

MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY



FACULTY OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

RESEARCH TOPIC

**THE IMPACT OF THE CLOSURE OF TEXTILE INDUSTRY ON
LIVELIHOODS: THE CASE OF MERLIN TEXTILE LIMITED
IN BULAWAYO CITY**

BY

JUANA MAGURA

R123416Z

**DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENT OF THE BACHELOR OF ARTS
HONOURS DEGREE IN DEVELOPMENT STUDIES**

MAY 2015

RESEARCH SUPERVISION ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM
MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

NAME OF STUDENT..... JUANA MAGURA
REGISTRATION NUMBER..... R123416Z
MODE OF ENTRY..... VISITING
NAME OF SUPERVISOR..... MR. T. CHIBANDA

RESEARCH TOPIC:

THE IMPACT OF THE CLOSURE OF TEXTILE INDUSTRY ON LIVELIHOODS: THE CASE OF MERLIN TEXTILE LIMITED IN BULAWAYO CITY.

I, the undersigned do/do not acknowledge that the above student has consulted me for supervision on his/her research project/dissertation until completion. I therefore do/do not advise the student to submit his/her work for assessment.

SIGNED.....DATE.....

DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to my loving parents Mr and Mrs Magura and my brother Tennyson. Your words of encouragement and support have been a source of strength to me throughout this Degree program, you are very special.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost I give praises and thanks to God Almighty for leading and guiding me through this research project.

Without the fruitful planning discussion with my supervisor Mr. T. Chibanda I probably wouldn't have been able to do this research project. I would like to thank him for his assistance and invaluable guidance throughout this research. It was a privilege and honor to work and study under his guidance. His motivation and determination to succeed inspired me. My appreciation also goes to the Development Studies lecturers who took me through my Degree course.

Many thanks to my parents and mentors, Mr and Mrs Magura for your love, prayers, and sacrifices and continuously supporting me throughout my studies, may God continue to bless you. Tennyson I'm blessed to have you as my brother, even though you live far away the encouragement and support you gave me was always close by, may God richly bless you.

I give thanks and appreciation to Dr .C. Madondo the Judicial Manager for Merlin Textile Limited for giving me permission to do a research case study on the company. I feel I must specifically acknowledge Mr .N. Magurasave (Merlin workers committee chairperson), former workers and their immediate families for their patience and contributions in making this research a success.

I express many thanks, to the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, Bulawayo City Council, the Consumer Council of Zimbabwe and the Zimbabwe Textile Workers Union. Finally I thank all my friends and colleagues for their support to this research work.

ABSTRACT

This research sought to analyze the impact of textile industry closure it has on livelihoods looking at indicators such as access to income, quality of education, health care and standard of living. Particular attention was paid on how former workers and their immediate family members have been affected by the closure of textile industry and what coping strategies they have employed. The researcher's case study is Merlin Textile Limited situated in Belmont Industrial Area in Bulawayo City. In this study qualitative methodology was employed. A total of 100 former workers and 25 immediate family members were used as respondents. Interviews and questionnaires were used to collect data from the respondents. The findings were collected from information entered on questionnaires and face to face interviews conducted by the researcher with the respondents. The study found that the textile industry has been a source of livelihood for workers and their immediate family members. With the closure of Merlin Textile Limited, workers are now financially insecure and have been thrown into abject poverty. They do not have money to pay schools fees for their children or even to afford basic commodities. As a way of surviving, workers have adopted low income coping strategies such as street vending, urban farming and others survive on handouts from well-wishers. The study also revealed that former workers faced challenges in coming up with coping strategies. These challenges include lack of capital to start small businesses, competition in the informal sector and limited enterpreneual skills. The closure of textile industry has had adverse impacts on former workers livelihoods and their immediate family members.

ACRONYMS

AOGOA.....	Africa Growth Opportunity Act
BCC.....	Bulawayo City Council
CCZ.....	Consumer Council of Zimbabwe
ESAP.....	Economic Structural Adjustment Programme
GDP.....	Gross Domestic Product
IMF.....	International Monetary Fund
RBZ.....	Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe
ZTWU.....	Zimbabwe Textile Workers Union

TABLE OF CONTENTS

RESEARCH ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM	i
DEDICATION.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iii
ABSTRACT.....	iv
ACRONYMS.....	v
INTRODUCTION.....	1-2
BACKGROUND.....	2-4
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK.....	4
STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM.....	4-5
RESEARCH OBJECTIVES.....	5
RESEARCH QUESTIONS.....	5
THEORATICAL FRAMEWORK.....	5-6
JUSTIFICATION.....	6-7
LIMITATIONS.....	7
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	7
DATA GATHERING INSTRUMENTS.....	8
INTERVIEWS.....	8
QUESTIONNAIRES.....	8
SAMPLING.....	8-9
TARGET POPULATION.....	9
SAMPLING METHOD.....	9
LITERATURE REVIEW.....	10-13
ETHICAL CONSIDERATION.....	13
CHAPTER 1	14
AN OVERVIEW OF FACTORS LEADING TO THE CLOSURE OF TEXTILE INDUSTRY IN ZIMBABWE.....	14
1.1 INTRODUCTION.....	14
1.2 OVERVIEW OF THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR IN ZIMBABWE.....	14-15

1.3 A BRIEF PROFILE OF ZIMBABWE TEXTILE INDUSTRY.....	15-16
1.4 FACTORS LEADING TO THE CLOSURE OF TEXTILE INDUSTRY IN ZIMBABWE.....	16-22
CONCLUSION.....	22
CHAPTER 2.....	23
THE CLOSURE OF MERLIN TEXTILE LIMITED AND ITS EFFECTS ON LIVELIHOODS ON ITS WORKERS IN BULAWAYO CITY.....	23
2.1 INTRODUCTION.....	23
2.2 LIFESTYLE OF WORKERS AT MERLIN TEXTILE LIMITED DURING ITS PEAK.....	23-26
2.3 PROFILE OF WORKERS AND THEIR IMMEDIATE FAMILY MEMBERS PARTICIPATING IN THE STUDY.....	26
2.4 AGE RANGE AND MARITAL STATUS OF WORKERS WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE STUDY.....	26-27
2.5 THE CLOSURE OF MERLIN TEXTILE LIMITED AND ITS EFFECTS ON LIVELIHOODS IN BULAWAYO CITY.....	27-31
CONCLUSION.....	31-32
CHAPTER 3.....	33
COPING MECHANISMS BY WORKERS OF MERLIN TEXTILE LIMITED AFTER THE CLOSURE OF MERLIN TEXTILE LIMITED.....	33
3.1 INTRODUCTION.....	33
3.2 COPING STRATEGIES BY WORKERS AND THEIR IMMEDIATE FAMILY MEMBERS.....	33-39
3.3 CHALLENGES FACED BY WORKERS IN IMPLEMENTING COPING STRATEGIES.....	40-41
3.4 MEASURES TO REVIVE THE TEXTILE INDUSTRIES.....	41-42
CONCLUSION.....	42-43
REFERENCES.....	44-46
APPENDICES.....	47
APPENDIX 1 QUESTIONNAIRE GUIDE FOR WORKERS.....	47-49
APPENDIX 2 QUESTIONNAIRE GUIDE FOR IMMEDIATE FAMILY MEMBERS.....	49-50
APPENDIX 3 INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE AND THE CONSUMER COUNCIL OF ZIMBABWE.....	50
APPENDIX 4 INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR BULAWAYO CITY COUNCIL.....	51
APPENDIX 5 INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR ZIMBABWE TEXTILE UNION.....	51

FIGURES

FIGURE 1 SHOWING NUMBER OF FIRMS CLOSED AND WORKERS LAID OFF (2011-2013).....15

FIGURE 2 SHOWING ASSETS AQUIRED BY WORKERS.....25

FIGURE 3 SHOWING AGE RANGE AND MARITAL STATUS OF WORKERS.....26

FIGURE 4 SHOWING WHAT WORKERS CAN NO LONGER AFFORD..... 28

FIGURE 5 SHOWING TYPES OF CAPITAL EMPLOYED BY WORKERS.....39

INTRODUCTION

The textile industry is very germane to the industrial development of many countries especially developing countries as it is seen as a long term strategy for economic growth and it is also a major employer of labour for the majority of people. The textile industry grew out of the industrial revolution in the 18th century as mass production of yarn and cloth became a mainstream industry in Britain. The textile industry has played a significant role in the socio economic livelihood of workers and their immediate families. According to Chambers and Conway (1992) a livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (stores, resources, claims and access) and activities required for a means of living. The textile industry is a safety net for most workers as the sector provides them with a source of livelihood. The textile industry has been able to provide stable employment for a lot of people the world over which is key to poverty alleviation and human development. Workers in the textile industry have been able to use their earnings to satisfy financial needs such as paying school fees and rentals, buy food, purchase agriculture inputs and accumulate assets such as cattle, furniture, start their own sole trading businesses and some even save money to take their families for holidays. Thus the textile industry as a source of livelihood for many men and women enables them to achieve livelihood indicators such as access to income, improved standard of living, investing in human development through education, improved quality of life and being able to accumulate assets and invest in alternative source of income for example agriculture and micro businesses. The survival of the textile industry is imperative in any country as it forms part of the screws in a vehicle for economic development.

The manufacturing sector has been a victim of a declining economy of Zimbabwe during the period of 2002 to 2008. The textile industry has not been spared as evidenced by the companies' closure. This has been a result of economy decay, cheap imports into the country, political situation that has eroded foreign investments and operational competitiveness on companies in the manufacturing industry. The continuous decline in customer spending power, decline in the demand for textile products and increases in operational costs resulting from hyperinflation has impacted negatively on the textile industry. Most textile companies have closed shop putting the majority of workers at risk of not having an alternative source of livelihood affecting their cash inflows and standard of living. Most of the textile companies that have shut down their

operations are undercapitalized, facing liquidity problems and others have been put under Judicial Management leaving the majority of people unemployed and destitute.

A lot has been said about the number of textile companies that have shut down in Zimbabwe without little information on how the closure of these industries has had on livelihoods. It is imperative for this study to dig deeper and find out how the closure of Merlin textile industry has impacted on livelihoods indicators such as lifestyles or access to income on workers and their immediate families and the coping mechanisms they have adopted since the closure of the company.

BACKGROUND

In the 1950s the textile industry expanded immensely as a result Bulawayo the second largest city in Zimbabwe boasted of a number of giants textile companies such David Whitehead, Merlin Textile limited and Cotton Printers to name a few. Most people from all corners of the country travelled to buy products from Bulawayo textile industries. Unfortunately in the 21st century the textile industry has not been performing well as evidenced by company closure and downsizing of operations as a result of hyperinflation that prevailed in the late 2000. At the beginning of 2015 the Industry and Commerce Minister Mike Binha said that government is determined to support ailing industries including those in the textile sector from de-industrialization under the Zim Asset programme, the country's economic blue print (Bulawayo24news, 2015). Under Zim Asset a cotton to clothing export strategy was implemented boasting sustainable development in the textile sector. The aim of the strategy is to revive the textile industry by promoting the industry in Eastern and Southern Africa and increase exports of textiles and garments (Murema, 2014).

Zimbabwe support for productive sectors like the textile industry has been enunciated in policies such as the Zimbabwe National Trade Policy 2012-2016. The objective of the policy is to ensure the participation of industries such as the textile in global markets and to protect them from unfair trade practices. Zimbabwe is actively participating in the free trade areas both under COMESA and SADC. Zimbabwe and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa signed an agreement for the regional trading bloc to provide 4, 2 million euro grant to boost

value addition in industries such as textile industry to increase capacity that has fallen to below 10% over the last years (Nsingo, 2014).

The decline of the textile industry has been a result of losing local markets as it faces competition from cheap imports. To support the textile industry the Government will endeavor to give priority to local industries of goods and services under the 'Buy Zimbabwe Campaign Initiative' which is one of the tenets of the National Trade Policy. Awareness on encouraging the public to buy local manufactured products is carried out by the Textile and clothing Association through the textile and clothing Indaba annually.

Merlin Textile limited one of the big giants in the textile industry had a total number of 1200 workers before it was closed in 2010. Merlin Textile limited provided a source of live livelihood to many people. During its peak the company provided stability to its employees as some workers had been part of the company for more than 35 years. Merlin textile provided access to income for its workers for instance bachelors who joined the company in the 1980s and early 1990s with access to cash through wage employment managed to pay bride price for their wives and start their own families. Through the monthly wages that workers received at Merlin textile limited they were able to send money to support their families in the rural areas and also pay their workers who looked after the cattle and goats in the rural areas. When Merlin limited was functioning well the standard of living, life style and quality of life for workers was very high. Workers were able to buy food stuffs, pay rentals, pay schools fees for their children and accumulate assets such as furniture. Workers also enjoyed supplementary benefits such as free transport provided by the company to work and their dwelling places reducing expenses on public transport. This enabled workers to save money for future investments and some workers could afford to buy newspapers every day and also take their immediate families on holidays. The majority of workers at Merlin had come from rural areas to look for work in the cities. The income from textile labour helped them improve their lifestyle in the rural areas as some built brick houses in their homes rural areas. Workers could also afford to buy agriculture inputs during the farming season.

The government availed the Distressed Marginalized Area Fund (DIMAF) which was formed in 2010 to help breathe life into troubled industries including the textiles sector. The 40 million DIMAF benefited a few companies as more than 100 companies are in need of financial

assistance to reequip plants and spring up production of textile for production. The government and stakeholders have an enormous task to come up with ideas and programmes to attract new investments that will revive the textile industry. With the continued closure of giant industries in the textile sector, the workers are put in a dilemma to look for alternative source of livelihood in an environment where unemployment is very high.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Chambers and Conway (1992) define a livelihood as comprising the capabilities, assets (stores, resources, claims and access) and activities required for a means of living. A livelihood is sustainable which can cope with and recover from shocks and stress, maintain and enhance its capability and assets and provide sustainable livelihood for the next generation and which contributes to other livelihood at the local and global levels in the short term. Livelihoods are usually shaped by the economic and political environment at national or international level. The impact of livelihoods on people in case of shocks and stress such as hyperinflation are not taken into account in policy formulation and implementation by governments. Livelihoods drive access to various types of capital which may be natural, financial, human, social and physical capital. Access to financial capital for instance may lead to livelihood outcomes such as, availability of cash, decreased vulnerability, food security, pride and empowerment amongst people and in their homes.

Textile is from a Latin word meaning woven (Free dictionary, 2012). A textile is a material that is woven which has natural or artificial fibers (nylon, polyester) known as threads or yarn. Therefore a textile industry specializes in turning natural fibers (cotton, silk) or synthetic fibers (nylon, polyester) into fabrics by pressing the fibers together, weaving or knitting. Textiles are used for bedding, household linen or even carpets. Merlin Textile Limited mainly specialized in making towels, baby napkins, morning gowns, bed covers and garment and shoe labels.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The textile industry has played an enormous role in sustaining livelihoods. The industry provided employment for workers who were skilled, dedicated, and hardworking and committed in making production possible contributing to the economy of Zimbabwe and providing welfare for their immediate families. Its closure has devastating effects on livelihoods. The research will

focus on the closure of Merlin Textile Industry and the effect on livelihoods. Livelihoods are going to be accessed under the following livelihood indicators which include access to income, standard of living, education, health and quality of life.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To understand factors that cause Textile industry closure in Zimbabwe.
- To have an understanding of how Merlin Textile industrial closure has impacted on its former worker's livelihoods.
- To unpack coping mechanisms adopted by workers and people after the closure of Merlin Textile Industry.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What are the factors that are leading to the closure of Textile Industry in Zimbabwe?
- How the closure of Merlin Textile Industry in Zimbabwe has impacted on livelihoods?
- What are the coping mechanisms adopted by workers and people after the closure of Merlin Textile Industry?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The research will make use of the sustainable livelihood concept. Majale (2002) states that Sustainable livelihood is a way of thinking about objectives, scope, priorities for development in order to enhance progression in poverty elimination. Sustainable livelihood is a holistic approach that tries to highlight and give means of understanding the underlying cause and dimensions of poverty without ignoring the focus on factors such as economic issues. The sustainable livelihood concept also tries to draw the nexus between causes and manifestations of poverty allowing for effective action to be taken. The textile industry is essential for economic development in any country as it tries to alleviate poverty amongst men, women and their immediate families by providing wage employment that provide workers to access to cash to improve their wellbeing. Economic issues such as hyperinflation or failed policies for instance might cause industries to operate below capacity or shut down resulting in workers to lose their

jobs (source of livelihood) reducing their cash inflows as a result throwing people into the jaws of poverty.

The sustainable livelihood concept is important to this study as it helps former workers in the textile industry to come up with coping strategies after the closure of Merlin Textile Limited. Assets that are used with the sustainable concept include natural capital (land ,water, environmental resources), physical capital which includes basic infrastructure (transport, communications, housing), human capital (knowledge ,skills), social capital (trust, networks) and financial capital (cash, credit, savings).These capitals form livelihood resources that make livelihood strategies possible giving people capabilities to make livelihoods meaningful (Bebbington,1999). The textile industry has provided financial resources to workers and their immediate families to own, maintain and change other forms of capital. The employment wage at Merlin Textile Limited was used to purchase houses, pay children’s education, pay bills and for social networking by respecting culture in paying lobola.

The sustainable livelihoods concept provides a framework for poverty reduction. The frame work views people as operating in a context of vulnerability (shocks and stress).Within the context they have access to which they try to eliminate poverty through the existing social, institution, and organizational environment. The sustainable livelihood concept applies to this research as livelihoods analysis is important to the textile industry operating at full capacity and also when they have shut down. The sustainable livelihood concept provides a useful conceptual base for understanding the causes of textile industrial closure particular large companies like Merlin Textile Limited. The concept also helps to understand the situation of workers in terms of livelihood strategies using the assets they have when they are laid off. Therefore sustainable livelihood concept is an effective tool for analyzing the impact of Merlin Textile Limited closure on livelihoods of workers and their immediate families.

JUSTIFICATION

More has been said about the closure of textile industry in Zimbabwe without putting into consideration how it has affected livelihoods. The researcher saw the need to carry out this study because the Textile Industry plays a pivotal role in the economy of any developing country including Zimbabwe. Second to agriculture, the textile industry as sub sector in the

manufacturing industry is the largest employer of labour. Less has been said about the coping mechanisms the workers have adopted as a result of the closure of textile industry hence there is a beseeching need to carry out this research. The research took Merlin Limited as a case study as it used to be one of the largest textile industries in Zimbabwe that used to produce excellent quality products and had a large skilled workforce. Merlin Limited used to provide sustainable means of living for men and women so there is need to carry out a study on its closure and get a deep insight on how it has impacted on their livelihoods. The closure of textile industries affects livelihood indicators such as the quality of life, education and access to income and it is important for the researcher to do this study to find out how these indicators have been affected by the closure of Merlin Textile Limited.

LIMITATIONS

The research encountered a few constraints particular in looking for a manufacturing company to do a case study with as most companies have been turned to churches. The researcher spent weeks looking for a company that had not be turned to a church. Time to carry the research was limited as a result field research was executed in a short space of time but would require several months to accomplish the task.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The qualitative research paradigm will be used in this study. The primary goal of using this approach is to describe in detail and understand the impact of the closure of Merlin Textile Limited it has had on livelihoods. The study will make use of structured interviews and questionnaires to gather responses from respondents. Qualitative research taps on the richness and social experiences by interactions between the researcher and study participants (Crewel, 2004). Participants have the opportunity to respond more elaborately and in detail than with quantitative methods. Qualitative research may be defined as a type of social scientific research that consists of an investigation that seeks to answer a question. It seeks to answer a given research problem from the perspective of the study population, which involves the human side of the issue that is their experiences. It is therefore important to know the experiences of former workers and their immediate families after the closure of Merlin Textile Limited. Their detailed narrated information will answer the research question on how the closure of textile industries

impacts on livelihoods. The qualitative research design was appropriate as the researcher was able to obtain relevant information from the respondents.

DATA GATHERING INSTRUMENT

Interviews

Interviews render the opportunity for immediate feedback from the respondents. Interviews give the researcher a chance to explain and enables the researcher to have control of the data collection by asking questions and noting down answers. According to Cassely et al, (1995) an interview is a direct contact established as the interviewer engages the interviewee to collect data. Personal interviews will be used for this study for all respondents, as they provide face to face communication between the interviewer and respondents, thus creating good rapport and detailed collection of information. Interviews were carried out with different stakeholders, and these were in form of depth interviews to get more in depth information. The stakeholders interviewed included the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, Bulawayo City Council, Consumer council of Zimbabwe and Zimbabwe Textile Workers Union.

Questionnaires

A questionnaire is a self-report instrument used for gathering information about variables of interest to an investigation (Cohen, 1989). Questionnaires are important in this study as they is no psychological discomfort amongst respondents that can be experienced during face to face interviews. This increases the chances of respondents to answer questions honestly because they are not intimidated by the presence of the researcher. The questions were very clear, former workers and their immediate family members were able to answer the questions. The questionnaires were designed to gather information from former workers and their immediate family members.

SAMPLING

A sample is a segment of elements taken from a population, which is considered to be representative of the population (Black et al, 1976). One would wish to study the entire population so as to get accurate analysis of the situation. However this is impossible and not feasible as it can contribute to poor findings and bias and thus for a researcher to have a feasible study must settle for a sample. The researcher used a sample of 100 workers and 25 immediate

family members. The sample size consisted of personnel from the following institutions, the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, the Bulawayo City Council, Consumer Council of Zimbabwe and Zimbabwe Textile Workers Union.

TARGET POPULATION

The largest population in this research was the former Merlin Textile Limited workers. Immediate family members were selected as they are directly affected by the closure of Merlin Textile limited. The researcher also targeted personnel from the Bulawayo City Council, Ministry of Industry and Commerce, Zimbabwe Textile Workers Union and the Consumer Council of Zimbabwe. The researcher had to work extremely hard and put more extra hours during the day to study the whole target population which included 100 former workers, 25 immediate family workers and personnel from different stakeholders.

SAMPLING METHOD

Purposive sampling will be used by the researcher. Purposive sampling targets particular group of people so the researcher purposefully selects the research participants. Therefore purposive sampling is a technique that involves selecting certain units or cases based on a specific purpose rather than randomly (Black 1999:118). Purposive sampling hand picks subjects on the basis of specific characteristics (Black 1999:118). Every year companies are being closed in Zimbabwe, through the closure of Merlin Limited how has it affected the livelihoods of its former workers will be part of the characteristics used in the study in relation to purposive sampling. This will be appropriate given the time and resources constraints of the study. Black (1999:118) also argues that another advantage of purposive sampling is that it ensures balance of group sizes when multiple groups are to be selected. On the other hand the major disadvantage of purposive sampling is that samples are not easily defensible as being representative of populations due to potential subjectivity of the researcher. Purposive sampling was relevant in deeply understanding the impact the closure of Merlin Textile Limited has had on former workers and their immediate family members. The researcher was able to select respondents with requisite information and who could divulge information as required by the researcher.

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Nancy (1996) literature review describes, compares, contrasts and evaluates the major theories, arguments, themes, methodologies, approaches and controversies in the scholarly literature on a subject. In this regard spinning, garment making and weaving have been at the forefront of the world's industrial turn around. The Textile sector has been at the heart of many economic miracles of many countries around the world especially developing countries. However, the importation of Chinese textiles in Africa has brought about a radical change to African economies threatening the closure of textiles industries and affecting jobs of millions of workers in the textile industry. In this study the main subject will be on the closure of industries and how it has impacted on former worker's livelihoods looking at Merlin Limited.

The textile industrial closure is also evidenced way back in 1982 in South Carolina a state in the Southeastern of the United States, where Newberry Textiles Mills was located. Newberry Mills Became the 12th textile mill to be closed in seven months in January 1982 as South Carolina's largest industrial declined. According to NY times (1982) more than 18 000 of 133 000 textile employees were laid off and it was the largest cut in the textile industry since the recession in 1974. The closure of Newberry was a result of imported products which uprooted expensive American made goods. The decline in customer spending on textile products and the recession in housing and auto sales cut the demand for industrial fabrics. The History of Merlin limited dates back in the 1950s meaning that the company is part of historical legacy of Zimbabwe that will always be known. The economic decline in Zimbabwe in the mid 2000 resulted in the decline in customer spending power and the shortage of fuel affected the operations of Merlin Textile Limited.

Adama (2014) states that in Nigeria despite the pay out of N60 billion by the Bank of Industry to revive the collapse of textile industry, many textile factories remain closed especially Kaduna Textile Limited, while former workers continue to die due to unpaid entitlements. One former worker who had worked for many years at Kaduna Textile Limited, became hypertensive as soon as the company shut down in 2002 and died a year later. The widow of the former worker also lost two children after her husbands' death because of her inability to provide quality health care

for them. With the continued closure of textile industries in Nigeria most children of former workers are roaming around the streets like beggars while often get involved in criminal activities. The closure of textile industry in Nigeria has affected the livelihood of workers and their families as consequences continue to pile up. The Cotton, Textile and Garment bailout fund is yet to bring life to the textile sector. The ex- workers have come together to form a Coalition of Closed Unpaid Textile Workers to fight for their entitlements (Ibid). As a result of closure of textile industries in Nigeria former workers embark on menial jobs such as breaking fire wood for people, being hired as farmers and occasional brick layers which can hardly sustain themselves and their families.

On the 30th of July 2003 a textile company industry called Pillowtec Corp. based in Kannapolis, North Carolina a state in the Southeastern United States filed for bankruptcy and ceased all operations at its 16 plants in the United States and Canada (Beatty et al, 2004). Pillowtec textile was the largest producer of household textile products such as sheets, towels and bedspreads in North Carolina. With its closure, 7 650 workers were permanently laid off and this was the largest mass lay off in North Carolina history which impacted negatively on the livelihoods of workers and the communities as a whole (Ibid). Causes of the company closure resulted from management mistakes, excessive debt, mismanaged systems. Poor inventory control combined with vigorous competition from international producers caused financial challenges for the company and placed it in serious problems as researched by Beatty et al (2004). The closure of the company brought about financial distress to the former workers and increased the need for services of social welfare agencies. Beatty et al (2004) went on to state that the workers were reluctant to confront reality to consider life options and most of them were not eager to go back to school. Most of the workers had no computer skills to search for other administrative jobs. The closure of Pillowtec Textile Company also affected the community as it harnessed issues for the provision of service as well as the loss of tax revenue. The city of Kannapolis had reached an agreement with Pillowotec textiles in December 2003 to take over the preparation of water treatment plant unfortunately this was not to be reached due to the closure of the company.

In July 2003 the United States imposed sanctions in Myanmar a country in Southeast Asia which impacted negatively on the textile industry. These sanctions were a result of bad human rights

and democracy in Myanmar. All exports of Myanmar products to the United States were banned. This affected the industry since it exported half of its products to the United States. The textile industry in Myanmar had 400 firms with more than 300 000 workers in the late 1990s up to 2001 (Kudo, 2005). Myanmar government blamed the US for the sanctions which affected 80 000 textile factory workers in losing their jobs as 64 textile industries were shut down in 2003 (Steinberg, 2003). Wages constituted 60% of the total household income, they were the main source of livelihoods for former workers who went bankrupt after the closure of companies. The sanctions affected small to medium sized local textile companies who were not the main target of sanctions. Besides sanctions the textile industry in early 2000 also suffered stiff competition from the international economic environment contributing to the decline of the textile industry in Myanmar. It is seen the wage employment from the textile industry contribute a larger part to the immediate families of workers. The closure of textile industries affects the lifestyle of standard of workers and their immediate families.

Lesotho at some point employed 56 000 workers in the textile industry ,with the end of Multi Fabric Arrangement Lesotho experienced six of the country's 50 textiles companies being shut down leaving 6 600 without jobs or termination of benefits (Matume,2006) . As stated by Ngomba (n.d) on the end of the Multi Fabric Arrangement, as a result in Malawi 2511 jobs were cut in the textile industry between January and March 2005. In South Africa 86% of all the textiles, 60% being blankets and towels come from China as a result putting local textiles industries in danger of losing markets. The stage of textile industry in Africa is a story of the obstacles of globalization to domestic textile industries and how it threatens and affects the livelihoods of workers and economies of developing countries.

In India in the late 20th century and the first decades of the 21st century witnessed the closure of large industrial firms. These large industrial companies were historically known for large scale industrial production and political actions that were facilitated by trade unions which at times took a militant form (Mhaskar, 2000). The closure of the textile firms did not only put former workers into the informal sector but also had a negative implications for the politics of labor. Mhaskar went on to state that in Mumbai textile mill workers went on an eighteen month long strike in 1982 to 1983 which put the textile mill owners in connivance with the State. In his study

Mahskar on Kanpur textile mill in Mumbai shows that the closure of the textile mill and retrenchments that followed resulted in the disappearance of spaces for social cohesion. Alternative notion for community and identity as workers sought refuge in communal formation which led to the participation in the communal program against Muslims. Mumbai former textile workers were involved in politely mobilization since 2006 to claim their entitlements in the form of housing and alternative employment with the aim of wanting the state to come to their rescue. Unfortunately the State facilitated the closure of textile mills to transform the land from industrial to non industrial use.

From the above it is seen that the closure of textile industries all over the world affects thousands of workers who are either retrenched or laid off. It is imperative for this study to look on how the closure of textile industry impact on livelihoods. Therefore the study will centered on the closure of Merlin Textile Limited and its impact on livelihoods.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

For the research project to be a success ethical guidelines have to be adhered to which include the right to privacy, confidentiality, sensitive topics and the right to answer questions. Informed consent was obtained from the Judicial Manager to seek permission to do a research on Merlin Textile Limited. It is important to explain to the participants that the research is mainly for academic purposes. The researcher was able to ensure that ethical principles such as the right to confidentiality were adhered to. The respondents were notified about the reasons and contents of the study prior to their participation.

CHAPTER 1

AN OVERVIEW OF FACTORS LEADING TO THE CLOSURE OF TEXTILE INDUSTRY IN ZIMBABWE.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Zimbabwe's textile industry, which at its springtime was one of the major employers in the country, is facing extreme challenges as some of the giant companies have been shut down. This chapter seeks to spell out the factors leading to the closure of textile industries in Zimbabwe. By first understanding the situation facing the manufacturing sector in Zimbabwe the researcher will be able to reach to the factors that have caused demise in the textile industry. Field data from personnel representing the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, Consumer Council of Zimbabwe and Zimbabwe Textile Workers Union interviewed by the researcher was helpfully in understanding factors that have led to the downfall of textile industry in Zimbabwe.

1.2 OVERVIEW OF THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR IN ZIMBABWE

Not long ago Zimbabwe was once the envy of many countries in the Southern and Sub Saharan Africa as it had the biggest industrial sector second to South Africa. The industrial sector was diverse as it specialized in textiles, pharmaceuticals, metals, mining, food processing and other industrial services. In 1987 the manufacturing sector employed 175 000 people which represented 16 per cent of the labour force in the formal sector (Sachikonye, 1999). The size of the manufacturing sector grew to 205 000 workers in 1991 before a decline began to set in (Sachikonye, 1999). Since the early 2000 the amount of manufactured output has become insignificant as compared to the late 1990s. Exports have decreased and most factories in the

industrial sector have no funding for maintenance, upgrading and replacement of new technology (Bloch, 2014). De industrialization has been haunting the industrial sector in the 21st century in Zimbabwe as capital utilization continues to decline. Retrenchment and layoffs of workers have become frequent in the industrial sector throwing the majority of people into abject poverty and destitution.

In presenting the 2015 National Budget the Honorable Minister Chinamasa (2014) mentioned that more than 55000 workers have lost their jobs after 4 610 companies closed country wide in the industrial sector since 2011.

YEAR	FIRMS CLOSED	NUMBER OF WORKERS WHO LOST THEIR JOBS
2011	2 130	19 121
2012	1 468	20 825
2013	878	14 499

Figure 1: Showing the number of firms closed and workers laid off in three years (Chinamasa, 2014).

In 2012 the largest number of work force in the industrial sector was laid off, showing how bad things were in the sector. The textile industry in particular had not been spared by the wave of de industrialization since 1998. 8000 workers had lost their jobs (Herald, 2013). The decline of the industrial sector in particular the textile industry is a big challenge to the Zimbabwean Government as most people have lost their jobs affecting their livelihoods.

1.3 A BRIEF PROFILE OF ZIMBABWE TEXTILE INDUSTRY

The 1980s was a period of rapid growth of the Zimbabwean textile industry. This was attributed to a variety of export and investment facilitation and promotion schemes, a highly educated work force and the country's location in the Southern region (Nkala, 2012). As a result the textile sector was one of the sub sector leading in outputs, exports and in providing manufacturing employment to thousands of people. In 1982 the sub sector had a gross output of 10, 4 percent of

the total manufacturing output (Sachikonye, 1995). In the early 1990s the textile sector had an employment capacity of 24 000, representing 13 percent of the manufacturing employment, making the sub sector the fourth largest employer in the manufacturing sector (Sachikonye, 1999). Large establishments that were at the top hierarchy in the textile industry included Merlin Textile Limited, David Whitehead Textiles, Textile Mills, Cotton Printers and Karina Textiles which were involved in the production, ginning of cotton, transforming lint into yarn and fabric and the conversion of fabric, yarn into garments. Before the demise of the textile industry it played a significant role in people's lives and the economy of Zimbabwe.

1.4 FACTORS LEADING TO THE CLOSURE OF TEXTILE INDUSTRY IN ZIMBABWE.

The textile industry in Zimbabwe had been providing key economic development inputs to the country and people's livelihoods, making its significance to the economy of the country undoubted. The optimistic picture of the textile industry in Zimbabwe has been affected by a variety of economic and political factors that have haunted the country for some years. At its heydays the textile industry employed 24 000 people but less than 4000 are now under its pay roll in 2015 as stated by the Zimbabwe Textile Union secretary Mr Kuvheya in the Herald (2013). Some companies like David Whitehead Textile and Merlin Textile Limited to name a few were put under judicial management with very thin prospects of recovering. As a result Merlin Textile Limited has been closed since 2010 with no production taking place at the company. Other companies such as Karina Textiles, Cotton Printers applied for liquidation and eventually have ceased their operations. These are some of the giant companies that the country relied on in the textile industry and now they are in the doldrums.

The implementation of radical policy in the early 1990s by the government lead to the closure of some textile industries. As stated by Mlambo (2006), the introduction of the World Bank and IMF Structural Adjustment Programme in 1991 changed the situation intensely for vulnerable sectors in the manufacturing industry like the textile industry. Mlambo (2006) highlighted that the liberalization of trade and the elimination of export incentive schemes led to the closure of six textile firms by 1999. According to Sachikonye (1999) prior to economic structural adjustment programmes, most textile industries were generally in good financial health with low

levels of debts. A major objective of the structural adjustment programme was to foster foreign investment for expansion purposes in the manufacturing industry including the textile sector.

Economic structural adjustment programme (ESAP) was introduced at a stage when developing countries were watchful of their economic policies. Developing countries like Zimbabwe had come up with strategies to armor local manufacturing industries in particular textile industries through control on imports and restrictions on foreign exchanges. Foreign companies that sat on top of the economies of developing countries were finding it difficult to repatriate their earnings. As a result World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) found fault in these policies which they blamed for the demise of economies in African countries. They argued that such policies were protectionist and repressed development. As a result they sang in favor of economic liberalization that was evidenced by openness of markets and integration on countries into one global economy, which in a way is a direct appearance of globalization. Globalization is a trend towards internationalization of economies both developed and developing nations by allowing markets forces, rather state policies to control the direction of development (Nherera, 2005).

In Zimbabwe as a result of ESAP there was a serious mismatch between expenditure and revenue resulting in high budget deficit and this attributed to the collapse of the manufacturing industries particularly the textile industry. ESAP did not lead to an increase in foreign trade and direct investment as suggested by its proponents. Exports remained poor, foreign investment inflows were stationery and worsened by reduced international support. Savings declined from 18.2 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) in 1996 to 11 percent of GDP in 1999 (Nherera, 2005). Investments also declined from 18.7 percent of GDP in 1996 to 15 percent in 1999 (Nherera, 2005). Unfortunately in 1992 tight monetary policies were adopted by the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe (RBZ) to arrest the situation, instead interest rates rose uncontrollably which made borrowing and repaying loans for local textile industries very expensive (Sachikonye, 1999).

At the adoption of ESAP in Zimbabwe in the early 1990s inflation was at 21 percent and escalated to 70 percent by end of 2000, went up to 600 percent in 2003 through thig monetary policy (Nherera, 2005).This resulted in textile firms operating under severe debt burdens. Textile firms like Cone textiles who managed to modernize and invest were badly affected by the high

interest rates. As a result the fiscal challenges and the challenging micro economic environment prevented textile industries from re equipping and expanding their businesses. This had a negative impact on the textile industry capacity to compete internationally. Sachikonye (1999) went on to state that full benefits would not be realized locally and externally as textiles firms were not competitive enough in terms quality of products. Since its closure Merlin Textile limited had been operating with some of its obsolete machinery which it had installed in the 1950s when the company was established and this contributed immensely to its closure. It is important to note that machinery used by textile companies such as spinning, weaving and looms equipment were imported in the 1950s and spare parts were not locally produced. Therefore the acquisition, replacement and maintenance of new equipment needed foreign currency which was not available as a result of the economic crisis that the country was facing.

Violence by workers in an attempt to block liquidation of textile companies like David Whitehead Textile made things worse as the company was already facing a lot of challenges making it its closure inevitable during the period of ESAP in early 1995 (Sachikonye, 1999). Violence by workers caused damaged worth millions of dollars which was the largest loss suffered by the company during ESAP as machinery and stocks of goods kept in the warehouse were lost in the fire as stated by the workers. The dispute was over job evaluation between workers and management and this threw the company into a huge burning forest.

As a result of globalization and opening up of markets to the global village has allowed countries like China to have a strong marriage in terms of trade and investments between developed countries and developing countries. This has presented opportunities and challenges to African manufacturing industries. China's marriage with Africa goes beyond raw materials (Dhliwayo, 2012), Africa's textile industries have not been spared from the unequal trade relations which within the industry is called "the global textile struggle" (Dhilwayo, 2012). Huge influx of cheap Chinese textiles and appeals have severely damaged the textile industry in Zimbabwe. Most textile industries such as Textile Mills, Merlin Textile Limited and David Whitehead Textiles that have collapsed found it difficult to compete with low cost cheap imports that attract low income customers.

The closure of textile industries in Zimbabwe was as a result of the record breaking hyperinflation that occurred in 2008. Hyperinflation is defined as inflation that is out of control,

a condition in which prices increase rapidly as a currency loses its value (Makochekanwa, 2007). To compliment this Stanlake (1981) states that, hyperinflation is an extreme form of inflation where prices rise at a high rate daily as evidenced in 1923 where Germany experienced this kind of inflation as prices were million times greater than their prewar level. Paper money was losing half of its value in one hour and wages paid hourly. Makochekwanwa (2007) propounded that the main cause of hyperinflationary environment in Zimbabwe was the increase in the printing of money to counter budget deficit and this was not in line with growth of outputs of goods. During this period textile industries operated at very low capacity.

Structural Adjustment Programme adopted by the government in 1991 affected consumer spending power on textile products as most people were retrenched especially civil servants who were the majority of local customers in the textile industry. Hyperinflation in the early and late 2000 also made things worse for the textile industry as consumer spending power declined resulting in the low demand for the textile products. As a result the situation contributed to the closure of Archer Clothing. Most people during the hyperinflation period could barely afford basic commodities let alone to purchase textiles finished products (Bloch,2010). Thus the textile industry sustained an immense downfall in production coupled with increased fixed costs (Bloch,2010). The shortage of foreign currency in Zimbabwe had no mercy on the textile industry, which led to the demise of companies such Merlin, Karina Textiles, Cotton printers as the economy continued to decline during the period of 2002 to 2008. As a result textile industries could barely afford to purchase operating inputs including chemicals, synthetic, yarns (Bloch, 2010). Working days for workers were reduced to 3 days per week. Concorde Clothing reduced its staff from 600 to 170 as this was meant to keep the company running, because the company was already operating below 50 percent capacity (Zimbabwe Independent, 2004). In addition to the negative situation, textile operations were affected by the recurrent interruptions in utilities supply of electricity, water, diesel and petrol (Bloch, 2010). As a result of frequent load shading, textile machinery were damaged which are expensive to repair and textiles operations were also interrupted which decreased the export market demand.

Gross mismanagement by investors, lack of effective corporate governance and foresight by management has also contributed to the closure of textile industries in Zimbabwe. For instance Cotton Printers and Merlin Textile Limited before their closure were insolvent with more

liabilities than assets resulting in the company's failure to buy basic materials. Textile industry needs experienced top management teams that can develop long term strategies which enable textile industries to survive in unpredictable economic situations such as recession. Foresighted top management teams in textile companies must go beyond traditional functions of operations to include people oriented issues like change management and sustainability in the long run. Gross mismanagement contributed greatly to the closure of the textile companies. Investors who acquired Merlin Textile Limited in 2004 after it was resuscitated from judicial management had little experience in the textile industry. Unfortunately the new leadership failed to follow a five year strategic plan given to them by the Judicial Manager which involved replacement of old machinery and equipment with new state of the art technology . The Company was operating with machinery which had not been serviced for years. It was also unfortunate that the new investors did not lesson to the advice given to them by experienced workers and this costs the company greatly with its closure in 2010. Mismanagement and lack of democratic structures that do not involve workers at all levels in decision making lead to the closure of textile companies.

International isolation as a result of the land reform programme in 2000 also affected the performance of the industrial sector especially the textile industry of foreign investors as the sector was in need of foreign currency. The international community from developed countries like the United Kingdom and America thought the land reform was not implemented in a transparent manner as violence against the white farmers by war veterans was evident. This led to the exclusion of Zimbabwe in many global activities that would have benefited the country's industrial sector. In early 2000 for instance, Zimbabwe was excluded from a group of African countries eligible to improve trade access in agreements such as the African Growth Opportunities Act (AGOA).The country did no reap any benefits from the AGOA were almost 44 African countries were offered duty free and quota free status into the United States for textile firms as stated by Muleya (2000) in the Zimbabwean Independent. Under the AGOA countries such as Mauritius and South Africa were not allowed to even indirectly export fabric made from Zimbabwe (Muleya, 2000). South Africa benefited immensely from AGOA with rewards amounting to US135million from January to June 2001 as stated by Molebeledi, (2001).

With findings from the interviews conducted by the researcher a critical point came out that the closure of manufacturing industries in Zimbabwe could have been a deliberate move by the

frustrated white community as a result of the land reform program as stated by a representative from the Zimbabwe Textile Workers Union in Bulawayo. The white community owned the majority of textile industries in Zimbabwe. During the fast track land reform program in 2000 the white who were farmers were forced violently off their land along with their workers. This did not go well with the white community and most of them had to seek refuge outside the country. The whole issue attracted the international community and as a way to seek revenge against the government, the white community might have deliberately contributed to the demise of industries in Zimbabwe including the textile sector. Cotton Printers a large textile company has been closed for years. It is owned by a white family who were also part of the top management. The family relocated overseas and security guards are the ones left manning the deserted chains of building with no sign that the company will be resuscitated in the future.

A personnel officer from the Ministry of Industry and Commerce in Bulawayo City echoed that the closure of industries particularly the textile industry is largely rooted in the lack of infrastructural development in Bulawayo City which has been in a state of oblivion for many years. For instance at the moment the City of Bulawayo is relying on two dams out of the five that were built in 1958. Since then no new dams have been built in the past 22 years even when there has been a tremendous growth of population in the City (The Sunday News, 2015). The problem of water does not lie in poor rainfall patterns in the region but lack of infrastructural investments in servicing old infrastructure (The Sunday News, 2015). This has affected the operation of many manufacturing industries in the City that have seen the textile industry collapsing. Without secure water source, it is also difficult to operate the small power station like the Bulawayo Power station which has a capacity of 90 megawatts (The Sunday News, 2015). As a result some textile industries have relocated to Harare where there is investment and closed shop in Bulawayo leaving workers without any jobs.

Bulawayo City had a high activity of the industrial sector in the 1980s and 1990s as a result it was given the name *koNtuthu ziya thunqa* (a Ndebele name for a place that continually exudes smoke). However in the early 2000 the city had seen the domination of the largest opposition political party in the country. This has in a way affected investment to the city's industrial sector. Bulawayo city once boasted of large textile industries such as Merlin and Cotton Printers.

Lack of Government support to the textile industry in Zimbabwe has also contributed to the collapse of companies like Textile Mills and Cotton Printers to name a few. The government for the past years has been concentrating on other issues and one of them being the cancellation of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Debt. The textile sector would not have collapsed if only the government had attended to the early symptoms affecting the industry. Most textile companies could be functioning at full capacity by now. In 2009 the IMF insisted on the payment of over US175 million failure the country would be choked out by the institution (Hondora, 2009). Zimbabwe managed to pay 150 million pounds (Hondora, 2009) towards the loan despite critical shortages of foreign currency in the country hence no money was available to assist troubled sectors like the textile industry.

CONCLUSION

The continuous closure of textile industries in Zimbabwe has been led by the economic decay which started in the early 2000 as a result of hyperinflation. The shortage of electricity and influx of cheap imports have not spared the textile industry from collapse. The government has delayed in response to rescue the industry from its downfall as a result most people have been left without alternative source of income in an environment that has a souring high level of unemployment.

CHAPTER 2

THE CLOSURE OF MERLIN TEXTILE LIMITED AND ITS EFFECTS ON LIVELIHOODS ON ITS WORKERS IN BULAWAYO CITY.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter pays attention to the closure of Merlin Textile Limited and its effects on livelihoods on its workers and their immediate family members. It examines how livelihood indicators such as standard of living, education, health and access to income have been affected by the closure of the company. The closure of Merlin Textile Limited has had a direct negative impact on the livelihoods of workers as the company has been closed since 2010. This chapter uses information from questionnaires and interview responses with former workers and their immediate family members.

2.2 LIFESYLE OF WORKERS AT MERLIN TEXTILE LIMITED DURING ITS PEAK.

During its peak Merlin Textile limited contributed positively to the livelihoods of its workers. Merlin Textile Limited a company situated in the city of Bulawayo at Belmont Industrial site had a total of 1200 workers before its closure. When Merlin Textile Limited was operating at full capacity it could afford to pay weekly wages, monthly salaries and even bonuses for permanent workers at the end of each year for their contribution to the company. When the company was functioning well the standard of living for its workers was very high. Workers could afford to buy a full basket of basic commodities with a few luxuries. One respondent stated that he could afford to buy soap, toothpaste, maize meal, beef, cooking oil, bread, milk, eggs and luxuries such as toilet cleaners, deodorants and even the daily newspapers. The respondent said that this could

last the whole month before the next pay cheque. When the researcher was interviewing the former workers she observed that the strained faces of workers glowed when asked to talk about Merlin Textile Limited during its glory days and wished that one day they could go back to work as the company provided financial capital that helped them survive.

Merlin Textile Limited was established in 1954 and some of its workers had served the company for more 35 years and they had managed to accumulate assets such as houses, cattle and household furniture. One respondent who is part of the workers committee said that he started to work at Merlin Textile Limited in the 1970s having come from the rural areas to look for employment. He said that “*I company leyi yayi nakhekela izisebenzi zayo ngesikathi sayo*” (This company was looking after the livelihoods of its workers during its peak days). The respondent went on to say that during the period that he started work at Merlin Textile Limited he managed to build two brick houses under asbestos roof at his rural home, also bought agricultural tools such as ox drawn plough, wheel barrows, scorch carts and even two cattle that have given him more than 10 more. Through the monthly wages workers were able to save and send groceries and some money to their rural homes. Some workers stated that, they were able to support their parents, brothers and sisters in the rural areas.

Some respondents even said, paying for children school fees and examination fees was not a problem when they were employed at Merlin Textile limited. Workers managed to finance their children’s education during the peak period of the company. Most of the workers have between two to six children and the majority are school going. A widow who worked on contract at Merlin Textile Limited said that the weekly wages that she was paid enabled her to start a soft drink business which complimented her wages and she was able to pay school fees for her two boys without getting assistance from relatives. Those who joined the company in the 1980s managed to educate their children up to college and university level. More so workers could afford health services for their families. When children fell sick there was money to take them to the hospital. One respondent said he could afford to take his mother from the rural areas to the city for medical attention by a private doctor.

Merlin Textile Limited reduced and eliminated poverty among workers and also relations at home improved as men and women who worked for the company could provide for their families and save money for holidays. An interviewed respondent said that he could save money

to take his family to the rural areas on public holidays or visit relatives in far cities like Harare. Another worker who started working at Merlin Textile Limited in the late 1970s said that from his saving he actually managed to pay lobola for his wife and they have been married for more than twenty years.

During Merlin’s Textile Limited hey days workers managed to pay their bills on time which included rents, water and electricity bills. One respondent who is a lodger in the western suburb said that when he was at work he knew that his monthly salary would come and had good relations with the landlord as he paid the rent on time. A former female worker said life was easy when she worked at Merlin Textile Limited as she helped her husband in looking after the children and the extended family. During the peak of Merlin Textile Limited sampled workers stated that they managed to acquire tangible assets as shown by the line graph below,

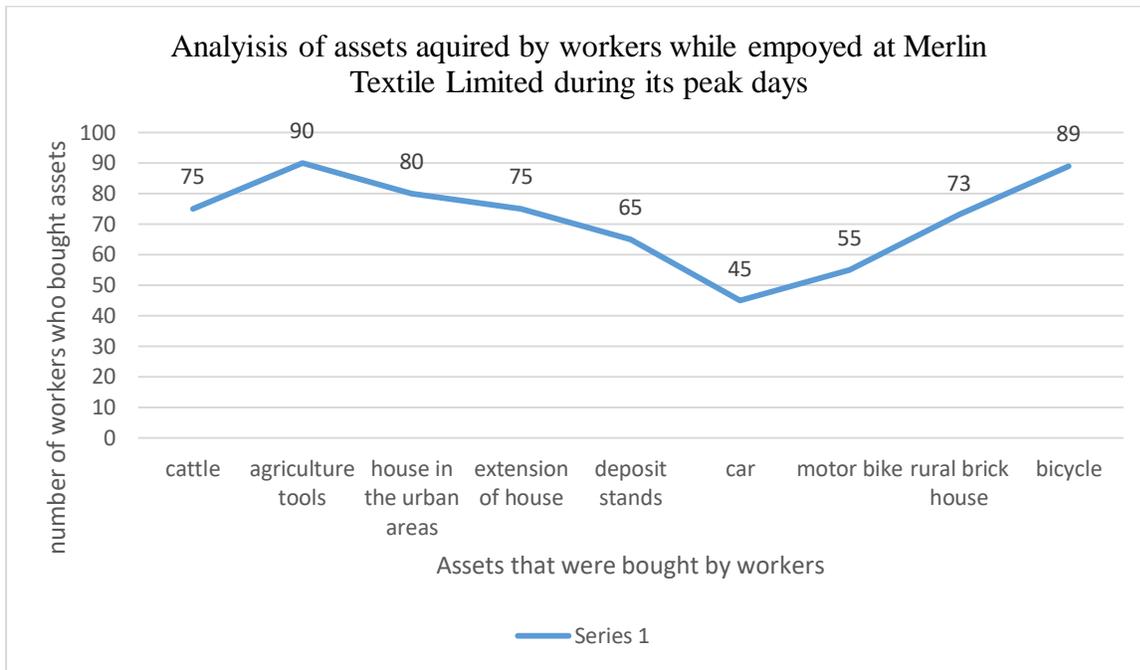


Figure 2 –Line Graph: Source research data

As highlighted in figure 2 many workers about 80% managed to buy houses in the high density suburbs of Bulawayo City. Most respondents stated that in the 1980s and early 1990s houses were quiet affordable for a person working in the formal sector and some building societies such as Beverly Building Society offered interests on loans at a low rate enabling them to pay monthly

instalments. Most workers had bought houses in Makokoba, Mzilikazi Entumbane, Luveve, Emakhandeni and Njube suburbs to name a few. 75% managed to extend their urban houses from savings.

The researcher observed that most workers were foresighted as 90% invested their money in developing their rural homes through acquiring farming tools such as wheel barrows, hand holes and ox drawn ploughs to mention a few. One respondent stated that “*Ngisese Merlin ngayenelisa ukuthenga inkomo zami esintathu insikazi ezimbili lenkomo yenduna eyodwa. Khathesi inkomo zami ziyafika 10 ekhaya*”. (When I was still employed at Merlin Textile Limited I managed to buy 2 heifers and one bull and now I have more than 10 cattle in my rural home). To add on, 73% of the respondents had actually built one or two brick houses in their rural homes. As a result only 43% managed to buy cars as shown in the line graph as most thought that developing their rural homes was the first priority.

2.3 THE PROFILE OF WORKERS AND IMMEDIATE FAMILY MEMBERS PARTICIPATING IN THE STUDY

Demographic characteristics of workers and immediate family members in terms of gender

As many as 125 people who participated in this study 76% were male workers that is (95 male workers) of the sample population. 24% represented 30 females (5 female workers and 25 female family members). It is important to note that the majority were male workers who were breadwinners as compared to women. Immediate family members interviewed included wives to the workers, aunts and sisters who were responsible for the day to day activities at home.

2.4 AGE RANGE AND MARITAL STATUS OF WORKERS WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE STUDY

AGE RANGE	NUMBER OF WORKERS	MARRIED	SINGLE
25-30	10	8	2
31-40	60	55	5

41 and above	30	30	-
---------------------	-----------	-----------	----------

Figure 3- Table

It is important to note that the majority of workers who participated in the study are between the ages of 31 and 40. They are mature, energetic and have a lot of experience in the textile industry as some started work in their early 20s. More so they are the highest category in the category of married people as a result they put much effort and commitment to their work as they have many dependents. About 10 workers interviewed were in the range of 25 to 30 years and they were still establishing their career in the textile industry. Most of them are new couples and have the potential to work hard. The lowest range is 40 and above who also have vast experience and are mentors to the 25 to 30 age group.

2.5 THE CLOSURE OF MERLIN TEXTILE LIMITED AND ITS EFFECTS ON LIVELIHOODS IN BULAWAYO CITY.

The respondents disclosed negative effects on the closure of a Merlin Textile Limited and this was shown by heartrending accounts with 90% of the respondents being now stranded. As stated earlier on the company employed a lot of people and it was one of the companies that made the City of Bulawayo tick as the best industrial City in Zimbabwe. This section shall discuss the negative effects and impacts on access to income, education, health, standard of living and change in life style to name a few based on data from field research conducted by the researcher.

The consequences of losing a job that used to provide financial capital is excruciating both for the workers and their immediate family members as they no longer afford the basic standard of living. The majority of worker's living standard was adversely affected as shown by figure 3 below.

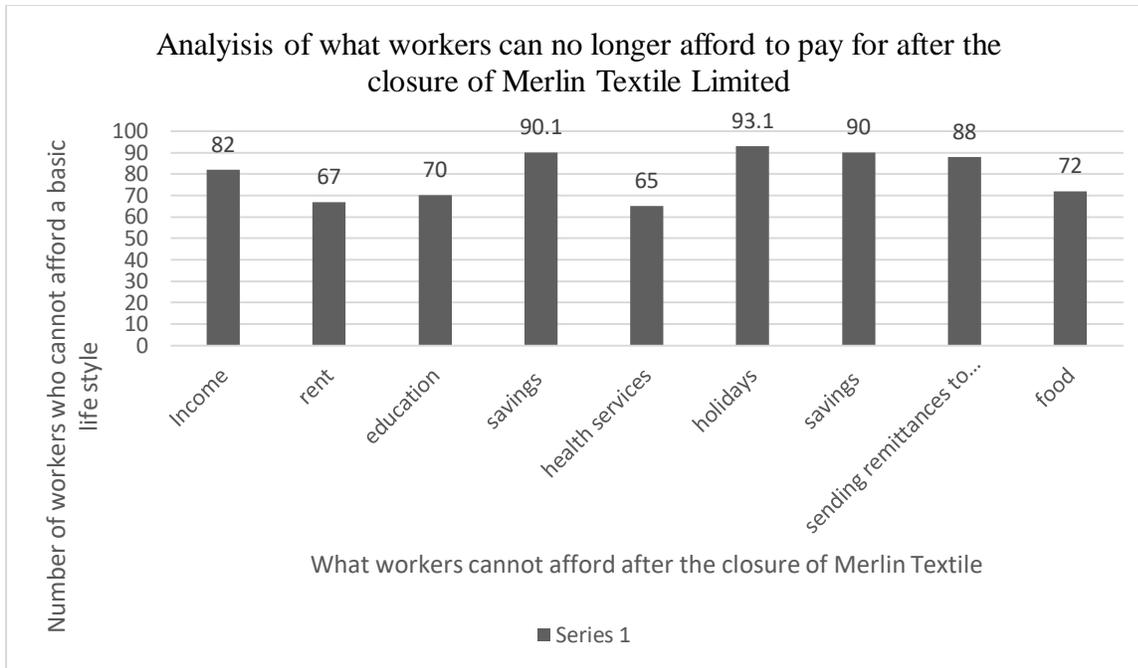


Figure 4 -Bar Graph: Source research data

The findings revealed that workers who worked at Merlin Textile Limited were breadwinners. Immediate family members who included spouses, children, and relatives depended on the income of workers for survival. About 82% of the former workers have no access to income as they are failing to secure alternative jobs in an environment with high unemployment. A respondent stated that basic commodities such as maize meal, cooking oil, sugar, tea leaves are now a luxury and he went on to state that his children have not tasted beef which is \$5 a kilogram and chicken in months as he could no longer afford to buy meat as he used to do when he was still employed at Merlin Textile Limited. A lady who also worked at Merlin said that she only cooks porridge for her family in the mornings, in the afternoon they don't eat anything until evening were she cooks sadza with vegetables from her small garden. Most workers now have a full meal once a day instead of three times a day. The respondent also observed that most former workers are affected psychologically because they spend most of their time passive and in deep thought. Workers had gone for two years prior to Merlin's closure without receiving their salaries. As a result most workers and their immediate families are food insecure. Food is one of the most important basic needs that a human being can live without.72% of the workers cannot longer afford to buy food and this is sad for people who used to work hard to make sure their families have something to eat.

The effects of Merlin's closure on livelihoods has been terrible as most workers can no longer pay for their children's education. 70% as stated in figure 3 said that their children could not proceed to ordinary level and advanced level because they could not afford to pay for their school fees. A few who managed said that their children at ordinary level had to sit for less subjects preferable five subjects only due to lack of money. Some children who could not afford to proceed to ordinary level were forced to work as house maids when they reached seventeen years to help support their parents and boys usually migrated to South Africa to look for employment. A few percentage of children who passed their ordinary level secured places at nursing schools and are now paying fees for their fellow siblings. At most the 30% that managed to educate their children had to sell cattle to be able to pay school fees for their children. The majority of respondents were worried about what will become of their children as they could not proceed with their education are now spending most of their time doing nothing.

The former Merlin workers have felt the impact the closure of the company has had on them as 67% of the workers cannot afford to pay rent. 80% had bought houses in the urban areas as shown in figure 2 (line graph) and those who had not put lodgers in their houses were finding it difficult to pay monthly rent. For those who are renting houses (lodgers) can no longer afford to pay rent. A former worker who rents a two roomed house in Emakhandeni suburb feared that his landlord would throw him out of the house anytime as he was two months in rent arrears. To rent a room in the western suburb costs \$50 plus \$15 for electricity and \$10 for water bills. Some respondents said they have also gone for months without electricity and use fire wood for cooking on a daily basis.

One of the immediate family members said *“when my uncle was still employed rent was paid on time and that he is no longer working he always has problems with the landlord. I fear that soon we will be thrown into the streets as there is no money to pay rent or for transport to go back to the rural areas”*.

A respondent from Njube suburb who used to work in the weaving department at Merlin Textile Limited said the new cash power system was expensive and did not have money to buy electricity. Indeed life has not been easy for former workers at Merlin Textile Limited as they have accrued so much debts with the Bulawayo City Council. Unfortunately other respondents have had their water meter disconnected and rely on their neighbors for water. Water is a very

important element in people's lives. Without it people are susceptible to diseases such as cholera and typhoid.

More so 65% of the respondent said that they could no longer afford health services. For one to consult a private doctor he or she has to pay about \$25 consultation fee before paying for medication at the pharmacy. With the shortage of drugs at many clinics and hospitals patients are given prescriptions to buy medication from the pharmacy which is usually expensive. A woman that the researcher interviewed said that her husband has been ill since losing his job at Merlin Textile Limited and that she could not afford to take him to the hospital. From the field findings the researcher observed that most workers and their immediate family members have joined the Johani Masowe church. A former worker also stated that when his wife was pregnant she did not go to the clinic for delivery as there was no money leading to the elderly women from church helping her to deliver the baby. It is terrifying because it is important for a pregnant woman to visit a clinic or hospital to prevent any complications during delivery. As a result of not having any source of income workers are forced to take such risks concerning themselves and their immediate family member's health.

An almost tearful worker stated that life is now difficult for him and his family since being laid off. He went on to mention that *"as a man I'm supposed to provide food on the table, and it's hard to see my children not getting enough and at times staying the whole term without going to school because I no longer have any source of income"*. The respondent who is 48 years old said that he cannot sell his property as it has lost so much value. His television and refrigerator are not working as they have been damaged by the recurring electricity load shading and they have been idle for some years. Another respondent who has 3 primary school going children sadly stated that my wife left for South Africa when I was laid off and sadly she has started a new family there as she no longer sends money for the children. It is very common that when workers are laid off household relations are destroyed, it's either the wife or husband leaves because they do not have hope and cannot bear the stress of seeing their family members suffering. Sadly in such situations the children tend to suffer more that is psychologically as they lose the love of one parent and on top of being affected by the financial insecurity in the household which deprives them of their needs.

The effects of losing a regular income has had a devastating effects on workers and their immediate family members. Former workers cannot afford to buy clothing for their families. Some workers used to have credit accounts at stores like Edgars and after losing their jobs this is no longer the case. When a person cannot afford to acquire basic needs such as food, clothes, shelter it is difficult to socialize and even loses that self-esteem and motive to achieve something. Most workers are experiencing extreme depression as a result of losing a job that they so much depended on. Emotional, mentally and socially the worker's lives and that of their immediate family members has been affected. Holidays, family reunions and self-care activities such as hobbies are no longer a priority for the former workers and their immediate family members as a result of financial insecurity. One immediate family member said *“when my uncle was still employed at Merlin Textile limited we never missed a trip to Harare during Christmas holidays to be with relatives. Now even when a family member passes away in the rural areas we cannot afford bus fare money to attend the funeral”*. To add on a respondent also stated that he was behind with his burial society subscriptions and fears that he will be scrapped off from the club.

Most former workers at Merlin had acquired villagised resettlement stands as a result of the land reform programme. Most of them in the age range between 31 and above considered the villagised resettlement as insurance for them and their family members when they retire. Unfortunately most of the villagised resettlement stands are not developed due to the loss of jobs. The villagised resettlement stands are still lying idle as workers have no money for development and did not receive any packages that they thought would assist them in developing their stands in the resettled farms. It is hard for workers because they have no money to buy seeds and fertilizer to start farming in the villagised settlements. One respondent said that it is depressing not having any money as I thought that by acquiring a stand at Inyathi villagised resettlement area I would be able to prepare a future for my children who are also unemployed.

CONCLUSION

The continuous closure of textile industries has been a devastating and heart rending on former workers and their immediate family members. Many workers and their families are starving because they do not have money. Their children are no longer going to school as a result of financial insecurity. Merlin Textile limited provided financial capital for its workers. The closure

of the company has thrown people into extreme poverty as basic commodities are now a luxury. The majority of workers are now poor and very vulnerable and some might be soon become destitute as they no longer afford to pay their rentals. Therefore the closure of any company has adverse effects on workers and their immediate family members.

CHAPTER 3

COPING MECHANISMS BY WORKERS OF MERLIN TEXTILE LIMITED AFTER THE CLOSURE OF MERLIN TEXTILE LIMITED

3.1 INTRODUCTION

It is evident that the closure of Merlin Textile Limited has had adverse effects on the livelihoods of its workers and their immediate family members. Most workers after losing their jobs have been thrown in a tough battle for survival in the already overcrowded informal sector of selling vegetables, soap, sugar and second hand clothing. Some have found work in security companies as security guards and others have devoted themselves to urban farming as a means of livelihood. Therefore this chapter pays more attention to the different coping strategies that former Merlin Textile Limited workers have adopted after the closure of the company. The coping strategies are drawn from questionnaire responses by former workers and their immediate family members. Measures to help revive the textile industry will also be looked at in this chapter.

3.2 COPING STRATEGIES BY WORKERS AND THEIR IMMEDIATE FAMILY MEMBERS

Coping strategies have become imperative to former Merlin Textile Limited workers as a way of compensating for the loss of income and as a survival strategy. Coping strategies in this study may be defined as different activities that workers and their immediate families embark on to make a living and boost their household financial security which may include vending or urban farming. Workers and their immediate family members have come up with different survival strategies after the closure of Merlin Textile Limited as a way to continue surviving. Losing a job and experiencing financial insecurity has adversely affected the worker's consumption patterns and standard of living.

The majority of former workers are now actively involved in urban farming and community gardening to step up their deteriorating household food security and fight poverty and hunger.

Most workers said that they have open land in urban areas which residents allocated themselves without the authorization of the City Council. The farming land is usually not far from their homes where they walk less than three kilometers. One respondent said that they are very happy because the Bulawayo City Council (BCC) has a policy of promoting urban farming hence they have resorted to urban farming for survival. Most former workers practicing urban farming plant maize, sweet potatoes, tomatoes and vegetables for resell and household consumption. One former worker stated that the 2014 rains were a blessing as he managed to harvest six by ninety kilogram sacks of maize which he is still consuming with his family members in 2015. Some workers have resorted to community gardening where they share land to do gardening with other residents. Each individual has his or her garden beds where they plant vegetables such as spinach, rape, tsunga, onions and tomatoes. Some former workers are part of the community gardens which are found in Luveve, Entumbane, Old Pumula, Old Lobengula, Emakhandeni, Number 6 and Nkulumane suburbs in the City of Bulawayo. The community gardens are well fenced and there are boreholes for irrigation. One worker stated that he can make about \$3 a day from selling vegetables from the community garden as motorists always stop by every day to buy vegetables. Another worker who stays in Njube suburb said that he has turned his back yard into a vegetable garden and most residents know that he sells vegetables as a result each day he makes about \$1, 50 to \$2, 00 from selling vegetables. Urban farming has become a source of livelihood that most former Merlin workers depend on although, the money that they get is not enough it prevents their families from starving.

It is very difficult for Merlin Textile Limited former workers to find employment in the formal sector because of limited educational skills, experience in other sectors and also high rates of unemployment in the country have made the task to find employment unattainable. Some workers are now working for indigenous people as general hands, drivers or messengers. A few workers are now employed as security guards where they earn \$150 to \$200 per month which allows them to pay their rent. The coping strategies are a struggle for most workers in an environment where companies continue to be closed. One respondent said that he was lucky to have found work in a Chinese fabric shop as a customer attendant where he earns \$200 per month.

In this study 5% of the workers are now working as cashiers and merchandisers in super markets in the City of Bulawayo. One respondent who is 28 years old said that after the closure of Merlin

he had to look for alternative employment as a cashier in a local supermarket as his wife was pregnant and he needed money to pay for hospital bills and make preparation for the unborn baby. He stated he was provided with a month's training in till operation by the supermarket employers before he started work. Most coping strategies that former Merlin Textile Limited workers are resorting to are of very low income which only allow them to meet basic household needs and monthly rentals. The study revealed that the money that former workers get every month is too little for them to save and invest in large businesses.

Some former workers have relocated to the rural areas to start a new life as they could no longer afford the expensive urban life style which involves paying rentals and other bills. One immediate family member stated that his uncle who used to work at Merlin Textile Limited relocated to the rural areas with his family. Fortunately he had developed his rural home and bought cattle that he actually rents to other village members who do not have any livestock for farming. For some workers who have relocated to the rural areas they survive by letting out their livestock for farming. Selling livestock such as goats and cattle has been another means of survival for former workers that enables them to pay school and tuition fees for their children. Those who invested in buying scorch carts while they were employed at Merlin Textile Limited use them as a source of transport for a fee to carry beneficiary food items such as 50kilogram sacks of maize which they receive as food assistance from Non-Governmental Organizations. In some cases food distribution points in rural areas are 20kilometers away from their homes hence a person cannot carry a 50kilograms bag of maize for that distance. As a result former Merlin workers who have taken advantage of their scorch carts use them for transport purposes as means of survival.

Some workers who have relocated to the rural areas pursue casual labour activities by getting hired to build huts and plaster them with mud using their bare hands for people at a fee. Clearing agricultural land for people in the rural areas has been a survival strategy for former workers who have relocated to the rural areas. Even in urban areas a woman who was a contract worker at Merlin said she prepares gardens in people's yards for a fee of \$5 dollars.

Another lady who used to work at Merlin stated that she now works as a housemaid in the low density suburbs where she gets \$100 every month for cleaning the house, cooking for the family

and washing and ironing their clothes. Some former male workers now depend on their wife's income who have become housemaids so as to supplement the household income.

As a way of coping some former workers have turned to the informal sector. In this study the researcher defines the informal sector as ways of seeking a living which is not classified as formal and normal that does not require tax payments. The informal sector is attractive to laid off workers as it requires very low capital, low educational skills and less technology. With little money such as \$10 a person can start an individual vegetable business in the informal sector without having to pay taxes or rentals every month for selling the vegetables. The desperate situation has forced some former workers to resort to street vending. A male respondent stated that since the closure of Merlin Textile Limited he is now selling airtime with his wife at Eghodini, a commuter omnibus terminus in the City of Bulawayo. The male respondent said that in a day with his wife they can make a profit of \$20 to \$40. The money helps them to pay rent, buy food stuffs and pay school fees for their two children. For the workers to survive, members of their immediate family are also taking part in vending activities to fight hunger and poverty. Another former worker said he benefited from the vending bays that were allocated by the Bulawayo City Council and now sells a wide range of wares such as household electrical appliances, toothpaste, soap, bathing towels, baby pampers and deodorants along the busy Lobengula Streets of Bulawayo City.

Some male workers are now busy assisting their wives in selling second hand clothing (Amabhero) that they buy from Mozambique. A male respondent from Entumbane stated that since he lost his job his wife joined a Self-Help group that allows women from the same economic backgrounds to gather financial resources by contributing money as little as a \$1 every week. His wife managed to borrow \$200 from the Self Help Group that enabled them to buy a bag of second hand clothing (a bhero) from Mozambique and in a month's time they repaid the loan with interest of \$20 as the businesses has high profits. The cheapest bhero (a bag of second hand clothing) costs \$160 and the profits are twice the selling price .The respondent said that he and his wife sell second hand clothing at Tower Block in Bulawayo City during weekends and in a day they can get \$70 as profit. It is important to note that since the closure of Merlin Textile Limited women of former workers are now playing a big role in assisting their husbands in looking for sources of livelihoods by becoming actively involved in income generating projects,

selling vegetables and taking part in cross border trade. A male respondent stated that his wife travels to Mesina (South Africa) every month to buy goods such as clothes and furniture for resell to back home. As observed by the researcher before women go to buy goods in Mesina they take orders from their clients hence they do not go there without knowing what to buy.

As a means of surviving, immediate family members take turns to sell chicken cuts door to door in their communities, yes it is illegal but they take the risk. They buy 2 kilograms of chicken from supermarkets which costs \$8 and re-pack the chicken pieces into smaller packs for resell at \$1 per packet. One immediate family member said that from the 2 kilogram of chicken they gain \$5 profit. Some workers even use the profits from their small businesses to go to Binga to buy dried fish for resell in their communities as a means of survival.

Rearing of chicken has been a survival strategy for many people in urban areas. 20% of workers have also resorted to poultry when they lost their jobs. Most of the former workers got capital from their vegetable business profits to start breeding chickens. One worker said it takes long to realize the benefits as he has to wait for six to eight weeks to sell the chickens but in the end it's worth it, as he can get \$7 a day.

A 32 year old male former worker stated that when he was still employed at Merlin Textile Limited he managed to acquire a driver's license and is now working as a commuter omnibus driver in the City of Bulawayo after the closure of the firm. Every week he is paid \$60 that he uses for his household consumption. Most people use public transport to and from work. The City of Bulawayo through meetings by the residents associations have formed transport association such as Tshova Mubaiwa that have created employment for many people. Some workers who have been laid off have resorted to finding employment in the transport sector. Those who managed to acquire class 2 licenses, drive long distances buses and trucks as a means of coping.

One immediate family member that the researcher interviewed stated that her husband when he was laid off after the closure of Merlin Textile Limited stayed for almost two years without finding a job. In the end his uncle who is in South Africa called him to look for employment. The respondent said that her husband is now working in a manufacturing company as a general hand and manages to send money every month as a result things are now better than when he was unemployed. Some workers have migrated to neighboring countries such as South Africa and

Botswana in a journey to search for employment. Migration has been another coping strategy for most former workers to improve their family economic lives.

Finding coping strategies has been a big challenge for some former workers in an environment where there is high unemployment. One former worker whose health is now deteriorating after losing his job said that he and his family now depend on handouts from church members. His wife volunteers to assist in cleaning the church twice a week. Every month the family receives food such as maize meal, cooking oil and sugar beans from the church.

About 15% of the respondents have been lucky to get assistance from relatives. A former worker said that, when he lost his job, his sister and her husband support him with basic commodities such as mealie meal, sugar, soap, cooking oil regularly. Another worker said that his brother is actually helping pay tuition fees for his daughter who had dropped out of university, and this was quite a relief for the family as the assistance brought much hope. 5% of the respondents in the age range between 48 and 55 years are receiving financial support from their children whom they sent to college whilst they were still employed at Merlin Textile Limited. One respondent who is 55 years said that his son who is now working in a local bank helps them with food stuff and payment of bills every month.

About 80% of workers managed to buy their own houses while they were still employed at Merlin Textile Limited. 67% of those who bought houses cannot afford to pay BCC rates hence they have decided to sublet some of their rooms to lodgers to get money to pay rates, water bills and electricity and use part of the money to buy food. Subletting to lodgers has been another coping strategy for former workers. A male worker who has a seven roomed house in Emakhandeni suburb said that two of his rooms are occupied by lodgers and he gets about \$65 every month from each tenant. The \$65 includes \$15 for electricity and \$10 for water bills.

Another respondent who bought a four roomed house in the new high density suburb of Cowdray Park in the City of Bulawayo has turned a room into a tuck shop where he sells basic commodities such as bread, cooking oil, mealie meal, bathing soap, soft drinks to name a few. The area in the suburb is called Garikai/Hlalani kuhle where there are no shops. Most former workers rely on their illegal home tuck shops as a coping strategy.

Some former workers, as a means of surviving have decided to try their luck in gold panning by working for those who have legal licenses in areas like Gwanda in Matabeleland South and Inyathi District in Matabeleland North Province. An immediate family member stated that her uncle who used to work at Merlin Textile Limited and her two brothers spend most of the time in Gwanda forest digging for gold for some businesses men who have legal mining licenses. As a means of surviving, the former workers have resorted to dangerous means of survival such as gold panning with no safety clothing or equipment in the mine shafts.

Some former workers have not found jobs and spent their time at Merlin Textile Limited premises anticipating that the company will resume its operations. These workers have faced so many challenges as they usually walk daily from their homes to the firm premises to meet with others.

TYPES OF CAPITAL APPLIED BY WORKERS TO GENERATE COPING STRATEGIES

TYPES OF CAPITAL		FORMS OF INCOME
Human capital	-ability to work -own labour for income	-wages -agricultural produce from own land -profits from small businesses
Natural capital	-farming land -water for irrigation	
Social capital	-opportunities for employment through networking	
Financial capital	-revenues from small businesses eg vegetable businesses -money from relatives	

FIGURE 5: Source field Data

Figure 5 shows that, in coming up with different coping strategies, workers employed different forms of capital that included human capital (labour, skills, knowledge), social capital (networks), financial capital (cash) and natural capital (land, water). These capitals formed livelihood resources for former workers to be able to adopt survival strategies. For instance the study revealed that natural capital provided workers with land to exercise urban farming and gardening as a means of survival for former workers and their immediate families.

3.3 CHALLENGES FACED BY FORMER MERLIN TEXTILE LIMITED WORKERS IN IMPLEMENTING COPING STRATEGIES.

Most former workers have adopted coping strategies some of which are dangerous and detrimental to their health. They have faced challenges in coming up with these coping strategies. The informal sector that most workers have resorted to requires capital. For most workers having capital to start their own individual businesses and expand them has been a serious challenge. Lack of finance has limited former workers to raise capital and start their small businesses.

Competition in the informal sector has also been a challenge for most workers to implement a means of survival. The continuous closure of industries and unemployment has resulted in the informal sector becoming overcrowded by people selling similar goods. For some workers dress making and knitting has been their means of survival. Competition from retail shops and cheap imports has taken away their customers and this has been an obstacle for them.

The majority of workers are into street vending and this is a challenge as they have to play cat and mouse with the police and the Bulawayo City Council police. Some workers have had their goods taken by the police and charged a fine for illegal selling in the City Centre.

Lack of education has also limited some workers to find work in the formal sector were nowadays it requires one to have a college qualification to obtain a good paying job in an environment where there is high unemployment. Even former workers who have migrated to neighboring countries are finding it hard to get well-paying jobs due to lack of education and this challenge has driven them to accept very low paying jobs. Lack of entrepreneurial skills has also

been a challenge for most former workers. Most of the workers make quality products through knitting and dress making but marketing and promoting their products has been a challenge.

Some workers after losing their jobs have suffered from extreme depression which has affected their health terribly. One worker has suffered from stroke because of the shock of losing his job. Ill health has been an obstacle for some workers to embark on any coping strategies and support their families. Low self-confidence as a result of losing a job has resulted in some workers finding it hard to implement coping strategies. Some workers have lost hope that they will find alternative employment thereby becoming very passive, withdrawn and isolate themselves from social networkers that may have opportunities for finding alternative employment for them.

Lack of support from stakeholders such as the Government has also been a challenge in realizing how the closure of textile companies such as Merlin Textile Limited has affected the livelihoods of workers and their immediate family members. The Zimbabwe Workers Textile Union has not done enough to voice the concerns of former workers that would attract different stakeholder's attention for them to realize the suffering that the former workers are going through in an environment where there are limited means of survival.

3.4 MEASURES TO REVIVE TEXTILE INDUSTRIES

It is imperative that the Government gets the textile industry to function as it used to be in the early 1990s and absorb a lot of people who are now unemployed enabling them to pay fees for their children, buy household goods and have a good quality lifestyle. Government needs to pull up its support to the textile industry. Funds must be injected to the textile industry to breathe life to industries such as Merlin Textile Limited that have been long closed. Zimbabwe is blessed with natural resources such as diamonds. Transparent and accountable plans could be made for troubled textile industries for them to get a share from the diamonds revenues to help them restart their operations. When funds are availed to closed textile industries they must be accountable and a thorough follow up be made to make the firms more efficient and effective in their operations.

The Government must also create a textile association which represents textile industries country wide in direct talks with the government. This will allow the government to act urgently to

troubled textile industries and rescue former workers from financial insecurity by making sure that they return back to work.

To win the war against competition in the textile sector that has contributed to its demise knowledge and skills should be impacted in the textile industries. Perceptions of college and university graduates have worsened the negative situation experiencing the textile industry in that they perceive it as a sunset industry. Universities and colleges should encourage students to venture into the textile industry. Therefore skills and development must be transferred to students to build a strong base in the textile industry. Textile engineers must be developed in Zimbabwe to allow the country to retain its second position as one of the best textile industries in Southern Africa.

The success of the Zimbabwean Textile industry relies on its regional and international markets. This is important as expertise, information, marketing skills and trainings are shared amongst different nations in ensuring the success of textile industries. Having good international relations with different countries is important for the government to partner with strategic investors who have vast experience in the textile industry. This may help closed textile industries to resume their operations. It will also allow foresighted board of directors to be put in place who have experience in the running of the textile industry encouraging them to have long term strategic plans put in place that can fight against obstacles experienced by the textile industry.

The needs of people working in the textile industry should be prioritized first. Any foreign policy pursued by the government should have workers in mind. For instance the look east policy should be a gateway to revive the textile industry and not to destroy it through cheap imports. The look east policy as one of its many objectives must be able to replace obsolete machinery that has resulted in the closure of textile industries with new state of the art machinery and technology, so that textile industries can be competitive at local, regional and international level.

The growth and prosperity of the textile industry relies on its workers even those at low levels such as general hands or messengers. When problems started at Merlin Textile Limited, the workers at low levels knew solutions to some of the problems that were facing the company. Unfortunately they were given a cold shoulder by the top management to help in decision making. It is important to consult workers at the lowest level to help solve problems affecting the company. This allows the top management to have diverse views that help them make the final

decisions. Democracy and employee participation is important at all levels in a company to prevent a company from collapsing because the lowest employee might have a solution that may save the company from collapsing.

CONCLUSION

This study sought to put to light the impact of the closure of Merlin Textile Limited has had on its workers and their immediate family members. In this study it was observed that policies adopted by the Government such as Economic Structural Adjustment Programme and hyperinflation experienced by the country made textile industries uncompetitive locally, regionally and internationally. This, however, slowly led to the demise of the textile sector. Merlin Textile Limited operated with obsolete machinery and corruption by staff members led to the down fall of the company.

Field research showed that the impact on livelihoods as a result of the closure of Merlin Textile Limited is so adverse to its former workers and their immediate family members. The former workers are faced with acute hardships in trying to survive because of lack of money. When Merlin Textile Limited was operating at full capacity, workers were financially secure and their standards of living were excellent. Workers could afford some luxuries like family holidays.

The study also went to explore the coping strategies that the former workers have adopted to alleviate their desperate conditions of losing employment. Most workers have resorted to street vending, urban farming and others rely on hand outs from well-wishers. The closure of Merlin Textile Industry has resulted in some former workers living in abject poverty and failing to pay for their children's school fees. Only a few lucky ones receive financial support from close relatives. Lack of financial capital has made it difficult for some former workers to adopt means of survival that are sustainable. Finally the study looked at a number of priorities to be addressed to enable the textile sector to be revived so that former workers are re-employed enabling them good standards of living that they once had. In the study it was noted that it is imperative for Government to give more extra support to the textile sector for the sector to be able to provide employment for people.

REFERENCES

- Adama, D., S (2014) How textiles closure cost 2700 lives in Kaduna, achieved at <http://www.dailytrust.com> (accessed on 2 August 2014).
- Aremu, I., O. (2005) Collapse of the textile industry in Nigeria. Implications for employment and poverty reduction. National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies: Kuru.
- Beatty, M., Longman, D., Tran, V. (2004) Community response to the Pillowtex Textile Kannapolis closing. The rapid “Response” Team a Facilitative device.
- Bebbington, A. (1999) Capitals and Capabilities: a framework for analyzing peasant viability rural livelihoods and poverty, *World development*, 27(12).
- Black, T. (1999) *Doing quantitative research in the social sciences: An integrated approach to research design, measurement, and statistics*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications CA.
- Bloch, E. (2010) “Textile faces stresses” *Zimbabwe Independent*, 6 May, 2010.
- Bloch, E. (2014) “No reprieve to Zim deindustrialization”, *Zimbabwe Independent*, 8 -14 August 2014, p12.
- Bulawayo24 News (2014) Government pledges support for ailing Bulawayo industries, achieved at <http://www.bulawayo24.com> ,(Accessed on 8 January 2014).
- Casely, H. (1995) *Research Methodology*, New Delhi, New Age International.

Chambers, R., Conway, G. (1992) Sustainable Rural Livelihoods: Practical Concept for the 21st century, Institute of Development Studies DP, 296.

Chinamasa, P. (2014) “Chinamasa reveals shocking company closure figures” *NewsdzeZimbabwe*, 27 November 2014.

Cohen, L. (1989) *Research Methods in Education*, Routledge Falme.

Creswell, J., W. (2004) *Research design: Qualitative and Quantitative* .London: Sage Publications.

Dhliwayo, R. (2012) A continent vs. a country: China putting strain on Africa’s clothing and textile industries, achieved at <http://www.consultancyafrica.com> .(Accessed on 3 September 2012).

Free dictionary (2012) Textile achieved at <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/textile>

Gado, N., D., Nmada, T., M. (2012) the performance of textile companies in the North West zone of Nigeria: the role of infrastructure as a resource. *Human Resource studies* 2(1), p89-100.

Hondora, T. (2009) Economic sanctions undermine Zim’s economy, achieved at <http://newszimbabwe.com> ,(accessed on 1 December, 2009).

Kudo, T. (2005) The impact of US Sanction on the Myanmar garment industry, paper no 42.

Majale, M. (2002) Towards pro poor regulatory guidelines for urban grading. Intermediate Technology Development Group: United Kingdom.

Makochekanwa, A. (2007) A dynamic enquiry into the causes of hyperinflation in Zimbabwe. University of Pretoria working paper.

Malebeledi, P. (2001) “SA reaps promising AGOA reward”, *Business Day*, 29 October, 2001.

Mhaskar, S. (2000) Claiming entitlements in Neoliberal India, working paper number 200.

Mlambo,A. (2006) History of the Zimbabwe Textile and Clothing industry in S.Nkala (2012)Textile and clothing sector Brief Zimbabwe, achieved at <http://www.zimtrade.co.zw> (Accessed in May 2012).

- Muleya, D. (2000) "Zim booted out of trade pact" *Zimbabwe Independent*, 13 October 2000.
- Murewa, S. (2014) David Whitehead resuscitation of operations, achieved at <http://bulawayo24.com>, (Accessed on 14 November 2014).
- Mutume, G. (2006) Loss of textile market cost Africans jobs achieved at <http://www.an.org/africarenewal/magazine> (Accessed on April 2006).
- Nancy, D. (1996) Techniques for Student Research: A Practical Guide. Second edition: Longman, Melbourne
- Ngomba, T. (n.d) China's leap, Africa's doom, achieved at <http://www.africafiles.org>
- Nherera, C., M. (2005) Globalization qualification and livelihood shifts in the livelihood structure of Zim following economic liberalization.
- Nkala, S. (2012) Textile and clothing sector brief Zimbabwe, achieved at <http://zimtrade.co.zw> (Accessed in May 2012).
- Nsingo, D. (2014) Zim, COMESA sig 4, 2 million euro grant to boost clothing industry, achieved at <http://www.sundaynews.co.zw> ,(Accessed on 28 September 2014).
- Ny Times, (1982) South's Textile Mill closings continue from '74 recession. Achieved at <http://www.nytimes.com> (Accessed on 17 February 1982).
- Sachikonye, L., M. (1995) Industrial restructuring programmes and industrialization in Sub Saharan Africa, *intereconomics* Sep-Oct 1994.
- Sachikonye, L., M. (1999) Zimbabwe Textile Industry and Metal industries under adjustment, North America: Nordiska Afrkainstitute.
- Stanlake, G., F. (1981) *Introductory Economics 3rd Edition*. Longman Group: Essex United Kingdom.
- Steinberg, D., and L. (2003) Burma/Myanmar: The triumph of the hard time-liners, *South China Morning post*, August 15 2003.
- The Herald, (2013) "Textile industry on the brink of collapse" The Herald, 28 November 2013.
- The Sunday News (2015) "The history of de industrialization in Bulawayo, The Sunday News, 22 March 2015.

Young, V. (2003) The sun will shine again for the textile industry, achieved at <http://www.nl.cng.org/press/vanguardmarch> (Accessed on 27 July 2007).

Zimbabwe Independent, (2004) “8000 textile workers lose jobs”, *Zimbabwe Independent*, 3 January, 2004.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Questionnaire guide for former workers at Merlin Textile Limited

My name is Juana Magura and I am currently doing my Honors Degree in Development Studies at Midlands State University. I am undertaking a project which attempts to look at how the closure of Merlin Textile Limited has affected the livelihoods of workers and their immediate family members. Your participation in this study will remain strictly confidential. Names and addresses will not be included in the study for confidential purposes. Feel free to answer questions, your participation in this study will be greatly appreciated.

Instructions

- Do not write your name and address
- Tick where appropriate
- Answer all questions

1. Date

2. Age.....

3. Sex.....FemaleMale.....
4. Marital Status.....Married.....Single.....
- 5a. How many children do you have.....
- 5b. How many are of not school going age.....
- How many children are attending Primary school.....
- Attending Secondary school.....
- At University/College
- Are working (*applicable to those above 18years only*).....
- 6a. Do you have any other dependents living with you? YES.....NO.....
- 6b. If yes how many are they.....
- 7a. How long have you worked for Merlin Textile Limited.....
- 7b. Why did you leave.....

Section A

Life style while employed at Merlin Textile Limited

1 What assets did you manage to purchase while still employed at Merlin Textile Limited (*tick were appropriate*),

- Urban area house.....
- Rural brick house/s.....
- House stand.....
- Agriculture tools e.g wheel barrows.....
- Cattle.....
- Car.....
- Bicycle.....
- Motor Bike.....
- None of the above.....

Section B

Lifestyle after the closure of Merlin Textile Limited

2a. Do you have any alternative source of livelihood? YES.....NO.....

2b If yes what do you do to earn as income.....

3 Do you get any financial support from relatives to buy food.....

Pay bills.....

Pay school fees.....

Other specify.....

None of the above.....

4 Give a comment about how your living standard has changed after the closure of Merlin Textile Limited.....

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Appendix 2

Questionnaire guide for immediate family members

1. Date.....

2. Age.....

3. Sex: Female.....Male.....

4a. Are you employed.....Yes.....No.....

4b.If yes what do you do for a living.....

4c.If no how is the family surviving.....

5. What is your relation to the person who was employed at Merlin Textile Limited.....

6. What contribution did the person provide towards sustaining the family when he or she was still employed (tick were appropriate),

Pay monthly bills (rent, electricity, water).....

Buy food every month.....

Pay school fees for children.....

Pay hospital bills.....

Buy furniture (TV, beds, stove, pots etc).....

Send remittances to other family members.....

Other specify.....

None of the above.....

7.Comment on the living standards you are now experiencing when your relative who used to work at Merlin Textile Limited was laid off.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Appendix 3

Interview guide for The Ministry of Industry and Commerce and the Consumer Council of Zimbabwe (CCZ)

1. What is your mission and vision?
2. What does the Textile Industry involve?
3. Why is it significant to the country and people?
4. What has caused the closure of Textile Firms in the country?
5. How many textiles firms have closed down in Zimbabwe?
6. How many people have lost their jobs due to the closure of Textile Industry in Zimbabwe?
7. As stakeholders what are you doing to help revive the Textile Industry in Zimbabwe?

Appendix 4

Interview questions for the Bulawayo City Council (BCC)

1. What is your mission and vision?
2. How has the closure of the Textile Industry in Bulawayo affected the BCC's operations?
3. With the closure of industries in Bulawayo are residents honoring rates charges?
4. How has the City Council planned with the closure of industries in Bulawayo?
5. Are closed companies honoring lease payment charges?

Appendix 5.

Interview questions for Zimbabwe Textile Workers Union industries (ZTWU)

1. What is the mission and vision of the textile workers union?
2. How many workers have lost their jobs due to the closure of textile industry in Zimbabwe?

3. What protective measures has the Union put in place to protect workers after the closure of textile industries?
4. What strategies have you implemented with other stakeholders to make sure that textile industries are revived?

