective action to overcome the various ways in which they are marginalised. The study set out to answer the following research question:

- How do female street traders in the Cape Town CBD use collective action to overcome shared challenges and represent their needs in local government?

The study also addressed the following research objectives:

- Explore the shared challenges experienced by female street traders in the Cape Town CBD.
- Investigate how female street traders organise to respond to collective challenges and represent their needs.
- Investigate the barriers to organising that exist among female street traders in the Cape Town CBD.
- Investigate whether and in what ways collective action among female street traders benefits the vulnerable group.

6.3 Shared challenges among female street traders in the Cape Town CBD

Street trading is an important source of employment for many South Africans, including the women who are the main focus of this study. However, street trading is not without its challenges. This section explores challenges experienced by female street traders in the Cape Town CBD.

6.3.1 Lack of infrastructure

Lack of adequate and supportive infrastructure emerged as a major challenge for women trading at the Grand Parade. Storage facilities, shelter and functioning toilets were among the main infrastructural deficits cited by traders. The City does not provide storage facilities for traders to store their stock at the end of the business day, which compels traders to store their goods in privately rented spaces. Most storage spaces are far from the Grand Parade and heavy stock and components of trading stalls have to be pushed in trolleys by hired operators known as trolley pushers, through traffic and across at least two streets to and from storage spaces. Most of the women are not physically able to move the goods themselves, and trolley pushers are hired to do the job at a cost of between R40 to R60 per day. According to the traders, the cost of renting a storage space is between R500 to R750 per month. These costs are a large part of the operating overheads of the traders who consider them onerous. One interviewee highlighted the financial and physical challenges associated with accessing storage:

It's extremely challenging to operate the way that we do in particular if you look at the *gogo* across the road here, she is also in her 60s already and she comes, she takes public transport every day and to come and set up her trade here she has this wire storage box, she packs everything in there, then she has to get some youngsters to push it to a storage area. The City doesn't supply us with storage which is one major challenge which we do need in the area where we operate. So traders have to pay storage, they have to pay for the boys that push the box in and out and it's across the traffic roads. Hey, it's quite far where they store, there in that area across Buitenkant street at the back [...] and she's got to pay the guys every day in and out, she's got to pay her transport as well. So if you should ask her how much she goes home with [laughs] it's really nothing. (Interview 1)

The traders stressed that the daily and monthly costs of rented spaces and trolley pushers took away a large portion of their revenue, resulting in low incomes. Further probing revealed that theft of goods stored in private facilities occurred, causing further financial loss. Furthermore, agreements with storage providers and trolley pushers were informal and they could be held accountable for the theft of stock. Even if they could afford it, because they traded from informal spaces, there is no possibility of insuring the stock against theft, damage or loss.

The Grand Parade is an open space with no protection from the weather. Traders do not have access to the few permanent fixed stalls provided by the City. Most traders use a standard steel frame with no cover to display their goods. Some traders use plastic sheeting and other materials

to protect themselves and their stock from the heat, rain and wind. Other traders use boxes, steel trolleys and plastic bins big enough to display their goods on the ground. These displays are set up in the morning and packed away to be transported to rented storage facilities at the end of the business day. The traders reported two specific consequences of exposure to the elements.

Firstly, cold weather and rain, especially in winter, contributed to health problems such as colds and flu. Being exposed results in sickness, reduced productivity and loss of income. For most participants, street trading is their only source of livelihood and they are forced to work even when they are sick. As one trader stated:

It's really difficult, my sister, especially when it's winter. As you can see we don't have shelter so we get sick a lot, we contract flu, some of us have had TB and it is difficult to work when you are sick. But we have to persevere, what else can we do? I really don't know what else to say about it, we just have to endure. (Interview 6)

Secondly, bad weather conditions like rain or excessively hot weather often caused stock damage, especially for traders who had no form of protective coverage. Because bad weather significantly deteriorated the condition of goods traders chose not to display items that were prone to damage. Since customers would not see these products, the potential for sales was reduced. The inability to display goods in inclement weather thus hindered the ability of traders to earn a living:

Some things can't be in contact with water because they get damaged so we don't display such things at all when it rains and we end up losing money. (Interview 6)

In addition to shelter and storage challenges, participants said that they did not have access to running water and functioning toilets. The Grand Parade has public toilets located near the food kiosks that are within walking distance and accessible to traders. However, during the initial stages of the interview process in September 2019, the traders reported that the toilets had been out of order for 4–6 months and closed for repairs. When the researcher returned in December 2019, the traders reported that the public toilets had reopened in October 2019 but had to be closed again for repairs a few weeks later. Traders were then forced to abandon their stalls to use the toilet facility at the nearby mall for which they had to pay a fee. One trader explained how the lack of toilet facilities affected her as follows:

They were trying to come and repair it but then it breaks next day, or same day it breaks, but now they started this new thing now I don't know why, they are very dirty, but toilets?! We don't have

them; they must repair it fast yeah because I am a diabetic patient, I need to use it every two or three hours. Later I have to hold it you see? And another thing, the toilet downstairs – so many steps down. I must go there for free or I must pay here all the time, when I make R20 some days I will cut R2 and pay for the toilet. (Interview 5)

Paying for access to toilets was a high additional expense for traders, especially those who sold smaller items such as jewellery and cosmetics. Some traders tried to reduce costs by avoiding using restrooms as much as they could. Walking to and from the toilets at the mall meant leaving the market stall unattended for a long time, risking a loss of income either through theft or customers buying from rival stalls after finding one unattended.

The lack of toilet facilities was a health risk for traders and even for their customers and the general public, who were all relying on the public facility. According to the traders, the City had provided mobile toilets for a short period in September 2019. However, these mobile toilets were not cleaned regularly, adding to a dirty and unhygienic environment that could potentially harm the health of those in the market and affect customers' willingness to visit the market. One trader with a young child had this to say:

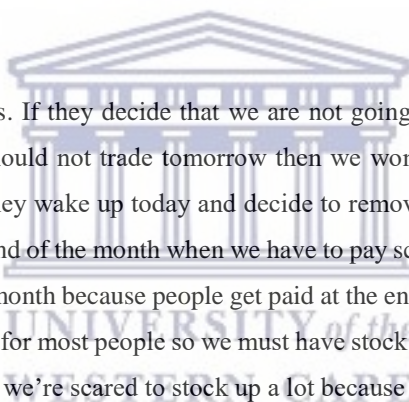
There was here that mobile one but it was horrible, it was smelling here. It was terrible and I had never also took my child there because I don't trust taking a child to a toilet like that I can't even flush [inaudible] but okay, I never took my child there. (Interview 3)

The need for functioning, clean toilets and other amenities to ensure the health and earning ability of traders has drawn comment in the literature. Access to basic infrastructure is important for the health, well-being and productivity of street traders (Mkhize et al., 2013). Shelter is an important physical asset that urban dwellers use for productive and income-generating purposes (Farrington, Ramasut & Walker, 2002). Access to public infrastructure is important as that creates an enabling environment and supports trader livelihoods (Farrington et al., 2002). The study found that access to physical infrastructure is important for the day-to-day functioning of street trader enterprises. Vendors were effectively denied access to this asset through restrictive planning regulations that did not acknowledge the importance of street trading to the urban economy. As a result of this, traders' productivity was disrupted. According to the Informal Trading Policy of the CoCT, "flexible and the appropriate level of infrastructure shall be provided" (CoCT, 2013: 10). In addition, the policy states that the type of infrastructure required by each trading area should be identified and the delivery of such infrastructure shall be followed by a maintenance plan. As

evidenced by the interviews, supportive physical infrastructure as per CoCT policy in the Grand Parade is lacking and maintenance is not prioritised.

6.3.2 No security of tenure

According to the research findings, traders do not have tenure over their trading stalls. Participants confirmed that they had little or no say with regard to location, relocation and eviction. The Grand Parade is often used to host events such as concerts, festivals and races. According to the traders, the City requires them to clear the space to make way for event preparation a few days before major events. The traders feel that they operate in an insecure environment because they are moved with little or no notification. The City does not provide an alternative location for traders to run their businesses during these events which can last up to a week. This has a negative effect on the livelihoods of traders as they cannot trade or earn any income until the event ends. As one trader expressed:



They do not consider our needs. If they decide that we are not going to trade today then we don't trade, if they decide that we should not trade tomorrow then we won't trade, they don't give us a seven-day notice anymore, if they wake up today and decide to remove us they just remove us [...] sometimes this happens at the end of the month when we have to pay school fees or rent and we stock up a lot towards the end of the month because people get paid at the end of the month. As traders, we know that month-end is payday for most people so we must have stock that will last from maybe let's say the 27th to the 2nd but now we're scared to stock up a lot because what if they remove us? Then we are stuck with a lot of stock. (Interview 2)

Tenure insecurity was a common challenge among all participants, who all said it hindered business growth as they could not plan ahead well. The loss of income during interrupted trade was felt by the traders long after major events ended especially near month-end. After month-end, the market experiences a decline in customers and traders cannot make back the lost income. This affects traders' ability to re-invest in their business and feed their families.

The organisations at the Grand Parade have had leases that are renewed on a month-to-month basis since the late 1990s. The month-to-month lease does not give trader associations a sense of security as they and the traders cannot make plans to refurbish the market, negotiate long-term storage spaces or form meaningful partnerships with sponsors and formal businesses. One trader said:

We formed a limited company of these 100 shareholders each one paid R500 for the company, we had a lease agreement, we rented space, traders pay and they are also shareholders and the profits

ploughed back into business. So each one's R500 ended to be R60 000 today. If we had the correct mentorship in that which we are now currently getting from professionals from the corporate sector[...]we would have been very far as a business entity of informal traders but we didn't have the skill. I just had that vision of forming this entity, we did it, we did grow but by 2010 our lease was taken away because it was oh "they're redeveloping the city and the station". (Interview 1)

The trader reflects on partnerships lost with the corporate sector as a result of their tenure insecurity. In 2010, many traders were removed from various areas in the city in preparation for the 2010 FIFA World Cup. In this period, the organisation lost lucrative partnerships that would have assisted traders and made a positive contribution to the informal economy at large.

As evidenced by the literature, urban space is a critical physical livelihood asset for informal traders as their livelihood activities rely on access to these spaces (Brown et al., 2010). Location and the nature of tenure are two defining features of space as a physical asset for the livelihoods of traders (Mensah, 2006). Sethuraman (1997) suggests that the income of traders heavily depends on their location in the city. Setšabi (2006) stresses that for a particular location to be regarded as suitable for traders, it must have some degree of security of tenure (Setšabi, 2006). Furthermore, when faced with the threat of eviction, traders rarely invest in productive assets (Mensah, 2006). In most cities, street traders face the threat of eviction because they do not have permits or because cities use laws and regulations that traders cannot comply with as a means to evict them (Mensah, 2006). Traders at the Grand Parade are legally permitted to trade in the area through permits. By refusing to conclude lease agreements with traders the CoCT retains the power to remove traders at will.

6.3.3 Exclusion from decision making

The findings indicate that traders are often excluded from decision-making processes that affect their livelihood. According to the interviewees, decisions such as removal before an event or refurbishment of the market are often taken without consulting the traders and their representatives. As mentioned, neither the traders nor their associations have the power to prevent removals or evictions. In some cases, traders suggested that they were not involved in plans to repair the public toilets that were out of order, and they were given little or no notice. When asked about their participation in decision making, one trader expressed how their involvement in decision making had changed over time:

When I got here things were not as they are right now, in the early 2000s the City would notify us in time before they would hold an event here, they would give us enough time to trade before the event or they would find us alternative locations to trade and they would show us the alternative location and we would assess whether this location would be ideal for trading. If the location was ideal for us we would take it, if not then we would tell them that we are not satisfied. But after 2010 things changed, now when they have events they don't involve us. (Interview 2)

In most cases, trader associations seem to be excluded from planning processes that include the temporary removal of traders. Although executive members admit that the City acknowledges their existence and has included them in certain planning and decision-making processes, some forms of exclusion persist. The engagement principles contained in the CoCT's Informal Trading Policy state that the city will communicate widely and accessibly in different forms to reach all relevant stakeholders. In addition, all relevant stakeholders should be included in the appropriate forums at appropriate levels (CoCT, 2013). As evidenced by the interviews, in practice, traders and their representatives are not always engaged by the City on issues impacting their livelihood. This finding resonates with the findings in a study conducted by Jiyane (2017), focusing on participation and policy formulation in the informal economy in Durban. Jiyane found that traders were not always included in decision-making processes despite Durban's informal trading policy allowing for inclusive and participatory planning processes. The study described an instance where traders were not consulted on changes made to spatial plans in the construction of the Warwick shopping mall. The final plans affected income-earning opportunities for traders at the site (Jiyane, 2017). This approach contradicted the inclusive planning processes contained in the city of Durban's policy.

6.3.4 Crime, safety and security

The research found that crime was a significant issue for all participants on the Grand Parade. Interviews revealed that crime in the area consists of pickpocketing, theft and drug dealing. The traders alleged that foreign nationals, particularly Tanzanians, were the main perpetrators of the crimes committed in the area. All participants agreed that crime harmed their trading operations, their earnings and reduced the number of customers that come to the market. One participant's view was typical of these feelings:

There are these Tanzanian boys around here, a lot of them, they are the ones that steal from us a lot. Like for instance, if you put one of your bags down then ask the trader next to you to keep a look-

out, you know people are also busy with their own things. Before you notice, your box is gone or they take whatever they take and run and it's really difficult to get your things back once they have taken them. Sometimes you find that by the time you get to them they have already sold your products. (Interview 6)

Traders often have to leave their stalls unattended to fetch more stock from storerooms in the morning or to find a bathroom in the mall. This makes them vulnerable to thieves in the area. Some traders suggest that their lack of shelter makes it easier for thieves to grab products on display and run. Crime does not only affect traders but customers and the general public as well. Traders suggest that customers do not feel safe enough to shop at the Grand Parade, which has a significant impact on sales and thus income. One trader said:

Customers are too scared to come to the Grand Parade because they get mugged and their phones get stolen. The thieves here pretend like they are bumping into you but that's how they steal your things. Drugs are sold right in front of us... (Interview 2)

CoCT law enforcement and Central City Improvement District (CCID) officers are present at the Grand Parade throughout the day. These officers have been placed there by the City to provide visible policing and assist with deterring crime at the Grand Parade. The CCID also operates many closed-circuit cameras throughout the CBD. Despite their presence, the traders say that they have seen little improvement in combatting crime over the years. According to the traders, the officers were often not in sight when a crime was being committed:

If I catch the person I have to beat the person, I have to yeah because there is CCID here but they don't do nothing. Sometimes when something happens, they will be so far away you won't even see them, you have to take the law into your hands, you have to fight the person that stole your things you understand? So you hit them so you can get your things. (Interview 4)

In addition to affecting their earnings, most traders felt unsafe in the market and particularly vulnerable because they are females. Their insecurity was exacerbated by their lack of trust in the law enforcement and security personnel (i.e. CCID) placed at the market. The findings of an IEMS study conducted in Durban were similar to this finding, as law enforcement officials were found to be unhelpful or unresponsive to reports of crime from traders (Mkhize et al., 2013). The literature (see Chapter Two) confirms that crime is a major risk for street traders and threatened their ability to trade. Lund and Skinner (1999) found that women are more vulnerable to crime than men and respond differently; unlike the above interviewee, women may retreat rather than

respond aggressively. In most cases, women are physically smaller than their attacker, most likely a male, and less likely to defend themselves (Møller, 2005). As males were not the focus of this study, such gender assumptions cannot be made. Although some women in the study chose to fight back, in one way or the other, most did not defend themselves. Some did not even report crimes because of their lack of trust in law enforcement and the CCID.

6.3.5 Financial constraints

A major challenge mentioned by all participants was the lack of financial resources to re-invest in or re-stock their businesses and sustain their families. The lack of financial capital was attributed to decreased customer flow, business-related expenses and decreased sales. Their lack of financial capital also threatened business growth. One participant captured the essence of what was shared by interviewees:

There is no money here, sometimes you can't even buy stock. This is all I have right now. Sometimes they will come by and ask for prices but they never buy anything so we just sit here all day until we have to go home. (Interview 8)

Observations and interviews confirm that the location of the market ensures a large flow of pedestrian traffic. The market is conveniently located next to the bus terminus, Cape Town Station and the city centre. It has numerous shops and businesses on its periphery, and large attractions nearby such as the Golden Acre and Grand Central building malls. Despite this, traders complained that sales have decreased over the years due to decreased customer flow. According to traders, the constant evictions and removals by the City lead to customers opting to buy from the Station deck market above Cape Town Station which had fixed stalls and an adjacent taxi rank. According to the traders, the CoCT had attempted to move them further down the Grand Parade towards the parking lot where there were few passing pedestrians, resulting in a significant loss of customers. One participant said:

They moved us there before but when people get off the busses, the flow is not going on that side. Customers always complained about going that side, customers said it was better for them to go to the street market on upper deck of the station which is much closer to the station. Then we lost customers because we were placed far from our customers but after some negotiation with the organisation they let us return here... (Interview 2)

As mentioned, urban space and location count as livelihood assets when traders can use them to their advantage to generate income and when they have some level of tenure security (Mensah,

2006). The traders experienced financial constraints for many reasons, most of which were linked to the infrastructural challenges and lack of tenure security. For instance, traders had to spend a good portion of their income on accessing toilets. A study on the links between water, sanitation, hygiene, productivity and well-being for traders in Nankuru and Durban found that traders spent 8–20 percent of their income on water and toilet access, cutting into their already limited funds (Kamau, Alfers & Sverdlik, 2019). Farrington et al. (2002) found that lack of access to one asset (i.e. infrastructure) can hinder one's ability to access other assets (e.g. financial assets). The financial challenges encountered by the women contributed to their lack of business growth, due to their inability to purchase productive assets (i.e. stock), and this created a cycle of income loss.

6.3.6 Double burden of work

Most of the street traders interviewed had children and were responsible for the care of their children and their households. This was true for both married and unmarried participants. Women who had younger children brought them to the market because they could not afford childcare facilities or they needed help at the market during weekends or on school holidays. One participant with a young child had this to say:

I don't have a choice because I don't have money to pay for her crèche, crèche is very expensive so I don't have a choice to bring her, now I must just bring her every day. (Interview 3)

Bringing children to the market means that the women have to divide their time between taking care of their children and running their businesses. Participants stated that at times they could not pay attention to their business and children at the same time and thus lost income. As one participant said:

They just take something off, okay that time it was my fault because that time I wasn't here. As you can see I've got a child on the market, she needs to go to the toilet or something so when I came back I saw that no, but there was something missing. So well it happens all over. (Interview 3)

Mothers further suggested that bringing young children to the market was unsafe because of the crime in the area. This resulted in mothers having to keep an eye on their children while running their businesses, which often took their attention away from the business. Similar findings were found by Chen et al. in their report on women, work and poverty (Chen et al., 2005). That study found that women had multiple duties such as childcare and cooking that hindered their ability to

trade. In addition to this, most women did not earn enough money to take their children to day-care facilities (Chen et al., 2005).

6.4 Membership in a trader organisation and mitigating shared challenges

6.4.1 Profile of GPUTA, a street trader organisation in the Cape Town CBD

6.4.1.1 Activities and operations of the GPUTA

The GPUTA was established in the 1990s as a local membership-based organisation. The organisation was created with the main aim of creating a united front to enable traders to speak with ‘one voice’. The key foci of the GPUTA are assisting traders to obtain trading spaces, negotiating with local government on behalf of traders, representing and negotiating on traders’ behalf with the private sector and creating an enabling operating environment for traders.

6.4.1.2 Organisational structure

The organisational structure comprises five individuals who are traders themselves and devote a certain amount of time to organisational activities. The committee is democratically elected by traders every two years at their annual general meeting. As of 2019, the executive was made up of four women, including the chairperson, and one man. The executive member interviewed indicated that she had been re-elected to the position by traders since the inception of the GPUTA. A female trader on the Grand Parade is employed by the organisation as a site manager to oversee the day-to-day operations. The site manager is also responsible for reviewing applications and allocating trading spaces to new traders. The executive committee meets once a month, while general meetings are held with traders when there is an urgent issue to decide.

6.4.1.3 Relationship with the CoCT governance structures

As noted in earlier chapters, cities often adopt restrictive approaches to street trading management. This has led to street trader politics being shaped by fluctuating but primarily antagonistic relationships with local government and resistance from traders and organisations who are opposed to this style of management (Bénit-Gbaffou, 2016). The study participants painted a similar picture of a strained but at times cooperative relationship with the CoCT. The constant threat of eviction, exclusion from decision making and restrictive decisions taken by the City on behalf of traders have left traders to conclude that local government has no regard for their livelihoods. This view was expressed by traders throughout the interviews. Speaking of the termination of their lease agreement, one trader said:

...you see, to me, sometimes I feel the local authorities, the government does not like to see the strengths and the development of the informal economy. (Interview 1)

Organisation representatives do not feel they receive adequate support from local government on issues that affect their livelihoods on the Grand Parade:

As traders we know our struggles, we experience them every day, so when we try as an organisation to fight the City of Cape Town on how we are being treated, they don't sympathise with us, or understand our struggles if they say we should sort ourselves we are forced to solve our own problems. (Interview 2)

6.4.2 General discussion of benefits

In comparison with other African regions, services and benefits provided by street trader organisations in South Africa are limited to reactive responses to problems as they arise (Motala, 2008). This is partly true for the GPUTA. The GPUTA has been active in negotiating space for traders in the market. The organisation actively represents traders in negotiations with the local government and continues to establish alliances with actors and institutions for the benefit of traders. Although the organisation has a clear long-term vision for traders at the Grand Parade, it is limited in its capacity to execute their goals. Challenges include financial instability, insecure tenure and a lack of cooperation between the organisations and the city.

6.4.3 Overcoming infrastructure challenges

Infrastructure was highlighted by all participants as one of the key issues that hinder their trading activities. The lack of supportive infrastructure created an insecure environment for traders to operate in. The organisation seemed to be limited in its capacity to overcome this challenge. Despite its active and continued engagement, lobbying and negotiation with the CoCT over the years, GPUTA has not achieved much improvement in this aspect. As expressed by one executive member:

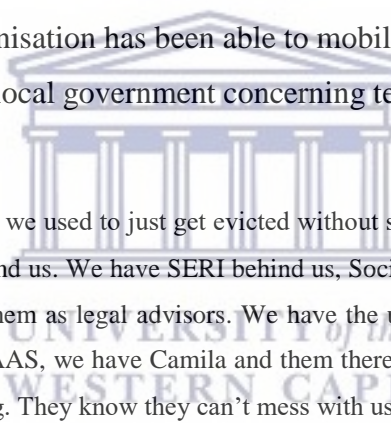
Well, the organisation aims to achieve an enabling environment for traders to work, to operate on, to ensure that they get the necessary services from the city like cleaning, running water, toilet facilities. We do not have everything as yet. As you can see, we set up our own structure, we don't have infrastructure that is developed by the city where they can just lock up and go. This is our ultimate wish but we are still engaging with the city. (Interview 1)

According to the leadership, although they continue to engage with local government around the challenging issue of infrastructure, "the pace of change is slow" (Interview 1). A challenge for the

organisation was effective engagement with the CoCT. The City has adopted a restrictive management approach that often hinders meaningful engagements that support the livelihoods of traders. This has resulted in the City taking decisions that prioritise construction and beautification projects rather than the livelihood of traders (such as the displacement of traders during the refurbishment of the Cape Town Station). As a result of this management style, the influence of organisations over local government practices regarding infrastructure is limited to small changes occurring over the years.

6.4.4 Overcoming tenure security challenges

The leadership identified security of tenure for trading spaces as a major challenge that hindered trading operations. The GPUITA has forged a wide range of alliances with different actors and institutions at the local and national levels for support and solidarity on issues affecting traders. Through these alliances, the organisation has been able to mobilise different forms of support and resources to assist it in engaging local government concerning tenure insecurity. A member of the executive explained:



I think over the years, although we used to just get evicted without say it's better now because they know that we have people behind us. We have SERI behind us, Social Economic Rights Institute in Johannesburg, we would use them as legal advisors. We have the universities behind us, we have Caroline Skinner, we have PLAAS, we have Camila and them there, they know, the COSATU, the alliance with the unions, it's big. They know they can't mess with us the way they want to anymore. WECBOF: now we're becoming an associate member of the Western Cape Business Opportunities Forum [...] we are forming an association with them, we're actually signing a document soon and we will get their support in all our challenges. Especially this lease, I've been telling WECBOF that this is a key issue, it's the lease and security of tenure... (Interview 1)

Despite continual engagement with the City, at the time of the interview, there had been no resolution regarding the eviction of traders during events. An issue that was being negotiated was the return to the Green Point market of the traders who had been evicted in 2010 and those who had been relocated to the Grand Parade. According to the GPUITA, the City was insisting on a permit system rather than having a long-term lease agreement as they did before the 2010 evictions. According to the organisation, the support received from various institutions and actors had put pressure on the City to respond to their complaints.

6.4.5 Overcoming exclusion challenges

Traders complained about their exclusion from decisions regarding their livelihoods. The GPUITA, as a single body, does not seem to have much influence over the exclusionary practices of local government towards street trading. The organisation does, however, use the influence it has to expose the restrictive and exclusionary policies and practices of local government through the media to put pressure on the City for more inclusion. Regarding exclusion from decision-making processes, one trader said:

...they would lease our land to the formal world, like to the Drift City or to the Red Bull, that racing thing that was here, then also the cycling tours, the Pick n Pay cycling tour and we can't trade, we're just evicted. I've got these big big stories on that, I'm always in the papers or the news, [...] the Atlantic Sun, I'm in there now on Thursday with regard to the return to Green Point. I'm giving my view there so yes, they do take decisions against us and I expose them. They're afraid to talk to me sometimes, they say 'Oh God please put it in writing because tomorrow we'll hear on the radio that we did this' and I say, 'That's right'! (Interview 2)

The media attention not only puts pressure on the City but attracts support from private and public actors.

6.4.6 Overcoming safety and security challenges

Crime is a key issue for traders and the greater public. The City has made law enforcement officials and the CCID officials available to assist with crime in the area. No evidence of efforts from the GPUITA to curb crime was found during the interview process. Traders view curbing crime as the responsibility of local government given that they are trading in a public space controlled by CoCT.

6.4.7 Overcoming financial challenges

The GPUITA recognises the daily financial constraints faced by traders. The research did not find any initiatives from the organisation to respond to the daily financial struggles of traders. However, the organisation had an informal savings plan for traders to offer some financial assistance. According to the leadership, membership fees are paid back to traders at the end of every year to assist them financially. One executive member said:

Each one pays a certain fee and the profits that goes back to them every year, we would give them what we call a rebate, the excess money would go to every trader... (Interview 1)

In addition to this, the organisation was pursuing a bulk-buying initiative in partnership with the national government. Buying stock in bulk would allow traders to save more money.

6.4.8 Overcoming the double burden of work

Female traders at the Grand Parade have multiple roles and have to balance being mothers, homemakers and running their businesses. Some women have to balance being mothers and traders during business hours which can negatively affect trading. According to the leadership, the organisation recognises the specific needs of women regarding balancing their multiple roles. Although the challenge of balancing motherhood and business at the market was recognised there were no activities undertaken by the GPUTA to address this specific challenge. Despite this, the traders had created a sense of community where children were known and taken care of by other traders. One trader said:

...every day she is here you can see, where is she now, there she is, she know everybody here and everybody know her since baby so she walk around everywhere [laughs]... (Interview 3)

Expecting mothers however were entitled to an informal form of tenure which was an initiative by the organisation to ensure that mothers who gave birth still had a space when they return. According to one executive member:

If she goes on maternity where we know she's going to be away for six months we will know that this is her spot, we maintain it for her, we put casuals there, when we let the casuals trade we let them know that look this spot belongs to someone and she's going to be back in six months and then we'll find another spot for you, so that is the power of having an organisation. (Interview 1)

There was no financial compensation for being absent as a result of childbirth, although this was part of the ultimate vision and plans were in place to offer services and benefits that would respond to the specific needs of mothers trading at the Grand Parade. However, the plan had not been executed owing to a lack of finances and support.

6.5 Barriers to organising among street traders

There were no barriers to finding and recruiting traders to be part of an organisation at the Grand Parade because one has to be part of the organisation before attaining a trading space. Therefore, any barriers or challenges to organising in GPUTA arose once traders were part of the organisation.

6.5.1 Division

One barrier identified by traders was the divisions within the organisation and divisions between organisations in the market. Within the organisation, traders often disagreed on issues tabled during meetings. Disagreements would arise from certain individuals trying to advance their interests instead of the interests of the groups. These disagreements led to discussions going on for weeks without a solution. One trader said:

We always go back to the same issues because everyone wants to push their own agenda, they sometimes want to dwell on issues that do not benefit the collective, everyone wants their voice heard and everyone wants certain things to happen in their own way and we end up disagreeing. (Interview 2)

Group politics often mean that traders take longer to reach a resolution or do not reach a resolution at all and this hinders progress and unity. There are differing opinions and interests within the group, creating internal tensions that sometimes lead to divisions between members. There are significant divisions between organisations at the Grand Parade. This disunity makes it difficult to fight for traders' needs. Interviewees suggested that there were underlying tensions between organisations which made it difficult to form an effective umbrella body that would increase their power and influence. As one executive member said:

There is lots of different organisations like Green Market Square but some organisations are not on board yet. They know about us, like they know we there but they don't like, they don't participate. It's difficult but we sort of send out the information, we keep them on a group platform, we pass through the information... (Interview 1)

Street trader organisations are prone to conflicts and divisions like any other formal organisation or union (Béni-Gbaffou, 2016). In a study of street trader politics in the city of Johannesburg after Operation Clean Sweep, it was found that there are deep divisions and resentment between organisations. The existing divisions made it difficult for different organisations to unite in negotiations with local government (Béni-Gbaffou, 2016). Although informal conversations between the researcher and the traders alluded to internal divisions within the GPUTA, and even conflict between members and the executive, they did not want to elaborate on the issue, on or off record.

6.5.2 Lack of female participation

Female traders who are members and not part of the executive were reluctant to raise their grievances or opinions in meetings, either because they were not confident enough to speak up or did not want to cause trouble. During interviews, it was noted that some female participants were reluctant to dwell on challenges experienced in the organisation or with the CoCT. Some participants claimed that they do not participate in meetings and simply accepted the final resolution regardless of their opinions. When asked about participation in meetings and influence on decision making, one participant said:

Well, whatever is being done or what they say so I accept because I am not gonna say this or that or anything, I just accept anything. (Interview 3)

When asked about raising issues or grievance in gatherings, another participant said:

...Hayi, you know [laughs] leave those things. I don't want to complain a lot because I am going to retire soon anyway. I don't really pay attention to those things anymore[...]other people have complaints. I don't do that I just sit there, I don't really say anything. (Interview 8)

The organisation prides itself on having an executive committee numerically dominated by females. Despite this, however, women members do not seem to speak up during meetings and do not express their grievances for fear of causing trouble or conflict. Although all the participants were aware that they could express their opinions, some felt that others could speak on their behalf. In a study exploring the organising capabilities of women, it was found that, in most cases, women are too shy to speak up, rather letting others speak for them or only speaking to support an opinion (Motala, 2008). Because they do not raise their opinions and struggles, there is a risk that the organisation may be unable to represent the women properly as their needs may not be voiced all the time.

6.5.3 Lack of resources

The organisation lacks financial resources to organise and fight against the treatment they receive from the City. In some instances, negotiations with the City lead to lengthy and costly legal battles. For a street trader organisation that is mostly financed through membership fees, legal battles can be too costly to engage in, making it difficult to advance their interests. One trader had this to say:

It's not easy to win over the City of Cape Town because we also do not have money to get lawyers to represent the organisation in our fight against the City of Cape Town you see? Like this case that

we have where the City wants to evict us, the traders who have kiosks had lawyers and they won their case. We don't have lawyers... (Interview 2)

The organisation mostly depends on contributions from street traders to finance operational costs. The money received is not enough to hire lawyers to represent them in court battles with the City. The lack of power and money means that the organisations may be unable to win court cases or even pursue winnable legal action against the City.

6.6 The role of collective action in reducing vulnerabilities and enhancing capabilities

As stated earlier, collectives that are formed among poor people enable them to expand their political, social and economic capabilities and to use them more effectively (Stewart, 2005). Reflecting on Sen's (1999) five instrumental freedoms that contribute to the expansion of human capabilities (see Chapter Three), the next section discusses freedoms that are realised by the female traders as a result of their involvement in the GPUTA.

6.6.1 Collective action and freedoms

This study found that the GPUTA contributes directly and indirectly to the expansion of three instrumental freedoms – political freedom, economic facilities and social opportunities.

6.6.1.1 Political freedoms

Political freedom is related to the freedom to scrutinise and criticise authorities, free press, democracy, freedom of expression and participation in political processes (Alkire, 2005). Ibrahim (2006) suggests that self-help groups allow or give poor people the platform to voice their needs and opinions, which is related to political freedom to a degree. The GPUTA creates a platform (not always used) for women to have a greater voice and opinion regarding their needs and their challenges while trading at the Grand Parade. This is evidenced by the dominance of women in the executive committee and the platform given to women to express their voice in meetings and gatherings. One trader explained the value of this as follows:

I joined the organisation because I wanted to be to be heard, like if for instance, there is something I don't like or I don't like the way I am being treated, I can voice my grievances and opinions about that and suggest how I think things should be done from my side. And they take my opinions into consideration and they make those changes, so that's how the organisation helps me. (Interview 6)

The organisation provides a platform for traders to hold City officials accountable and to openly criticise their disregard for traders. Additionally, traders can express their needs and challenges within the organisation. Through the GPUATA, traders have the opportunity to oppose unfair evictions, tenure insecurity and unfair treatment by the City. Being part of an organisation that represents their needs enhances their ability to participate in decision-making processes. The GPUATA supports traders in developing their political capabilities which may allow them to renegotiate their terms of inclusion.

6.6.1.2 Economic facilities

Economic facilities refer to the opportunities that are enjoyed by individuals to use economic resources for production, consumption and exchange (Alkire, 2005). One of the main functions of the GPUATA is approving applications and allocating trading spaces to traders. Every trader who wants to trade on the Grand Parade must join one of the representative organisations as traders cannot apply directly to the City for trading spaces. Easy access to trading spaces was a benefit highlighted by all the traders and they described the application process to obtain a trading space as easy. A prospective trader writes a letter of application to the site manager, the application is reviewed by the executive and, if the trader meets the criteria, they are allocated a space in a matter of days. Traders suggested that this process was easier than it would be if they were directly applying to the City. As expressed by one trader:

I asked the lady here if there is a place and she told me yes. I must just write a letter and to the committee and stuff like that and then I wrote and she gave me a place. (Interview 3)

The organisation provides easy access to trading spaces for traders to use for production and exchange. Access to trading space is an asset or resource that gives traders the freedom to pursue their livelihood, which they have reason to value. Traders use this trading space to run their businesses and earn an income, which enables other functions such as being healthy or being educated. By realising these functions, the women can reduce their vulnerabilities and improve their potential for business success. For example, investing in their health could increase their productivity, enabling them to earn more income. Although traders do not own the spaces they trade in, access is facilitated by the organisation.

6.6.1.3 Social opportunities

Social opportunities refer to people's ability to access health care, education, childcare and other essential facilities which influence people's ability to live better (Alkire, 2005). According to Ibrahim (2006), access to economic facilities creates opportunities to generate income which in turn widens their social opportunities. Earning an income through street trading enhances the ability of traders to invest in their children's education, their health and that of their families, i.e. to enhance their households' health and social capital and potential future outcomes. One trader expressed her appreciation of GPUTA as follows:

There are a lot of positive contributions because this organisation makes a big difference in the lives of the traders and poor people, it opens doors for the poorest of the poor because people are able to make a living here because of this organisation. So they can at least put food on the table, pay school fees and rent. (Interview 6)

Being able to provide for the needs of the family may prevent families from falling into poverty and contribute to accumulating human capital to invest in health and education.

6.6.1.4 Protective security

Protective security is described as a kind of safety net or social protection that prevents economically disadvantaged people from being reduced to further poverty (Alkire, 2005). Ibrahim (2006) suggests that poor people can enhance protective security by assisting one another, especially in times of crisis. The female traders in the study were doing this, assisting each other through pooling money to pay for storage facilities and looking after each other's children in the market. According to the organisation, pregnant women can safely take off time to give birth and nurse their babies while knowing that their trading spaces would be kept for them. Although the GPUTA was unable to provide financial assistance, this can be seen as a form of protective security for pregnant women and new mothers.

6.6.2 Collective action and agency

Agency refers to a person's ability to pursue goals that are not their own (Sen, 1985). Collective action is thus an exercise of agency freedom because the poor undertake collective initiatives to pursue communal goals that are beyond their individual well-being (Ibrahim, 2006). Ibrahim (2006) further states that group formation or collective agency has the potential to enable and empower individual capabilities. Involvement in the GPUTA was found to enhance the ability of

traders to influence, participate and negotiate with local government. Each member in the group has an equal right to participate in the decision-making processes in the group. This can be seen as a crucial form of collective agency and empowerment for the female traders.

6.6.3 Collective action and capabilities

As noted in Chapter Two, capabilities can be described as the freedoms and opportunities that people have to be who they want to be, do what they want to do and lead the kind of life they want to lead (Robeyns, 2005). Capabilities are the freedoms and opportunities that people have to achieve valued functionings (Clark, 2005). As previously mentioned, female traders who belonged to the GPUTA expanded three of Sen's five instrumental freedoms through their involvement. The women gained a new range of choices through the group that not only benefitted individuals but assisted the group. For example, representing traders and fighting for their rights not only expands individual political freedom but the freedom of the organisation.

Group affiliation through GPUTA enabled the women to gain access to assets that they used to achieve valued functionings. Female traders gained access to social/political, physical, and political capital, three assets that may assist them in pursuing their livelihoods and enhancing their capabilities. Social capital was gained through group affiliation as evidenced by group members assisting each other during times of need. In addition to this, the trader organisation was affiliated with a number of individuals, universities and other institutions that supported their cause. They could draw support from these networks when needed. Political capital was evidenced in their freedom to make demands and hold the City accountable and, to some extent, influence decision making. Physical capital was evidenced by their access to trading space gained through the organisation. Access to physical capital enabled access to financial capital in the form of the income earned through trading, which opened up a range of other functionings, such as being able to re-invest in their business or feed their families.

6.7 Discussion of results

This study found that female street traders faced a number of issues that constrained them in the pursuit of their livelihood. The challenges they faced increased their vulnerability and disadvantaged them both individually and as a collective. Some of the challenges experienced by the women resulted from the relationship between traders and the City. The CoCT has restrictive policies that often led to the exclusion of street traders from the formulation of plans and processes

associated with the City's commitment to creating a world-class city, which was often at the expense of the traders when it impacted directly on the Grand Parade terrain. Exclusion means that the traders have a limited influence on their livelihoods. Most of the challenges found i.e lack of security of tenure, exclusion from decision-making, crime, safety and security, financial were not exclusive to females. Apart from the responsibility of childcare in the market which was found to be a challenge that affected women in particular, the challenges identified could affect male street traders as well although this cannot be fully determined by this study.

The study found that involvement in the organisation to some extent reduced vulnerabilities and contributed to the enhancement of individual and collective capabilities. The organisation was found to contribute to increased access to assets which in turn increased their instrumental freedoms and capabilities and to a degree enabled them to overcome their challenges. Social capital enabled traders to assist each other in times of need, such as taking care of children while their mothers were trading and thus able to earn an income, hence achieving their valued functioning while decreasing their vulnerabilities (i.e. financial constraints). Physical capital increased the capacity of traders to pursue their livelihood strategy from which they could earn an income (financial capital). Financial capital has the potential to assist traders to achieve their valued functionings. Political capital was associated with political freedom. The organisation empowered female traders to participate in political spaces, i.e. local government. This would not only create a sense of self-esteem within the group but could lead to being able to influence City by-laws or put pressure on the City to change rules and regulations that disadvantaged street traders.

6.7.1 Limitations of the organisation in enhancing capabilities

Being part of a collective may result in the expansion of collective capabilities. However, this process may be influenced by external factors in the social, political and economic environments (Ibrahim, 2006). In this study, the main external force that influenced the expansion of collective capabilities was the CoCT or local government. If external actors are supportive, collective action can be more conducive to the expansion of capabilities (Ibrahim, 2006). The City was not found to be entirely supportive of the expansion of capabilities among traders. Street traders are permitted to trade in the city and an Informal Trading Policy is in place to regulate informal trading. While this suggests that the City recognises the importance of informal trading and supports the efforts of traders, in practice the City's rules, regulations and by-laws often restrict traders from exercising

their agency or accessing assets to achieve their valued functionings. For instance, traders and their organisation were excluded from decision-making processes and this limited them from exercising their agency and their political freedom. In addition, traders had restricted access to trading spaces (physical assets) that are essential to income generation and capability expansion.

The influence of the GPUTA on local government decisions, processes and policies was found to be limited. The organisation seems to be largely reactive to particular challenges, and little evidence emerged of any significant policy changes brought about by the organisation. Changes that have occurred at the Grand Parade were described as slow-paced developments over a number of years. Most of the actions of street trader organisations in South Africa are limited to temporarily blocking municipalities from further restrictions (Bénit-Gbaffou, 2016). Organisations have little ability to influence policy or long-lasting changes to state practices towards the informal sector. This study confirmed that disunity and lack of resources were some of the barriers that constrained the efforts of the trader organisation, which nevertheless continued to lobby and negotiate with the government for the rights of traders. Where necessary the organisation has used the media to expose perceived unfair treatment by the City.

According to the executive committee, the GPUTA advocates for gender equality and female leadership, which is evidenced by the numerical dominance of women in the executive. Despite this, the organisation has not fully addressed issues that affected women such as childcare and maternity leave. While the organisation acknowledges the struggles of mothers in the organisation, there were no childcare facilities or any plans to provide access to childcare facilities. The traders used their social capital to ensure the care of their children at the market.

Overall, involvement in the organisation reduced vulnerabilities and enhanced collective capabilities to the limited extent that the organisation was capable of, given the constraints of a lack of resources or external actors. As a member-based organisation, the GPUTA is limited in its ability to influence the entire system, but was found to contribute to the expansion of individual and collective capabilities.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Introduction

This study explored collective action among female street traders in the Cape Town CBD who were all members of the GPUATA trader organisation. The study gathered and analysed primary data derived from interviews with eight female traders. The findings were presented in Chapter Six. This chapter concludes the study by summarising the study, how the main research question was addressed and the empirical findings according to the research objectives outlined in the first chapter. The chapter concludes by presenting the contributions of the study and recommendations for future research.

7.2 Summary

Street trading is a large and growing part of the South African economy, acting as an alternative livelihood strategy in the context of the prevailing high unemployment rates. Street trading is a highly contested informal activity in South African cities, including Cape Town, where the local government has attempted to balance regulation and promotion by supporting street trading as a response to poverty alleviation and regulating the sector to maintain order and protect its brand as a world-class city. This study acknowledges that the South African government has adopted more inclusive policy approaches compared to the colonial and apartheid eras and that the regulatory environment has moved towards the promotion of informal livelihoods. The past few decades have seen a more inclusive and developmental regulatory framework. Despite this, existing policies and practices are not favourable to the livelihoods of street traders and at times practices contradict policy. Restrictive street trading regulations and urban management strategies have been described as limiting rather than promoting livelihoods in the informal sector. Restrictive policies, exclusion from decision making and poor management practices have led to a number of challenges for street traders.

The experiences that female street traders reported in this study support the view that female traders are greatly affected by these constraints and that existing policies. The study found that the lack access to affordable child-care for female street traders was a major challenge that disproportionately affected female street traders and constrained their ability to make a living. However, the study did not find that the constraints identified disproportionately affected female

street traders. The study identified political constraints that include evictions, harassment and exclusion. Existing regulations and policies emphasise compliance with by-laws, licensing of traders and development plans that often hinder the conduct of street trading. Except to a limited degree through their organisations, the street traders are excluded from decision-making processes such as urban management strategies and policy development.

They experience physical constraints in the CBD such as lack of access to proper infrastructure that is supportive of their trade and expands livelihood opportunities. Where infrastructure exists, it is poorly located or designed and does not take into account the needs of street traders. One example is the lack of on-site storage for their goods which adds to the expense and risk of operating on the Grand Parade.

The traders experience economic constraints that exacerbate their already low income, including the cost of operating, rising competition and decreased demand. Since the informal sector is characterised by low earnings traders are known to cover shortfalls or raise cash to buy stock by borrowing from moneylenders who charge exorbitant interest rates. Traders at the Grand Parade tend to sell the same or similar goods and have the same customer base, leading to decreased demand and pressure on prices.

The site is also associated with social constraints, including discrimination and crime. Discrimination came in various forms and women were found to be more vulnerable than men in this regard. Crime was a serious impediment to income generation and general safety. While both women and men experience these challenges, the study concluded that women seem to be more vulnerable. They were more prone to disadvantage than their male counterparts due to their perceived social status, low literacy levels, low skills, gender discrimination and violence. The women were not, however, always passive victims and claimed to take action to protect their goods from criminals

Street trading has largely been perceived as an individualistic activity where traders who are in competition with each other use individual coping mechanisms to overcome challenges. Evidence suggests that street traders are capable of organising and are increasingly doing so. Rather than lacking the agency and solidarity required for successful collective action, street traders are increasingly organising to overcome their challenges, represent their needs in negotiations and bargaining with local government and other stakeholders. Collective action has the potential to

empower traders while improving their livelihood opportunities and contributing to their individual and collective capabilities. Female street traders in particular find themselves in vulnerable positions and as a response use their agency to organise into collectives to overcome these vulnerabilities. The study revealed that collective or cooperative agency was not only exercised in the formal trader organisations operating in the Cape Town CBD. The female traders also had a common purpose in gender-specific roles and cooperate with one another by minding traders' children or keeping an eye on the goods of a trader who left the site to use a toilet or fetch stock.

The study showed that the traders generally, and females in particular, face several barriers to organising in the informal sector. Economic barriers include the difficulty of traders to allocate time to organisational activities, since time has economic value and time away from trading translates to lost income. The literature also shows that females struggle more with time as it is split between trading, their domestic responsibilities and the activities of the organisation. In terms of cultural barriers, women operate in a patriarchal environment. The study shows that the female traders did not always feel empowered to voice their needs during meetings and discussions within the organisation. Internal race, class and gender divisions further undermine the ability of street traders to organise.

Despite these barriers, this study suggests that female street traders know they can increase their agency through their membership in a collective. Agency can be enhanced through collective action, actively raising their political voice, creating and widening their networks and sphere of influence and gaining recognition in public spaces of participation and negotiation. Looking through the lens of collective capabilities, this study suggests that street traders can gain collective agency through collective action to achieve their valued beings and doings. In other words, through collectively organising, female street traders can engage in actions that will affect their environment and possibly improve their circumstances.

7.3 Answering the main research question

The study asked the question: How do female street traders in the Cape Town CBD use collective action to overcome shared challenges and represent their needs in local government? According to the findings, it can be concluded that street traders organised by joining and actively participating in the trader organisation through which they could increase their individual and

collective capabilities and ultimately overcome their challenges. Collective action was a tool through which members could exercise their collective agency, although their capacity was limited at times.

Street traders experienced various economic, political and social challenges, in most cases related to how they interact with the city. The CoCT put in place an Informal Trading Policy, which purports to recognise the significant contribution of the informal trading sector to the local economy. In practice, the findings suggest that the traders' lack of inclusion in decision-making processes and urban plans may indicate that the City is not supportive of the livelihoods of street traders. Although the City policy includes participatory governance, traders are mostly excluded from decision-making processes. The City refuses to reinstate the old system of concluding leases with traders, preferring to deal with their representative organisations. This lack of tenure security affects the traders' daily trading and ultimately their present and future income. Despite the explicit commitments in its Informal Trading Policy to do so, the CoCT does not provide the traders with basic infrastructure such as appropriate shelter, storage facilities or water. Traders had access to public toilets on site but these were poorly maintained and often out of order, forcing traders to pay for access to off-site facilities. Balancing trading and childcare was a finding in this study that was not previously identified in the literature. Female traders who cannot afford or access child care are forced to take care of the children at the market while attempting to simultaneously trade.

The City manages the trader relationship by working through the existing trader organisations. Since the only way to gain access to a trading site in the Grand Parade was through membership of a trader organisation, all the female street traders who participated in the study had had to join already existing trader organisations at the Grand Parade, including the GPUTA. The organisation is responsible for allocating trading spaces to street traders which generates income and may ultimately assist in reducing their vulnerabilities. The GPUTA acts as a representative body for the traders and their interests in negotiations with the CoCT but was found to be reactive, generally responding as issues arose. An issue of interest to the researcher was the discovery, contrary to the literature, that the GPUTA executive consisted of females with one exception and thus was a leadership collection that was more sensitive to female challenges, having experienced the same challenges as their members. Furthermore, The GPUTA had an elected leadership and the general membership included men, showing that the women in the executive were held in high regard.

Women were free to speak during meetings and gatherings. However, as reported in the literature elsewhere, some female traders preferred not to speak but rather agree with or support statements made by other traders. The executive was committed to responding effectively to the challenges that were specific to female street traders but were limited in their capacity to act by the organisation's financial constraints. One benefit the organisation was able to provide was a form of security for women who could not trade because of advanced pregnancy. Their trading sites were reserved and used by casual traders until their return, thus providing an informal form of non-financial social protection. The organisation tried to make up for the lack of resources by networking with other organisations such as COSATU and SERI to obtain support to overcome some of the challenges encountered.

The organisation struggled to secure financial resources to achieve all it sought to do, including covering legal costs in court cases pursued against the City. Internal divisions were apparent within the organisation and with other organisations in the Grand Parade at the time of the study, hindering the organisation's position in negotiations with the City. Nevertheless, the GPUITA offers street traders a platform and opportunity to actively participate in decision-making with the CoCT and to exercise their agency and ultimately overcome their challenges. Platforms and spaces of engagement with the city were achieved through membership in an organisation. Through active participation, members had the opportunity to voice their needs and have them resolved. The literature suggests that collective action requires supportive institutions to be successful. The CoCT was found to be partially supportive through its acknowledgement of street trading as an important activity and the creation of an Informal Trading Policy. However, in practice, some of the regulations and practices of local government stifled collective efforts. The organisation sought support from other institutions such as universities and trade unions to support collective action with some success achieved.

The GPUITA continues to advocate for the rights of street traders and negotiate on their behalf despite lacking resources and support. As the study has outlined, there are boundaries and limitations to what street trader organisations can do to assist street traders in overcoming challenges. For instance, they cannot protect street traders against financial loss or provide an income during maternity leave. The study is therefore careful not to overestimate the potential of street trader organisations to protect female street traders against risks and vulnerabilities. With

supportive institutions, however, street trader organisations can make significant contributions to the livelihoods of street traders.

7.4 Policy recommendations

The study found that street trader organisations play an important role in promoting well-being among female street traders, by enhancing their individual and collective capabilities and thus improving their ability to overcome their challenges. Members demonstrated agency by coming together and presenting a united front to address issues in the face of powerful opposition. The role of street trader organisations is recognised by governments, scholars and civil society organisations. The government ought to build on the agency and freedoms generated through and promoted by street trader organisations.

This study recommends that the CoCT should put into practice what is stated in the Informal Trading Policy by opening platforms for participation where trader organisations are part of a consultative decision-making process. Traders and their representatives should be recognised and given the platform to participate in development and spatial planning and the management of trading, sanitation and water facilities. In addition, trader organisations should be involved in the revision of informal trading by-laws to create an environment that enhances capabilities and supports informal trading. This may allow the creation of policies that are less driven by compliance, and more flexible and tailored to street traders. The involvement of female traders could also facilitate the creation of policies and practices that are gender-specific.

The consultative process should be clearly outlined and followed before making decisions regarding street trading. The City can work with street traders to assist them to reduce vulnerabilities. Some street traders pay for trading spaces but are using some of the time during trading hours caring for their children. Together with trader organisations, the City could invest in childcare facilities for women to assist them to increase their earning potential. This would require sustained engagement between the city and trading organisations to build trust and better relationships.

Street trader organisations should be capacitated to enable female traders to discuss and negotiate their rights with the city. This can be done by creating spaces for gender-sensitive participatory planning.

7.5 Recommendations for future research

More research could be conducted on the potential of street trader organisations to enhance individual and collective capabilities. The study concluded that street trader organisations have an important role to play in improving the well-being of female street traders. However, more knowledge is required in this area to assist the government in understanding and creating a better working relationship with street traders. This knowledge may also result in policymakers developing more responsive policies. This study only included female traders in a specific market and thus could not establish the extent of female vulnerability, relative to men, in the wider informal sector. Thus, future research may be needed on other female trader populations. It may also be necessary to include the perspectives of communities including male traders as well as the experiences and perspectives of other trader and stakeholder organisations.

7.6 Conclusion

The study sought to explore how female street traders use collective action to overcome shared challenges and represent their interests. The study confirmed that, when faced with challenges, female street traders are not passive but rather use their agency to overcome their challenges. Trader organisations were found to play an important role in assisting street traders to overcome their challenges and represent their interests with local government. Organisations provide a platform for traders to exercise their agency and express their needs and interests and thereby enhance their individual and collective capabilities. This was found to be particularly important for female street traders who were often quiet during participatory processes. The organisation actively encouraged female participation through a female-dominated executive that was sensitive to female issues. As a result, female issues were prioritised and this increased the potential of the organisation to assist in overcoming these challenges. The GPUTA organisation experiences limitations that hinder it from offering the services required by members. These limitations mostly stem from the lack of capacity, financial resources and support from local government. The researcher was convinced that strengthening the capacity of street trader organisations to work with local government rather than be cast adversarially against it will benefit both the state and the organisation. In addition, ongoing, sincere consultation between street trader organisations and local governments will not only facilitate a better working environment for traders but contribute to the prosperity and development of the cities.

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