

***DYNAMICS, EXPERIENCES AND ASPIRATIONS OF FLEA
MARKET TRADERS IN GWERU***

Doctor of Philosophy

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DEDICATION

To my wife and my children.

But most of all, to all my grandchildren present and future.

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This thesis was an unplanned journey; at least at the beginning. Then, I recall some gentle nudging from my former Dean, the late Mr K. Mbetu. Subsequently, I cobbled together a tentative concept paper cum proposal which I presented to a small audience of the Faculty and other interested persons. Then, I warmed up to this enterprise and started a long embrace with my magnum opus. Dean R. Duve took no time identifying a supervisor for me. I suppose from then on I was on a precipitous slope from which there was no return. My first supervisor, Professor Elliot Masocha, was meticulous on content, presentation, and expression. Throughout, he set a very high bar. In my second supervisor, Dr. Wonderful Dzimiri, I found someone with a passion for grounded theory. I hope I rose somewhat to his lofty expectations. I thought I had done superbly with my thesis until the editor Mr Dzama transformed it in grammar, expression and formatting. I am highly indebted to him.

Someone in the IT Department at Midlands State University introduced me to NVivo. I am saddened and embarrassed that I do not remember this benefactor's name. I am nevertheless extremely elated by this fortuitous discovery that made qualitative data analysis such a joy. My son, Rangarirai, had introduced me to Mendeley reference management software some years earlier. The duo of NVivo and Mendeley were invaluable companions on my research journey.

My family were a source of quiet support and gentle encouragement. I am therefore perpetually grateful to my wife, Rosemary, and my children Tinashe, Rangarirai, Teereraai and Mazviita for always being there for me. There were times when I doubted

whether I would last the distance. Fortunately, those closest and dearest to me had better faith.

ABSTRACT

The flea markets in the central business district of Gweru are part of a widespread form of informal market activity occurring in many countries and operating at various stages of economic development. This study focussed on regulated flea market activities housed in premises run by the Gweru City Council or owned by private individuals. The main units of interest were the traders themselves. This focus on the traders themselves allowed for the characterisation of flea market trading processes as informal entrepreneurial business operations. The literature portrayed informal flea markets in several economies as business activities in flux. Some forty traders out of thousands operating in Gweru central business district were sampled using non-probability methods. Unstructured interviews were conducted until saturation was achieved. The interviews were subsequently transcribed to aid analysis which in turn relied on NVivo 11, a computer software for analysing qualitative data. For this situated study, grounded theory was chosen to allow for systematic analysis leading to the production of a conceptual framework concerning the traders themselves and the businesses they were involved in. The resulting framework was represented in a core category labelled entrepreneurial compass. This core category and its representative typologies formed important pillars for recommendations affecting the crafting of public policy concerning informal flea market trading. The insights that emerged from the study were, however, conditioned upon the localised nature of the study in the confinement of Gweru CBD in central Zimbabwe.

Keywords: *Grounded theory, Flea markets, Informal sector, Gweru, Zimbabwe*

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ABBREVIATIONS

CBD: *Central Business District.*

CSO: *Central Statistical Office.*

ZIMSTAT: *Zimbabwe National Statistical Agency (formerly CSO).*

ESAP: *Economic Structural Adjustment Programme*

CHAPTER 1: FOUNDATION OF THE STUDY

In this chapter, I set out the background to this qualitative study of flea market retailing in the Central Business District of Gweru in Zimbabwe. An outline of flea market retailing within the wider setting of retailing as an economic activity is presented. In addition, the concept of informal sector is discussed leading to an operational definition of flea markets. The statement of research problem covers the purpose of the study and its objectives. The research study setting is also described together with a framework of delimitations applicable to this study.

1.1 Background to the Study

Flea markets are a common feature worldwide, especially in the urban areas of many developing countries such as Zimbabwe. However, important differences arise across the world from the least developed and developing economies such as Zimbabwe to the most advanced economies such as the United States of America (USA). In some countries, the economic contribution and visibility of flea markets is pronounced while in others it may be muted. According to Andrea, Silvestri, Costa, Fernandes and Fossen (2011), the verdict on the status and relevance of flea markets in an era characterised by the proliferation of the modern supermarket is mixed as exemplified in the countries of Latin America that the authors covered. On the other hand, in the United Kingdom (UK), even though flea markets once commanded a focal and dominant position in which they were the most visually impressive element in the retail landscape, such markets now seem neglected, half-forgotten and in some towns and cities, they now constitute a marginalised species (Jones, Hillier, & Comfort, 2007). However, Bennison, Warnaby and Pal (2010) also writing about the UK, were more optimistic and

pointed to many successful and thriving examples in local shopping provision and marketplaces. Given the variety of circumstances above, it would be useful to inquire into the condition and practice of flea market trading within the Zimbabwean environment.

In a description of small retailers in Spain and Scotland, Coca-Stefaniak, Parker and Rees (2010), highlight the competitive advantage of “localization” which they viewed as the antithesis of globalization because flea markets and similar markets serve local consumers and are therefore more responsive to local needs. Such enterprises also possessed the capacity to deliver in terms of employment for their operators as well as providing “emotional proximity” with customers. They are able, therefore, to offer “more socially and environmentally ‘friendly’ business models” (Coca-Stefaniak et al., 2010). Indeed, Abrams (2007) describes two hugely successful flea markets in New York and highlights some of the special appeals that flea markets, even in major cities in the developed world, appeared to hold. The author describes these markets as “an amalgamation of feelings of excitement” and not mere relics from traditional society surviving on the fringes of modern society. Abrams (2007) concludes that, “the flea market success story of American life has not been fully appreciated in contemporary scholarship”. Coca-Stefaniak et al. (2010) also add a recommendation for academic and practitioner communities to reflect on the unsung and often less-glamorous business marketing reality of many small independent retailers who include flea market traders. Writing of Malawi, a country within the same central African region as Zimbabwe, Mhango, and Niehm (2005) acknowledge the lack of documentation concerning second-hand clothing retail entrepreneurs. The study of flea markets

in Zimbabwe that I undertook was therefore, in part, a response to the invitation by Coca-Stefaniak et al. (2010) and others. My study also attempted to reveal the distinctive characteristics of flea market trading practices in a specific locale namely the Central Business District of Gweru in Zimbabwe consistent with the dimension of localisation which is the antithesis of globalisation.

Coca-Stefaniak et al. (2010) further assert that informal retailing may, in fact, be in a state of transition towards a new business paradigm embedded in value-based and community-led practices which give them sustainable competitive advantages. It may also be argued that mass production in conventional capitalist economies such as the United States sometimes falls short and fails to meet the needs of significant segments of consumers at the bottom of the social pyramid (Carden, 2008). Flea markets are appropriately positioned to fill such gaps among some consumer segments.

Even though flea market trading has a long history in Zimbabwe stretching to colonial times, as with most informal activity, it is generally marginalised and its contribution to the economy through the supply of goods and services and the provision of employment and household sustenance is underplayed even in national statistics. A qualitative analysis such as this study would help locate and position flea market retailing within business studies as a valuable, productive, and legitimate form of retailing that makes a major and positive contribution to the traders themselves and to the consumers they serve. In so doing, flea market activities make a significant contribution to the national economy as well. In order to understand participants in these flea markets, it may be appropriate to ascertain

the extent to which they relate to the more formal and modern retail landscape and the degree to which Zimbabwean flea market models interface with other forms of trading as Coca-Stefaniak et al. (2010) suggested.

For some consumers of flea market offerings in developed countries, flea markets have a carnival, festive, and playful dimension which gives them a major draw card unlike modern retail outlets. In a Mexican study, Anand (2009) observed how residents returning from church on Sunday would hold elaborate lunches at the *zacalo* or town square. Flea markets in the more affluent suburbs of Harare (such as those in Avondale and Sam Levy Village, Zimbabwe) may perhaps pose an equivalent appeal. However, most flea markets in Zimbabwe are probably unlikely to hold such appeal as those in Mexico. As their rudimentary structures might attest, flea markets in Gweru would most likely be confined to a largely functional role rather than constituting places for bargains, adventure, and fun. They are also far from the festival markets that Tiemann (2005) affirms existed in revitalized areas of major cities of the world such as New York where they seem to be designed to serve the tourist market and blend into conventional retailing and boutiques there.

Flea markets in Zimbabwe and elsewhere offer a range of products and serve diverse consumer markets. In the United States of America (USA), Christiansen and Snepenger (2005) describe how thrift outlets (in which they include flea markets and garage sales) appeal to a large number of consumers across a broad range of incomes. Such markets are not just for marginalised consumers with limited economic resources; they also exist to serve a wider market segment. In

Zimbabwe, incomes are, of course, lower than in the USA, and so it is possible that an even expansive range of customers patronise flea markets perhaps even enticing professional and other higher income consumers.

That the fortunes of flea market business activities are variable is beyond doubt. In developing economies such as Zimbabwe, flea markets have continued to expand, especially since the Economic Structural Adjustment Programmes (ESAP) programmes of the 1990s. Yessenova (2006) locates the dynamic post-Soviet bazaars in Kazakhstan along a transition trajectory to a market economy. On the other hand, Anand (2009) submits that in Mexico, supermarketisation which entails the proliferation and dominance of modern retailing had not been detrimental to smaller retailers and consumers in that country. Thus, the two forms may exist side by side; at times also competing with one another. In Gweru, flea market traders have at times operated close to major supermarkets, often selling competing goods such as fruits and vegetable. Indeed, some unlicensed traders operate from the door steps of these markets. Many consumers therefore patronize both modern as well as informal retail outlets. Thus, flea markets appear to be holding out and sometimes serving a niche market and encroaching on the conventional market segments even in the developed world such as the United States. Flea markets have also endured in Zimbabwe over time and the ESAP programmes of the 1990s showed that new forms have emerged sometimes in the shape of weekend flea markets which operated in Gweru for years up to 2015.

1.2 Flea Market Retailing and the Informal Sector

Flea markets can be classified as informal forms of conducting business in the broad sense. It is therefore necessary to inquire into the nature of informal trading. Cross (2000) highlights the fact that the definition of the informal economy has always been problematic. Tiemann (2005) even suggests that defining informality may be an impossible task. This is because flea markets are vaguely located between the formal economy and black market economies. In addition, practices differ from one country to another.

It seems that critical dimensions for distinguishing informal markets from their formal counterparts would embrace a number of dimensions including the goods sold or the services provided; how those goods are produced or obtained; the nature of ownership of the enterprise and the level of technology employed in the business operations. Rasanayagam (2011) further indicates that any definition of informal markets should be contextual and contingent. Writing of the informal and formal economy of Uzbekistan, Rasanayagam (2011) argues that “the formal and informal were organically linked within the everyday lives of Soviet citizens”. Indeed, in Gweru’s Central Business District (CBD) flea market traders have at times actually located themselves at the doorsteps of modern supermarkets themselves; to compete with them by serving the same clientele. It has also been argued that the informal sector should be presented using two dimensions, i.e., level of compliance with state law and regulation or the entity’s internal governance mechanisms (Madsen, Bednar, & Godfrey, 2014). The authors, therefore visualised formality/informality as a matter of degree and thus classified

organisations on a scale from formal to semiformal and lastly, informal categories. Similar sentiments were also echoed by Williams, Shahid and Martínez (2016).

While there are no set of universally agreed meanings that distinguish informal business operations from formal ones, the consensus places flea markets in the informal camp. Abrams (2007) regards flea markets as part of the informal or alternative economy characterized by wide usage of cash as a means of effecting payment; lacking formal record keeping; at times exhibiting avoidance of tax payments while placing importance on trust in their social relationships with other economic actors. From the consumer's perspective, there is also widespread uncertainty associated with flea market buying including lack of consistent quality standards; frequent absence of receipts; lack of permanence in vendor location or inconsistent policies on return of merchandise for example. In Malawi, Mhango and Niehm (2005) describe informal clothing and retailing activities characterized by lack of permanence and stability in terms of location, structure, merchandise assortment, pricing structure, and frequency of existence. The markets in Malawi were carried out in the open markets, along streets, at farmers' markets, and garage sites. Socio-economic and cultural conditions as well as history in Malawi and Zimbabwe (both being in central Africa) have significant similarities. Both countries share a history of colonisation by the British and, at one time, were members of the Central African Federation (also known as the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland) which ended in 1963.

The features mentioned above add to the sense of informality that characterizes flea market operations in many economies. It may therefore be sufficient to settle

for a bundle of defining features than to seek a tight definition of informal trading activities. Indeed, literature shows a variety of perspectives and representations with very limited convergence. Tiemann (2004) regards informal markets as occupying the space between formal and illegal economies in a manner that accorded them greater flexibility than the formal economy would permit. On the other hand, McCrohan and Sugrue (2001) characterise the informal economy as a legal sector market activity for certain categories of goods and services namely experiential retailing. Instead of a dichotomy between formal and informal classification, Pryor and Grossbart (2005) contend that there exists a formal-informal continuum as well as an economic-festive continuum for all retail activities. Stillerman and Sundt (2007) visualise an intermediate category of semi-formality consisting of vendors who pay for their operating licences and are therefore partially monitored by the state though in other cases they may evade regulation to some degree.

In the absence of agreement, and for practical purposes, this study of flea market retailing in Gweru adopted the official definition of the informal sector used by the Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency (ZIMSTAT, 2013) for compiling statistical data. According to ZIMSTAT, “a production unit is considered to be in the informal sector if the establishment is neither registered with the Registrar of Companies nor licenced, or is licenced only”. In the compilation of official statistics, this Zimbabwean government’s definition is applied in such a manner as to exclude paid domestic workers. Further, the Zimbabwe Income Tax Act suggests that informal traders operate in “people’s markets” and similar locations. The flea markets covered in this study operated mostly under licence from the City of Gweru

and paid a “presumptive tax” in terms of the national law (Income Tax Act, Chapter 23:06 (2007)). The Zimbabwe tax law therefore requires all informal traders who sell articles in “people’s markets” and “flea markets including hawkers and street vendors with annual gross income of less than \$6 000” to pay a “presumptive tax” directly to the national revenue authority or indirectly as in the case of flea markets, via their local authorities such as the City of Gweru or their landlords where flea market sites are owned or managed by private individuals or companies. All the flea markets in this qualitative study are located at sites managed by the Gweru Municipal Council or those managed by individuals and companies. They therefore fall under the purview of the state. Because flea markets in Gweru are partially monitored by the government, they perhaps fit Stillerman and Sundt’s classification of semi-formality. This perspective, however, excludes large numbers of illegal street traders and hawkers who operate outside the purview of the law. This latter group are not covered in this study.

Cross (2000) observes that, despite frequent attacks, and against all logic, street vendors in New York continued to thrive and grow and that open-air markets increased in their popularity with the passage of time. Further, Cross (2000) argues that informal practices, such as street vending, represent a lifestyle choice that affords players greater personal freedom and flexibility. Cross (2000) also warns of the danger of a tendency to think of the informal economy in negative terms and in terms of how it fails to match the character of formal markets such as through their lack of efficiency; undercapitalization and lack of machinery or managerial skills or the lack of a strong growth motive. Instead, Cross avers that the focus should be on the distinctive characteristics that make informal activities successful

such as the spirit of survival and flexibility; or how informal retailing saves on labour and regulatory costs. This sentiment suggests that there exists a need to inquire into the true and unique nature of flea markets in their own right and beyond the statistics and how they represent the voluntary and deliberate choices of individuals. This is what this study attempted to do by focusing on flea market sites in Gweru. Though the study focused on the Central Business District of Gweru only, it may raise important insights that resonate across the whole country and perhaps beyond.

The prevalence of informal market activities is also a reflection of rising levels of unemployment in the formal sector in Zimbabwe. According to Biti (2011), about 47% of economically active people in urban areas derived their income from self-employment, the number of such self-employed people in urban areas having risen from 43% in 2009. It appears most probable that jobless and self-employed people would be attracted to flea market retailing in the absence of formal employment; this same sector also providing a ready pool of consumers. This shows that flea markets are a promising source of beneficial occupation with a potential to contribute towards reducing levels of unemployment and underemployment in Zimbabwe. Clearly, a sector which has such relevance to significant proportions of a country's economy justifies academic study such as this qualitative study of flea market retailing in Gweru, Zimbabwe attempted to do.

Tiemann (2005) submits that flea markets constituted an important part of the Polish economy through providing jobs and low-cost goods. In Poland, these markets had evolved rapidly as politics, tastes, and economic conditions changed:

informal flea market activities often demonstrate a fluid character of their own. The free and open markets that Tiemann describes held many features in common with flea markets in many parts of the city of Gweru. An understanding of the operations of such informal trading has relevance for public policy, economic development and household survival strategies. According to Burgess and Nyajeka (2007), youthful, fast growing, and unsaturated markets located at the intersection of subsistence and formal marketplaces have the potential to provide a platform for Zimbabwe's economic development.

Mhonde, Nyamwanza and Sikomwe (2011) conducted a study of pricing strategies used by informal retail traders in Gweru Central Business District (CBD). On the basis of the pricing strategies adopted by these informal traders in Gweru's CBD, Mhonde, Nyamwanza and Sikomwe (2011) were not especially optimistic about the prospects for long-term viability of flea market trading. They expressed concerns that even where informal retail players had been in their industry for over a decade, there was still nothing visible and tangible to show for such participation. Mhonde, Nyamwanza and Sikomwe (2011) underline the failure by these players to migrate from informal to formal retailing. The authors went further to recommend strategies to address the apparent low level survival and poverty alleviation strategies as well as the apparent absence of wealth accumulation that seem to dominate.

This assessment by Mhonde, Nyamwanza and Sikomwe (2011) probably carried overtones of what Cross (2000) calls the tendency to apply the practices and standards of the formal sector to informal trading instead of acknowledging the

individuality of these operators. Similarly, in discussing the economics of cow ownership among India's poor, The Economist (2013) warns in these words: "Don't underestimate the wisdom of rural folk". The same may be true of the urban poor and the marginalised in Gweru, Zimbabwe. There may be a need therefore to interrogate the gloomy assertion by Mhonde, Sikomwe and Nyamwanza (2011). As highlighted above, their study had focused on pricing strategies solely thus falling short of adopting a broader view embracing a wider range of factors beyond pricing. The measure for success is variable and such success is, metaphorically, in the eye of the beholder. Abrams (2007) perhaps summarises it aptly by arguing that "Flea markets operate successfully with basic characteristics of efficiency and informality within a social structure of cooperation, reciprocity, and informal networks usually not found within the primary capitalistic economy".

1.3 Flea Markets in Gweru: The Research Setting

Flea markets are a common sight in all big or small urban centres in Zimbabwe. Despite this, there is very little documented literature on them. Indeed, although flea markets involve large numbers of urban dwellers, perhaps mostly from the poorer inhabitants, no national register exists. This study therefore chose to focus inquiry on one urban context as opposed to conducting a national survey. In a study of flea markets in the USA, Abrams (2007) attest to a lack of appreciation among academics of the contribution of flea market trading to economic activity even in developed countries. Similarly, Coca-Stefaniak et al. (2010) recommends that academics and practitioners ought to reflect on what they termed the unsung and often less glamorous business marketing reality of many small independent

retailers who include flea market traders. This qualitative study of flea market retailing in Gweru, Zimbabwe, was therefore designed to focus on this gap.

The city of Gweru is centrally situated in the Midlands Province of Zimbabwe. It had a population of about 158 000 at the last census in August 2012 (ZIMSTAT, 2013), representing 3.5% of Zimbabwe's urban population. The city has a small central retail area which includes three of the largest national retail chains in the country, namely OK Zimbabwe, South African retail giant Pick n Pay (since 2014), and an international franchise chain, SPAR. Each of these has one supermarket outlet in the central business district (CBD).

The CBD also has a variety of retail shops that include clothing retailers, and many builders' merchants and hardware shops. These retail outlets are of variable sizes including some small traders who serve several niche markets. Within the low and high density residential areas, there are several small neighbourhood shopping outlets which meet basic and daily needs of consumers in the immediate locality. For the bulk of their shopping requirements, consumers commute to the CBD where they face a wider choice between modern and informal retail outlets represented by flea markets.

The resident population in the CBD itself is negligible; constituting less than 5% of the city's population (City of Gweru, 2013). The largest residential areas in Gweru are located to the west. Mkoba is the most populous of these suburbs with about 51% of Gweru's population (ZIMSTAT, 2013). The furthest suburb, Senga, is some

8 kilometres from the city centre. Thus, the flea markets in the CBD draw upon a market from distant segments of the city's population to sustain themselves.

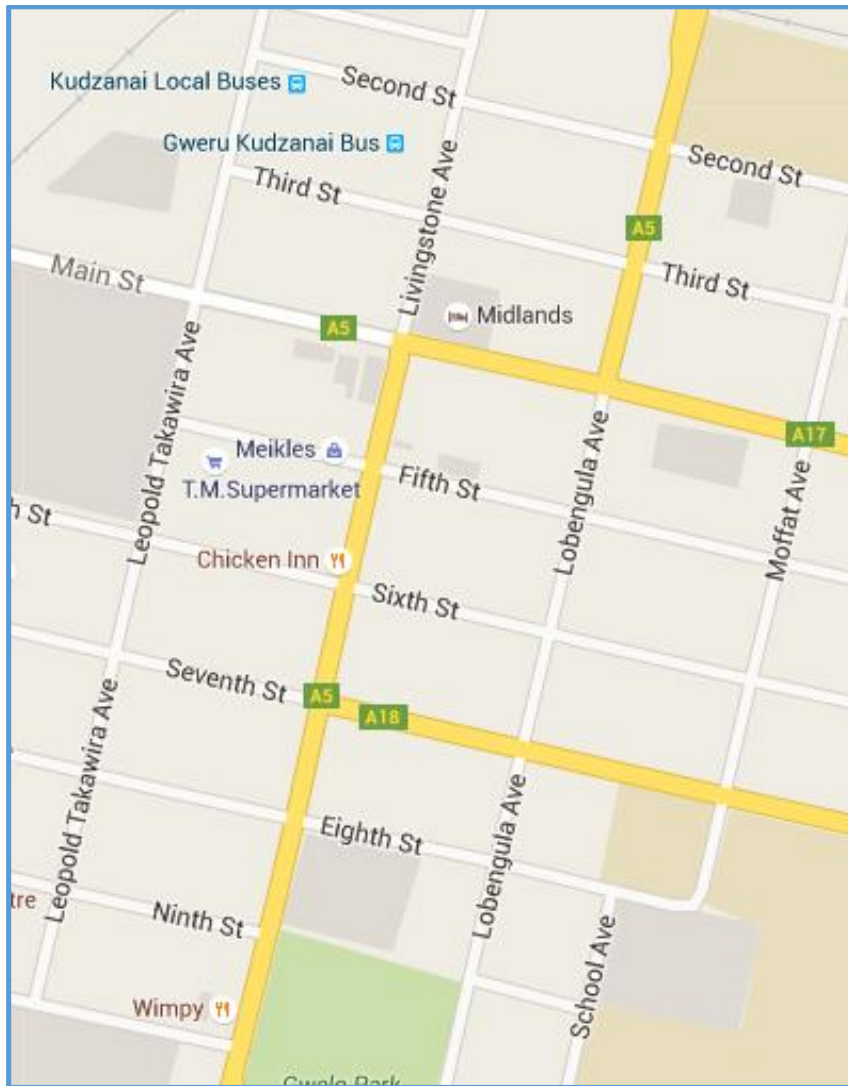


Figure 1: Street Map of Gweru CBD

Source: Internet search

There are many flea markets across all residential areas of Gweru in addition to those in the CBD. This study focused only on flea market activity within the CBD which consists of a rectangular area (barely $\frac{3}{4}$ of a square kilometre; 600 metres by 1.1 km) bounded by Moffat Avenue, Leopold Takawira Avenue; running from

First Street to Tenth Streets as shown in Figure 1 above. The flea markets covered in this study constitute 20% of all trading sites licenced by Gweru City Council. The city centre is roughly at the intersection of Main Street and Robert Mugabe Avenue. The flea markets based in the Gweru CBD are within short walking distances of each other and of the formal retail outlets. The city's development plan shows zoning areas depending on the intensity of usage. Zone 1A (at the intersection of Livingstone Avenue and Main Street), at the centre, is an area which has the greatest volume and intensity of business and office functions to reinforce its character as the business hub. This was designed to enhance the visual appearance of the CBD, especially through pedestrianisation and landscaping. A major weekend flea market operated from this city centre hub for many years until it was closed in 2015. A similar weekend flea market opened towards the western edge of the CBD in late 2014 for the flea market operators dealing mostly in second-hand clothing. Subsequently, this market too was turned into a daily market specialising in imported second-hand clothing. In 2017, that too was moved together with most street vendors to a site on the outskirts of the CBD.

Zimbabwe's recovery from the period of hyperinflation which came to an end in 2009 when the multi-currency regime was introduced has been slow and unsteady. This fact has continued to fuel the growth of the informal sector including flea market trading (The Standard, 2016). Official statistics place the rate of unemployment in Zimbabwe at 11% (ZIMSTAT, 2013). In an ILO-based review of ZIMSTAT employment statistics, Luebker (2008) acknowledges that such low levels of unemployment are often met with disbelief by ordinary citizens in Zimbabwe. Indeed, unemployment rates of 90% are commonly cited in the popular

press, for example, iHarare Staff Reporter (2016). However, Luebker also submits that Zimbabwe is not unique in this regard; many African countries exhibit similar patterns. It has been argued that the ILO definition of unemployment in fact distorts the picture for policy makers. However, Baah-Boateng (2015) commends the use of the broader definition of employment that Zimbabwe has adopted. Luebker (2008) (as ZIMSTAT also recorded) further notes that informal employment accounted for over 80% of all jobs in 2004. This position is also supported by Agarwala (2009) in respect of Africa and Asia. Agarwala also adds the observation that 93% of the Indian labour force is employed in the informal sector. In Kenya, employment in the informal sector (*Jua kali*) stood at 78% (Irungu, 2015).

Flea market traders fall into that segment of informal workers where incomes are low and working conditions generally poor. Of those in formal employment, wages are low and many workers earn about \$535 per month, a figure that is below the Poverty Datum Line (Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation, 2012). ZIMSTAT (2013) records that over 90% of employed Zimbabweans had monthly incomes of \$500 or less per month. Low wage levels in the formal sector also explain the widespread adoption of informal trading activities even by those in the formal sector. In any case, the customer base for flea markets is diminished and impoverished in terms of purchasing power. At the turn of the century, a process of deregulation in town planning also allowed for the renewed growth of flea markets in urban areas.

The flea markets covered by this study can be conveniently divided into two major categories, namely privately managed and publicly run market locations. The

publicly run flea market sites belong to the Municipality of Gweru and have the following principal types and locations:

1) Markets with permanent sheltered vending bays (also referred to as stands or stalls) provided by Gweru City Council. Here traders require an operating licence issued by the Council. Traders pay rental fees to the city council. According to Council nomenclature, this group is further subdivided into:

a) Fruit and vegetable markets.

b) Tobacco markets associated with an important part of Zimbabwean agriculture.

c) Traditional Arts and Crafts.

2) Daily flea markets which were introduced in the 1990s as part of economic liberalization associated with ESAP. They have permanent sheltered vending bays also provided by Council. Traders here require a hawker's licence and pay rental fees to Council. They trade mostly in clothing, footwear, or hardware goods.

Until 2015, Gweru City Council also allowed open air or road markets which were also a product of ESAP. These were non-permanent and had no sheltered vending bays provided. Traders did not require a licence but they paid rental fees. Two types existed:

- a) Those that sold the same goods as daily flea markets. These markets operated during weekend days or during public holidays only.
- b) Those devoted to the selling of imported second-hand clothing. The chief site was along Sixth Street. This opened in September 2014. Initially for weekend trading only, but subsequently trading was conducted daily. The establishment of this site as a daily market followed upon the closure of a section of the Main Street weekend previously reserved for this product category. The traders in this area were moved to a site outside the CBD

The municipal flea markets above are located at the following sites:

- 1) Kudzanai Bus Terminus, the largest flea market complex in Gweru, is situated at a traffic hub with long distance buses going to most cities, towns, and rural areas in Zimbabwe. The flea market complex surrounds the main bus terminus: it sells fruits, vegetables, grain, clothing, cheap electronic, and hardware goods and other miscellaneous wares. This is a complex and large area with a varied hive of entrepreneurial activities. It resembles what Pena and Norte (2000) describe as the *ambulantes* in Mexico City and *feriantes* in Santiago. In that study, those informal markets work in the same location all year round on permanent stalls except that in the Mexican example they are anchored on pavements and they apparently operate in violation of city ordinances.

Fifth Street area is situated next to a leading supermarket and to one of the principal public transport terminuses to Mkoba suburb (the largest residential area in Gweru). The main area is a municipal market for fresh fruits and vegetables.

3) Sixth Street saw the opening of another trading area opened in 2014. This area trades in second clothing imported in 'bales'. So, this site has been nicknamed *mabhero* (colloquial name for bales). There are just over 350 stands here. The area then operated all days of the week until it was closed in 2017.

4) Another flea market selling mostly fruits and vegetables benefited when Spar supermarket opened in 2011 along Moffat Avenue. This is one of the smallest flea market areas in this study with fewer than 30 stands. Another small trading area is close to the provincial local government offices in Tenth Street.

Table 1: Distribution of flea markets: Gweru

TOTAL NUMBER OF VENDING BAYS: CBD GWERU						
CBD Flea Market						
Zone	Description	No. of Bays				
A	Clothing & Footwear	39	8%	RESIDENTIAL AREAS		
B	Clothing & Footwear	43		Mkoba Flea Market	278	
C	Clothing & Footwear	83		Mkoba Fruit &	307	
W	Clothing & Footwear	43		Mkoba Firewood	42	
TOTAL		208		TOTAL	627	23%
CBD Fruit & Vegetable				Ascot Flea Market	60	
X	Fruit & Veg	99		Ascot Fruit & Veg	17	
T	Fruit & Veg	39		Ascot Firewood	6	
R	Fruit & Veg	16		TOTAL	83	
U	Fruit & Veg (Incl. Tobacco)	185		Mtapa (A&B) Fruit &	29	
TK	Fruit & Veg	55		Veg		
MS	Fruit & Veg (Incl. Stationery, Herbs & Roasting Area)	53		Mtapa Firewood	5	
V	Fruit & Veg	34		TOTAL	34	
TR	Fruit & Veg	35		Mambo Firewood	7	
Nyore	Fruit & Veg	13		TOTAL	17	
TOTAL		544	20%	GRAND TOTAL: RESIDENTIAL	761	28%
Second Hand Clothing: formerly Weekend Flea Market						
Old Post Office	Mabhero: Used Clothing	355				
Main Street	(up to 2016)	879				
TOTAL:						
WEEKEND		1,234	45%			
TOTAL: ALL CBD		1,986	72%	TOTAL: ALL GWERU	2,747	
Source: Mr J Ndlovu & Mrs Sheshe.						
City of Gweru Housing & Amenities Department.						

Source: City of Gweru

Privately managed markets have significant differences from the municipal markets. All of them operate as covered markets constituting a kind of shopping mall under a common roof. The newest of them allow the individual flea market traders to operate even at night as these are fitted with adequate lighting. They include the following locations within the CBD area:

- Inspiration Village in Third Street Flea Market (opened in 2013)
- Global Village Flea Market (opened late 2012) facing a major fast-food chain under the Innscor Group.
- Tanaka Flea Market in Sixth Street (opened late 2012). This is situated close to a stand which housed a similar outlet closed in early 2012.

Flea market types, like the ones described above, occur in most urban centres in Zimbabwe. As the table above shows, there were close to 2 000 municipal flea market stands selling different types of goods and services in the CBD in Gweru. This qualitative study of flea market retailing in Gweru covers all the flea market types given above. In this manner, this analysis made an important contribution to a widespread practice in Zimbabwe and it, therefore, filled a significant gap in both theory and practice.

Competing with these flea market traders are also numerous illegal perambulant street vendors, hawkers, and car boot traders selling sometimes identical merchandise. Being illegal, they are always vigilant for both customers and

patrolling municipal police officers. These illegal traders are not included in this qualitative analysis of flea market retailing in the Gweru CBD even though they also constitute a form of informal retailing in the same mode as the traders operating from designated locations that are covered in this study. Moreover, by their very nature, these traders are engaged in peripatetic activities for which data would be difficult to obtain. Their operations are illegal and they often clash with local municipal police (*The Chronicle*, 2014).

Some typical flea market scenes are depicted below.



Figure 2: Street market in Gweru CBD. Closed 2015

Source: Primary data



Figure 3: Vegetable market close to Pick & Pay

Source: Primary data

1.4 Flea market trading spaces

By definition retailing, as a productive sector, includes all activities associated with the sale of product offerings (and therefore encompassing even illegal hawking) for final consumption (Anand, 2009). Retailing therefore embraces all activities involved in selling physical goods or intangible services directly to final consumers for their personal, non-business use. In setting themselves up to meet these purposes, flea market traders covered in this study therefore constitute legitimate retailing. In particular, flea markets such as those in Gweru exist because they

satisfy unfilled customer needs and provide employment opportunities for participants and others.

As was the case for informal trading, no single definition of flea markets receives universal acceptance. The Collins Concise English Dictionary (2008) attempts to do so by defining a flea market as an open-air market selling cheap and often second-hand goods. Some writers have even equated informal markets (including flea markets) with black markets which sell illegal goods. To a certain extent, this may be true for street hawkers, however, flea market retailing in Zimbabwe has a legal/legitimate form of regulations by the state through local authorities. In fact, the flea markets included for this study pay a presumptive tax in accordance with the law.

In a study of local shopping provision in the UK, Bennison, Warnaby and Pal (2010) pointed to the futility of defining aspects of retailing, especially in cases where the academic and practitioner worlds overlap. These researchers then concluded that, in many instances, it may be sensible to apply what they called the “elephant test”, i.e., to identify a flea market when you see one. Thus, whereas defining flea markets may be a difficult undertaking, generally we have instant recognition of them when we get to see one even though there will be local variations from one context to another.

Berman and Evans (2011) represent flea markets as isolated retail destinations which sell an extensive assortment of merchandise; generally poor in depth and exhibiting variable quality. Prices are very low relative to other retail forms and are

negotiable. The atmosphere and general level of associated services are spartan (Tamukamoyo, 2009). Sometimes self-service may be used but promotion is limited and customer service is minimal. Flea markets are therefore lacking in modernity. Nevertheless, these factors could themselves be sources of strength. In Zimbabwe, the term 'flea market' is sometimes associated with those forms of informal retailing introduced in the 1990s as part of ESAP while excluding the older forms which include retail fruit and vegetable, traditional crafts and agricultural produce of various kinds. This study included both forms.

Clearly then, defining and classifying flea markets becomes a subjective activity. There is diversity and variety as shown by the flea market areas described earlier. Across the world, different labels are also used to describe essentially similar activities. The common local term for flea market is "*musika*" (a market in the local Shona language). For this study, the term "flea market" covered various forms of informal trading, whether they are conducted under a roof or in open air without regard for the goods sold. The flea markets in this qualitative study operated from designated bays and so peripatetic traders and hawkers were excluded. Perhaps common factors are that, in general, they do not have individual walled stalls though they may have a roof over them. They do not pay national taxes directly to central government but are regulated by local authorities, such as Gweru City Council, to whom they pay various levies and charges. Against the lack of consensus, for the purposes of this study, I have used the definition listed in the 'Definitions Section', namely that a flea market is a market where large numbers of traders congregate in one place/location (indoors or in the open air) to sell a range of relatively inexpensive goods and services. The goods sold may be new

or second or they may consist of fabricated articles or agricultural and horticultural products. This definition has been crafted by gleaning various descriptions, representations and characterisations from the academic and general literature as well as adaptation of Stillerman (2015).

1.5 Statement of the Research Problem

Informal trading activity is a very highly visible activity in the central business districts of most urban centres in Zimbabwe, including Gweru (Mazhambe, 2017). It has also been argued that African cities have tried to address economic informality without much understanding of its operation (Kinyanjui, 2014). This research addresses this gap from the context of one Zimbabwean city. Because of its scale, flea market retailing involves a very large number of individual operators often operating very closely to one another, and selling competing or complementary goods and services. This research focused on flea markets as a retail form and on the activities of those individual traders who operate them, i.e., how they run and organise their business activities and their business aspirations and orientations.

Flea markets sites covered in this study were crowded bee-hives of activity. Each trader operated across a shallow assortment of goods; the hours were long and most operators worked six or seven days a week; from sunrise to sundown and sometimes beyond. Even then, they came out as happy, cheerful persons. Mhonde, Nyamwanza and Sikomwe (2011) question the profitability of these operations. However, there must be some form of attractiveness or reward to such back-breaking efforts by so many. Flea market traders appeared capable of

achieving fulfilment from their labour-intensive efforts in the concentration of a few square metres of trading space. The key to unpacking these issues lies in the traders themselves. They, as well as their theatres of operation and their interactions with others, formed the focus of this study. Being informal and small scale, flea markets have been marginalised in the research literature (Abrams, 2007; Adom, 2014; Coca-Stefaniak et al., 2010). Considering this deficit, a qualitative grounded theory approach seemed most appropriate for building a theoretical framework for understanding the process and practice of flea market retailing unblinkered by any prior assumptions.

The principal research problem therefore is that, notwithstanding the large number of participants in the informal sector, significant gaps persist concerning flea market traders in general, their motivations, practice and strategies as well as their growth aspirations and commitments to such activities. Such lack of understanding and appreciation of the roles of flea market traders constitutes a significant handicap in formulating consistent and appropriate policy frameworks at national and local level especially for towns and cities who have to battle with growing numbers of informal traders. The economic contributions of flea market traders continues to be undervalued, while their roles are marginalised and sometimes even derided along with the low negative esteem generally accorded to all informal market activities especially so in urban areas.

1.6 Research Purpose

In pursuance of the research problem above, the purpose of this qualitative study was to advance understanding and appreciation of flea market trading in Gweru

by discovering and generating insights and perspectives from flea market traders themselves as the principal research participants leading to the formulation of a substantive core category using the grounded theory methodology. The formulation of a dynamic core category was guided by a conceptual framework which was anchored on constructionism and symbolic interactionism. Pursuant to this, the study sought to fulfil the objectives listed below.

1.7 Research Objectives

The following objectives apply for this study of flea market trading practices in the central business district of Gweru:

- i) Identify and describe flea market trading practices, processes and experiences of licenced traders operating within the Gweru central business district
- ii) Analyse and interpret the ways through which flea market traders conducted their trading activities and how they interacted with others and how this led to the depiction of the essence and experience of being a flea market trader
- iii) Explain the dynamic complexities of the social and economic realities of flea market trading and growth strategies
- iv) Delineate the meanings, worth and value that flea market traders themselves place on their business operations in the course their interactions with other stakeholders and their work environments; how these experiences and

interactions shaped their goals, perceptions and aspirations: for themselves personally, their households

- v) Propose a framework for representing the growth aspirations and intentions of flea market traders encompassing how participants comprehend their situations and experiences and what meanings they derive from those.

These research objectives were undertaken together with recognition of the embeddedness of values and practices in the acknowledgment that informal trading, as occurs in flea markets, places additional emphasis on trust, presentation of self and own identity and ego (Abrams, 2007). From the outset, I planned to use grounded theory for this research with the goal of discovering theory. Thus, any prior description and perusal of the literature was of a non-committal nature only. This was designed to avoid pre-empting emerging theory.

1.8 Justification for the Study

The informal sector in Zimbabwe is substantial and significant. Size matters. This provides powerful justification for a study of flea market trading in its own right to enable appropriate formulation of policies for economic development. Of course, Zimbabwe is not unique in this regard. Informal workers who include self-employed and informal entrepreneurs probably constitute the majority of the world's labour force, especially in urban areas: 40% in Latin America and over 80% in Asia and Africa (Agarwala, 2009). Similarly, up to 70% of the population of Lusaka is dependent on the informal economy while in Nairobi, 2.7 million people are engaged in the informal economy, according to the 2011 economic survey of the

Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (Kinyanjui, 2014). For Zimbabwe, 12% of economically active population (15 years of age and above) consists of “own account workers” who operate their own economic enterprises for their own consumption or for profit (ZIMSTAT, 2012). These own account workers are distributed evenly between males and females. ZIMSTAT (2012) records that 84% of the working population is engaged in informal trade of which flea markets are a significant part. Abrams (2007) advocates for greater efforts by scholars and researchers in unravelling what the authors regarded as the success story that flea market enterprises represent. Additionally, Coca-Stefaniak et al. (2010) encourage academic and practitioner communities to inquire into the unsung and often less-glamorous business marketing reality of small independent retailers such as flea market traders. In Zimbabwe, Kamete (2013) has highlighted that urban planning for example is critically handicapped through a lack of contextualised understanding of the experiences and aspirations of informal traders themselves.

Morris, Williams and Nel (1996) acknowledge that the informal sector, of which flea market retailing forms a part, is a major contributor to the economic welfare of society. Writing on global sustainability, Masocha (2011) expresses the conviction that flea market operations help raise the standards of living of a large number of people thereby helping developing economies, such as Zimbabwe, to prosper while also contributing to national prosperity and, critically, to raising the standard of living of its people. A qualitative analysis, such as this one, would help locate and position flea market retailing within business studies as a valuable, productive, and legitimate form of retailing that makes a major and positive contribution to the lives of many people by supplying goods or services and providing employment to

traders and others as well. In a similar fashion, Tiemann (2005) notes that in Poland, free and open markets provided local employment and incomes to their operators as well as essential consumer goods to the local populace, especially following the collapse of communism there and the country's entry into the market economy.

Due to the informal nature of flea market retailing, levels of output are difficult to quantify despite the size, prevalence, and scope of such trade. This study did not attempt to do such quantification. Nevertheless, flea market operations are important for those who participate in them and not just for their contribution to national income and economic development. In Zimbabwe, this is seen in the emphasis placed at national level on issues of indigenisation, employment creation, and on small and medium enterprises generally. Government Statutory Instrument (SI) 21 of 2010, for example, highlights the importance and sensitivity of sentiments concerning the retail sector by advocating for the exclusion of foreign participation in that sector. With unemployment rate at 11% and underemployment estimated at nearly 13% (ZIMSTAT, 2013), the potential for job creation in small and medium enterprises may be substantial. Politically and economically, indigenisation and empowerment represent topical and contentious issues in Zimbabwe. Thus, the government of Zimbabwe has focused on using empowerment and indigenisation as instruments of development. In addition, flea markets in Gweru's CBD appear to have evolved in the context of poverty alleviation in general, and through a desire to increase participation in economic development and activities much the same way as in the whole country. Depressed levels of employment in the formal sector justify the need to pay greater

attention to the informal sector which is the engine for future employment generation and economic development in general.

Christiansen and Snepenger (2005) note that in the USA, thrift shopping (in which they included flea markets) has largely been neglected by academic researchers. In the case of Zimbabwe, flea markets are somewhat marginalized and peripheral. This amounts to a yawning gap which invited fruitful inquiry through this qualitative study of flea market retailing. Indeed, the gap extends even to retailing in Zimbabwe in general. Clearly, therefore, flea markets in Zimbabwe are an interesting area of study. A qualitative analysis of this phenomenon using the grounded theory approach was designed to raise insights and perspectives for flea market retailing in Zimbabwe and provide a platform for further study of this retail form by focussing on its principal players and the enterprises they engaged in. Grounded theory allows for insights to be derived from research data and not imported and imposed from existing literature. Together with symbolic interactionism and constructionism, flea market players construct their own meanings. This allows for meaningful engagement in an economic agenda.

Africa has tremendous room for economic development. However, it also has significant barriers to effective intervention, such as the lack of an appropriate understanding of informal economic activity (Kinyanjui, 2014; Madsen et al., 2014). Scholars have debated the connection between the informal sector and development poverty (Devicienti, Groisman, & Poggi, 2010). However, breaking the connection between informality and the poverty remains elusive. This study sheds light on how the energies of the informal sector can be harnessed.

1.9 Delimitations

As described earlier, the sites covered in this study are in the central business district of the City of Gweru in Zimbabwe. Other sites elsewhere in Gweru's residential areas have not been covered. Some features may be recognisably Zimbabwean. However, this study is not about flea market retail activity nationally. The study was also limited to flea market traders operating from designated sites. No attempt was made to cover peripatetic vendors and hawkers who populate the streets and pavements of the city of Gweru. Data collection for this study was done in phases in the period 2014-2015. Participants were drawn from the nearly 2 000 flea market traders licenced by Gweru city council as well as the traders operating from four privately owned flea market houses in the central business district.

1.10 Definition of Terms

Informal sector

"A production unit was considered to be in the informal sector if the establishment was neither registered with the registrar of companies nor licenced, or was licenced only" (ZIMSTAT, 2013). Flea market retailing thus falls into this category.

Flea market

A market where large numbers of traders congregate in one place/location (indoors or in the open air) to sell a range of relatively inexpensive goods and services. The term may be used to refer to individual flea market stalls or to a collection of such stalls. Flea markets are open air or semi-enclosed markets featuring used, antique, or new goods and including stalls housing individual merchants (Stillerman, 2015).

Shopping mall

A large enclosed shopping centre. Also called simply 'mall' (Collins, 2008).

Stall

A small often temporary stand or booth for the display and sale of goods (Collins, 2008).

Stand

A stall, booth or counter from which goods may be sold (Collins, 2008). The terms stall, booth and stand are therefore often used interchangeably in this study.

Supermarketisation

The proliferation and dominance of retail supermarket forms (Anand, 2009).

Retailing

Retailing includes all the activities involved in selling goods or services directly to final consumers for personal, non-business use", that is, all the activities associated with the retail offering for final consumption (Anand, 2009).

1.11 Conclusion

This foundational chapter served the purpose of setting the stage for understanding flea market trading activities in the wider context of informal market activities locally and beyond. Against this, the chapter also served to clarify the statement of the research problem, its purpose and objectives. Related literature is further explored in the chapter that follows.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

In the preceding chapter, I provided a backdrop for this research through an outline of background information on flea market retailing, definitions of retailing (as an economic activity) of flea markets and of informality. A statement of the research problem was also outlined. Upon this foundation, this chapter outlines theoretical and empirical research to illuminate the study based on the following research goals:

- i) To investigate, describe, analyse and interpret the essence of the practice and experience of flea market retailing
- ii) To explain the dynamic complexities of the social and economic realities of flea market trading and growth strategies

This literature review provides a framework of common issues and insights that arise in flea market situations in different parts of the world. Such information provides a useful anchor without pre-empting research outcomes. The requirements of a grounded theory study employed in this research dictated that, regardless of the issues revealed in the literature review, I should strive to keep an open mind during data analysis to allow theory to emerge cleanly, uncontaminated by prior knowledge from the literature or elsewhere. In the following sections, I review the nature and process of change relevant to flea market trading, before surveying the forms and practice of flea market trading in different countries.

2.1 Dynamic processes

A recurring theme in the literature highlights that organizations and practices are not static. This is also true of individuals such as the flea market traders covered in this study. For organisations, a common theme was that rudimentary retail forms evolve from traditional or survivalist business forms to more efficient forms of economic activity. Such early forms constitute the precursors to economic take-off (D'Andrea, Lopez-Aleman, & Stengel, 2006; Mhango, & Niehm, 2005).

In similar fashion, flea markets have evolved over time; they possess dynamic symbiotic relationships with other retail forms and among the different participants. Flea markets in Zimbabwe embody the dynamic initiatives of individual operators many of whom have established themselves over periods of high unemployment, retrenchments and even hyperinflation. In a study of the food processing industry in Zimbabwe, Mavondo (2000) presented an ecological perspective to explain how organisations engage in different types of adaptation. This same spirit of adaptation is highlighted about the human condition generally: "The basic challenge that faces a person is one of adjustment" (Kathrada & Venter, 2017). So, Mavondo likens business entities to organisms which reproduce themselves, for example by opening new markets or introducing new products or adopting new retail formats. On the other hand, organisations may also compete based on efficiency in the way in which they use available resources. Such processes of adaptation highlight the dynamic nature of organisations. Accordingly, all retail forms can be expected to exhibit different types of adaptation as they evolve over time. The emergence of new retail forms and formats, such as flea markets in Gweru's CBD, represents either a form of environmental adaptation through

growth and multiplication or a reflection of the level of efficiency achieved as they compete in operations and for market space.

An example of such dynamic relationships is captured in MacNair's (1958) classic concept of the wheel of retailing. D'Andrea et al. (2011) apply this concept of the wheel of retailing to describe how new retail formats change over time: new retail formats tend to enter the market initially as low-status, low-margin, and low-price options such as flea markets tend to be. These new formats opt for a "no frills" approach and thus can often be ridiculed, scorned, or condemned as inefficient or illegitimate (Berman & Evans, 2011). They, however, possess massive potential to mutate and rise to loftier levels. They are, therefore, not merely part of a neglected, half-forgotten and threatened species that Jones et al. (2007) allude to for the UK. With the passage of time, informal market forms become institutionalized in a particular way. Initially, these retail formats serve low-income consumers before attracting more upscale consumers. D'Andrea et al. (2011) add that almost all successful retail chains for emerging consumers started as humble, small scale projects by low-income entrepreneurs. This study of flea markets in Gweru captures a widespread activity on that evolving wheel of retailing.

According to D'Andrea et al. (2011), informal markets may also be related to a "needs ladder" which reflects, in varying degrees, important issues of consumer access, proximity, choice, quality and design on a progressive basis. Thus, emerging retail formats have allowed emerging consumers to graduate from resignation to fulfilment through innovations which satisfy previously unmet aspirations (D'Andrea et al., 2011). D'Andrea et al. also posit that, through an

“ambidextrous” posture, new retail forms originally created to serve low income groups ultimately evolve to serve other socioeconomic levels as well. Thus, market segments evolve and expand in size and sophistication over time. At any one time, they may reach out to two or more market segments. New investments in flea market malls in the CBD in Gweru (three new sites in six months in 2012/13 for example) seemed designed to attract a more discerning client and perhaps to compete more directly with modern retail forms like fast fashion outlets and boutiques. They may also introduce new and different kinds of players. Flea markets under study in this qualitative analysis of flea markets retailing in Gweru, Zimbabwe may have such potential though Mhonde, Nyamwanza and Sikomwe (2011) are critical of their operations and prospects for real take-off even in the long run. From a rural setup, similar caution and scepticism was also sounded concerning the fortunes of curio traders selling artefacts to tourists (Nyahunzvi, 2015) in the Chivi district of Zimbabwe.

In their study of flea markets trading in second-hand clothing in Malawi, Mhango and Niehm (2005) also speak of retail evolution from flea market forms dealing in unrelated scrambled assortments of merchandise and characterised by their inability to increase productivity due to lack of infrastructure, technical knowhow and capital. Berman and Evans (2011) have also described the atmosphere and general level of associated services as rather rudimentary or spartan. The vendors in second-hand clothing in Malawi typically dealt in a merchandise assortment with no marked prices. The final price to the consumer was often the outcome of a process of negotiation or haggling. Over time, semi-permanent structures were established. Mhango and Niehm (2005) contend that formal retail may sometimes

coexist with informal retailing activities as “small enterprises and micro-enterprises will encourage store-based retail operations to coexist with other forms of formal retailing.” In their exploratory study, these researchers suggested that second-hand clothing sales were on the verge of formalized retailing. Their outlets were conveniently located but still lacked dignity or extensive product search; they offered less choice and had fragmented assortments. In the CBD of Gweru, flea markets offer more than just second-hand clothing. They, in fact, operate near formal supermarket and similar modern facilities. Indeed, such was the history of the Paris flea market which today is a huge tourist attraction attracting millions of visitors annually.

All retailing is purposeful. According to Mhango and Niehm (2005), flea market retailing of second-hand clothing in Malawi demonstrated progressive stages of development or evolution ranging from survival activities conducted by individuals driven by poverty. Survivalist strategies include petty traders who sell a few items to supplement incomes; to micro enterprises with some potential for further growth (Nyahunzvi, 2015). Mhango and Niehm (2005) also describe small-scale enterprises who include hawkers and petty traders plying their trade under semi-permanent stands in large open markets. It seems informal market forms may therefore graduate from primitive to higher forms as levels of sophistication rise. Mhonde, Nyamwanza and Sikomwe (2011), on the other hand, had conclude that, from a pricing perspective at least, the informal traders in Gweru’s CBD that they studied were stuck at the first stage, that is, the survivalist level, unable to break off and expand. However, such a dismissive view may be premature: Flea market operators should therefore not be written off hastily. This qualitative analysis of flea

market retailing in Gweru therefore undertook a broader examination and sought to achieve a more comprehensive assessment of the development and evolution of flea markets in Gweru's CBD by using the qualitative methodology of grounded theory.

Writing about Zimbabwean retailers, Burgess and Nyajeka (2007) observe that low income countries (LICs) are youthful, fast-growing, and unsaturated markets which stand at the nexus or intersection which straddles subsistence and development. As such, they offer opportunities for the creation and introduction of new retail forms. About Zimbabwe, Burgess and Nyajeka note that, in 2007 poverty was widespread and subsistence lifestyles common. This was, however, during a period of hyperinflation which came to an end early in 2009 with the adoption of multicurrency regime and the ensuing period of relative social, economic and political stability under a coalition government which appears to have revived economic prospects. Burgess and Nyajeka contend that extreme within-country diversity reflects the state of "dual economies" in which a relatively well-educated, affluent, and urban segment of perhaps 5-10% of the population lives amidst a mass market segment comprising low-income, subsistence segment in rural areas and impoverished urban areas. The middle class constituted a much smaller group. The Gweru flea markets of this study also operate in this environment though economic conditions have improved since 2009.

Official statistics (ZIMSTAT, 2013) showed that only 37% of Zimbabweans held a job in the 12 months preceding a countrywide health and demographic survey. The figure for men was somewhat higher at 61%. This reflected conditions of

unemployment and underemployment. Circumstances like this created fertile ground for the informal sector of which flea market trading is a part for those seeking some income-generating activity to meet basic needs among the urban poor. Depending on how flea market retailing is conducted, it may possess potential of serving not only the mass market but the elite segment that Burgess and Nyajeka (2005) described. According to D'Andrea et al. (2011), flea markets have an “ambidextrous” dimension in their ability to serve several consumer market segments.

2.2 Global flea market activity

Flea markets face different circumstances in different economies reflecting diversity of circumstance, form, and practice as well as varying levels of success and development. The literature, therefore, shows that flea market trading adopts various forms in different countries ranging from hawking and street vending in Kazakhstan or Bolivia (Yessenova, 2006; Gordon, 2009), car boot sales in the UK (Stone, Horne, & Hibbert, 1996), marketplace activities as in Poland (Tiemann, 2005) and Mexico or the USA (Anand, 2009; Shepherd, 2009). On the other hand, the growth and proliferation of flea markets may reflect what Bass (2000) calls the commerce of circumstance such as when trade follows the construction of a highway as in the researcher's study of street and market trade in Dakar, Senegal. This is an example of what may be termed opportunistic market behaviour illustrating dexterity and alertness of players in the informal sector. Low entry and exit barriers, especially for informal sector players, allow them to capitalize on emergent opportunities. This calls for vigilance and alertness to changing environmental conditions (Foss & Klein, 2009). This qualitative study of flea market

activities in the Zimbabwean town of Gweru adds new understanding from a different geographical and socio-economic context.

Tiemann (2005) describes different scenarios consisting of open air markets in Poland which to some extent, bear resemblance to the open-air weekend flea markets in Gweru streets. Tiemann observes that Poles love outdoor shopping with many kiosks located at street corners including free and open markets called *targowiska* that are sell a range of commodities from clothing, stationery, food, to electronics (Tiemann, 2005). In Poland, many markets appear to be unorganized and informal. The *targowiska* flea markets that Tiemann (2005) describes were small in scale, unregulated, easily accessible to customers. In addition, these markets spanned diverse activities ranging from a single person to small family businesses. They were characterised by high work intensity, lack of capital and, on the part of employees, inadequate qualifications acquired mainly on the job. Often local, mostly traditional technologies and resources are applied. Some markets operated on Sundays, weekends, or twice monthly. They, however, represented a large portion of Polish retail and wholesale business and employed thousands of Poles. All business was done on a cash basis. Only a few had an enclosed space.

Shepherd (2009) also paints a picture of street vendors at a popular weekend market in Washington D.C., USA where it appeared that participants derived satisfaction not merely from the interaction of demand and supply but also through buyer and seller interactions at the social level. Shepherd thus distinguishes “the market” from the realities of interactive “marketplaces” where sellers sometimes

engage in trading for other reasons besides money. As Shepherd (2009) demonstrates, the market is “at once a flea market, farmers’ market, arts and craft fair and upscale gourmet centre” thus serving multiple purposes for varied customers. Commodities sold included fish, meats, flowers, sandwiches, and baked goods. Clearly, even in a cosmopolitan city like Washington D.C., vendors may not be motivated by pure profit to any great extent. Flea market participants are a varied group for whom a rich detailed qualitative study is thus most appropriate.

Stone et al. (1996) describes car boot sales in the UK as an alternative retail format suggesting that such a format presented a special appeal for middle and lower social classes who are motivated to meet both functional and non-functional needs for these sub-groups in society. Stone et al. (1996) also explore the origins of the retail entrepreneurs who sell their wares through this format and alluded to the existence of degrees of competition between flea markets and established retailers.

Using examples from the USA, Pryor and Grossbart (2005) contend that market structures exhibit opposing tendencies across a formal-informal continuum with official, controlled, highly rationalized, proactive, and institutional types on one extreme to the less formal even clandestine and transient practice such as vendors on the opposite end. Market structures may also be located on an economic-festive continuum which may be characterized by rationality and utility or they may be hedonistic and experiential. Pryor and Grossbart (2005) said that flea markets reside at the intersection of the two continua. The flea markets covered by this

study have already been described as informal. By their spartan, “no-frills” nature, they are more likely to serve utilitarian/economic goals for their participants. But there are few pure types on the continua Pryor and Grossbart (2005) depicted. Flea markets therefore provide fertile ground for an in-depth analytical study involving multiple and complex issues. In particular, the informality of flea market retailing serving different consumer segments allows them to respond to the changing dynamics of economic activities. In the face of a lack of universal agreement on what market segments flea markets serve or of levels of formalisation, or the driving motives of patrons or their traders, this qualitative analysis of the flea market sector in Gweru, had the goal of revealing the nature of those forces involved and help locate Zimbabwean flea markets appropriately on the two continua that Pryor and Grossbart referred to.

Anand (2009) investigated the growth of supermarkets in Mexico and observed that supermarkets and small retailers can coexist within urban environments, and that they cater for the needs of different income groups by providing different product categories. In the case of Gweru, formal retail shops and flea markets are in daily or weekly competition with each other by operating in very close proximity to one another. Anand also describes weekly markets adjoining the municipal marketplace. These operated on Wednesdays and Sundays: these days being referred to as *días de la plaza* (meaning market days). Producers and traders from adjoining *pueblos* would bring wares to sell in open-air temporary stalls called *tianguis* surrounded by peddlers jostling for urban space (Anand, 2009). According to Pena and Forte (2000), *tianguis* specialised in basic goods such as fruits and vegetables. The market would be busy, especially on Sundays as residents return

from church and hold elaborate lunches at the *zacalo* (town square). They may thus be described as festive and formal, that is, the continua that Pryor and Grossbart (2005) mentioned. Anand (2000) concludes that supermarketisation represented by the proliferation and dominance of large-format retail outlets had not been detrimental to small retailers as they could coexist to answer the needs of different or even overlapping income groups and product categories. Indeed, most consumers may patronize both modern and traditional stores. In Gweru's CBD, many flea market activities are conducted in the immediate vicinity of significant retailers trading in similar commodities. The Main Street weekend flea market, for example, occupies street parking adjacent to two major grocery retailers as well as other smaller shops, raising possibilities of rivalry and competition on one hand and beneficial coexistence on the other. This is a dynamic and evolving dimension of retail operations.

The vibrancy that Anand (2009) witnessed in Mexico is perhaps not matched elsewhere. In a developed country such as the UK, local markets have a rich history but in the 21st century, they have faced severe challenges from new retail chains and supermarkets (Jones et al., 2007). According to these authors, local markets in the UK lost their dominance a long time ago. Some now often seemed a neglected, half-forgotten and threatened species no longer playing any valuable economic contribution (Jones et al., 2007). In the UK, they suffered from reductions in customers, rapid turnover of traders, growing number of vacant stalls and decline in occupancy rates and general neglect. These flea markets were also threatened by personal mobility due to mass car ownership and such demographic factors as employment of both men and women within households. While older

customers retain nostalgic loyalties to “the market”, the same markets appeared to have difficulty in attracting new and younger customers who command higher levels of disposable incomes. Many market halls and covered markets in the UK are over a hundred years old and in much need of renovation and refurbishment (Jones et al., 2007). These socio-economic dynamics have negatively impacted on such traders in the UK. However, the situation in a developing country such as Zimbabwe may be different because of higher unemployment/underemployment rates and vigorous patronage across many levels of society coupled with low levels of disposable incomes. Market segments served may thus be varied and diverse in Zimbabwe.

2.3 Flea Markets and Business Positioning

In common with many small retail businesses, flea market operations are fertile ground for the existence of joint family enterprises. Iyer (2004) suggests several topical issues in the study of family firms. These issues include the involvement of family members who bring their own individual expertise into the management of those operations, the crafting of growth strategies and the impacts these factors have on ownership and succession issues. These factors determine the emergence, operations, and endurance of such small enterprises. In addition, the concept of the extended family still has some potency within Zimbabwe and may influence operations of flea market traders, their longevity, endurance and the extent of family involvement. All these family and business related issues would form relevant areas of academic inquiry.

The involvement of family members also increases the range of participants in the running of flea market retail enterprises in Zimbabwe. They also determine the choices made of goods and services flea markets focus on. Usman (2010) describes how in some cases in northern Nigeria, street hawking is embedded in family gender division and poverty levels, for example, augmenting family income and traditional practices preparing young Nigerian girls self-reliance skills in an Islamic context, and as part of the socialization processes. In addition to the growth of market forms, it is also interesting to evaluate the extent to which engagement in flea market activity has a transformative effect on participants themselves such as whether retailing constitutes an incubator for entrepreneurship. While definitions of entrepreneurship differ vastly, one representation is that an entrepreneur is a person who makes decisions concerning the location, form, and use of goods, resources or institutions (Nelson et al., 2016). Another defined an entrepreneur in terms of two dimensions: personal characteristics or behaviours of individual players (Yao, Farmer, & Kung-McIntyre, 2016). These characteristics manifest themselves in different proportions in informal trading.

The reviewed literature has raised several avenues for exploration about retail market activities and these include:

- Ecological perspective of growth and development of flea markets (Mavondo 2000) in describing market conditions in Zimbabwe.
- Coexistence of economic and hedonic motives on a continuum (Pryor & Grossbart, 2005)

- Mutually beneficial coexistence of retail forms (Anand, 2009) serving different income groups and product categories in Mexico.
- That flea market retailing as an endangered retail form no longer making any valuable economic contribution (Jones et al., 2007) in the UK.
- A history of successful retail which has its roots from humble beginnings undertaken by low-income entrepreneurs (D'Andrea, 2011) in Latin America.
- That flea market retailing occurs under dual economies (Burgess & Nyajeka, 2005)
- Flea markets may be classified based on the motives of their operators and based on their levels of efficiency into clear and distinct stages (Mhango & Niehm, 2005) in Malawi.
- Informal trading as arenas: as both 'markets' and as 'marketplaces'(Shepherd, 2009) in Washington DC.

Clearly, therefore, literature gives ample demonstration of the richness of the flea market retail sector as a research field. This qualitative analysis of flea market retailing in Gweru, Zimbabwe, will contribute unique, context-specific insights about flea market practice in Gweru. After gathering and analysing data, it will be important to return to this literature and determine relevance. However, prior

knowledge should not drive analysis. Theory must emerge from the data itself as grounded theory dictates.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN

This chapter covers the research design adopted for this qualitative study of flea markets in Gweru's Central Business District and explains the critical elements of qualitative research which guided the research process. It also lays out the principal tenets of the grounded theory method and indicates the approaches used for sampling and recruiting participants. Techniques for collection and analysis of data as well as the ethical issues raised by this research are also described. The matter of trustworthiness of this research is also addressed.

3.1 Conceptual Framework

At the inception of this research idea, a compelling need arose to justify the decision to carry out a qualitative study of flea market activity in only one town as opposed to a survey of flea market practices across several locations nationwide. I decided against undertaking the wider survey type of study because I reflected on the enormity of undertaking a countrywide survey but, most importantly, on the worth such a study would have as it would barely scratch the surface and, therefore, fail to unpack the truly dynamic nature of a lived experience that involves thousands of Zimbabweans and supplies a range of important goods and services to numerous consumers. By focusing on one town (Gweru, in this instance), this research enterprise, therefore, assumed the nature of an empirical case study which, according to Yin (2009), investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, while also acknowledging the close interplay between the phenomenon and the context within which it occurs.

As in virtually every other urban centre of consequence in Zimbabwe, consumers in Gweru (Zimbabwe's fifth largest city) face two highly contrasting and visible shopping alternatives cohabiting virtually the same physical retail space. By their sheer size, supermarkets and other modern retail shops attract early attention. However, sometimes swarming around supermarket entrances are vendors and other small traders apparently competing for the same patronage. Perhaps a stone-throw away, are flea market traders selling all manner of goods from designated stalls. Modern retail shops and supermarkets represent the modern face of retailing on one hand while flea markets and vendors stand at the opposite extremity of consumer provision. This signifies the juxtaposition of formal and informal retailing within the same geographical space. Both trading types fulfil important consumer needs, mostly for the same consumers.

The flea market traders in the research area operated as individual business persons; each having a different strategy and understanding of the business game. Any attempt for a global study was therefore bound to miss important details and thus would lack depth and authenticity. A positivist survey of flea market operations over several sites would have been superficial and most probably deficient and unmanageable in magnitude by virtue of its scale. I was convinced that I needed a research framework that would accommodate the richness and diversity that flea markets exude. I also recognized the presence of different types of flea market activities involving a wide range of goods and services sold by hundreds of traders often operating daily close to one another and to modern retail forms as well. In the conduct of their trade, flea market traders also establish different relationships

with each other and with street vendors, consumers, suppliers and with formal retailers. I therefore settled for a limited study of flea markets in the Gweru CBD. On the other hand, I also steered away from the multitude of unregistered traders on the streets and pavements of Gweru due to the sensitivity of this trading activity.

I further recognized that retail activity in Zimbabwe is largely undocumented. This, of course, is also true, to a degree, of even the modern retail forms in Zimbabwe that Anand (2009) refers to as supermarketisation. This lack of documentation is, however, more acute for the country's flea markets. In that void, it would not have been possible to rely on a body of domestic theoretical knowledge to found a new study. Instead, knowledge would have to be constructed brick by brick from foundation upwards. I needed to ground this study of Zimbabwean flea markets on research data and then derive theoretical insights from it. The study needed to be a journey of discovery relying on inductive procedures not deduction or verification of existing theory. This is what Glaser and Strauss (1967) had in mind when they laid out the framework of grounded theory.

Although flea markets are ubiquitous in urban centres in Zimbabwe, each location is different as are the individual players operating there. Some markets are located in affluent suburbs (such as Sam Levy Village in the leafy upmarket suburb of Borrowdale in Harare, the capital city) where they even attract tourists. Most, however, are in the poorer neighbourhoods where most Zimbabweans live, especially in some of the country's oldest townships such as Makokoba and Nguboyenja in Bulawayo (Zikhali, 2017), or the sprawling Mbare Musika in Harare, or Mtapa Township in Gweru. My study was located in the Gweru Central Business District (CBD) which is a large and diverse area involving hundreds of traders. It is

far more active and visible compared to smaller versions in the individual residential areas of Gweru. Being located at the point of convergence (the CBD), these flea markets attract attention and patronage from the wider Gweru populace as well as visitors and month-end shoppers from rural areas that surround the city of Gweru.

Thus, this study sought to investigate, describe, characterize, analyse and interpret the essence of the practice and experience of flea market retailing in the Gweru CBD and to gain some understanding of what is happening. This included establishing how flea market retailers conduct their business; the meaning, worth and appeal flea market traders themselves saw in their business operations through their interactions with others and their surrounding environments for themselves personally, their households, and for employment creation in Zimbabwe. The study also sought to identify and profile flea market traders themselves individually and categorically, and as competitors or collaborators with other traders within a defined trading space and how they defined themselves and their place in the marketplace.

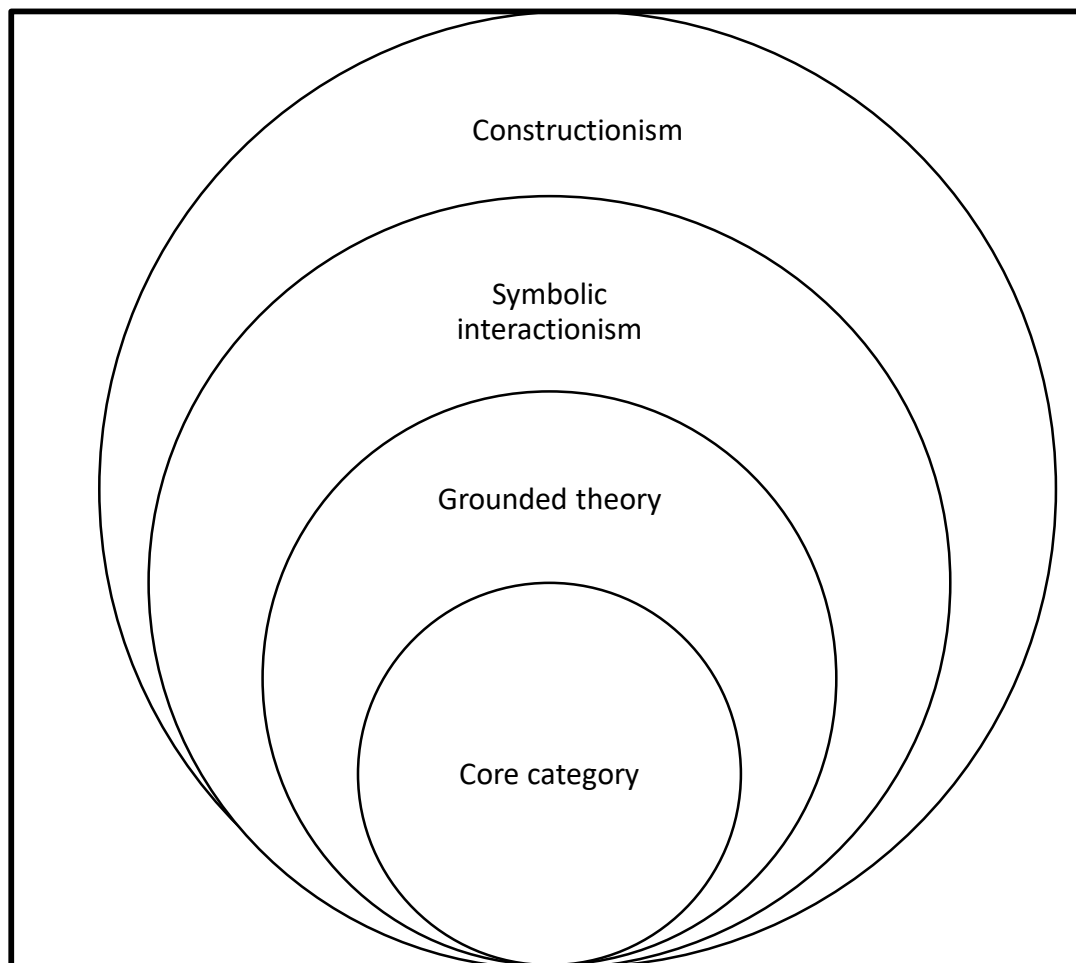
To embrace the range of dimensions and practices that operate, a situated qualitative research methodology therefore seemed most appropriate for an in-depth comprehensive understanding of flea market retailing within Gweru CBD. I therefore chose to rely on the qualitative research approach to capture the diversity of players, circumstances, perspectives, products, practices and processes in the flea market trade environment in Gweru. Although many players are involved in the flea market business (from suppliers, customers and traders), this study sought

to capture the flea market retail context from the perspectives of the sellers rather than their customers, suppliers or other stakeholders. These traders are critical to understanding the business of flea market retailing. This choice and emphasis may however have produced a limited and skewed representation of flea market practices.

Flea market traders no doubt pursue diverse personal goals. A qualitative research methodology therefore appeared well suited for the discovery and exploration of flea market trading goals and practices. In the absence of substantial prior research into flea market trading in Gweru or elsewhere in Zimbabwe, this study of flea market retailing in Gweru did not concern itself with testing a priori objective theories or examining relationships among variables as a quantitative study would seek to do. Indeed Crowther and Lancaster (2009) have argued that the greatest strength of inductive qualitative research is its flexibility which does not depend on a priori theories or hypotheses from the literature or elsewhere. Nor did the study seek to use mixed methods either, as these demand more time and financial resources (Masocha, 2011). Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2005) have also argued that quantitative research is typically motivated by the researcher's concerns, whereas qualitative research on the other hand is often driven by a desire to capture participants' voices and perspectives in their natural context and settings. As Creswell (2007) puts it: "to level all individuals to a statistical mean overlooks the uniqueness of individuals". King and Horrocks (2010) also pitched in to question any attempts to reduce human beings and human behaviour to sets of variables that can be measured and subjected to statistical analysis. This research therefore aimed to create insights and perspectives about the trading lives and

activities of participants involved in flea market retailing from an insider perspective. I therefore took the position that the informal nature of flea market retailing made it eminently suitable for a qualitative approach using the lens of symbolic interactionism.

Crotty (1998) explains that in deciding on a research design we need firstly to determine the methodologies and methods then, additionally, to justify the choices we make such as the description above has attempted to do. Referring to constructionism, Crotty then defines this concept as the expression of the view that *“all knowledge, and therefore all meaningful reality as such, is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world, and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context”* (Italics in the original) (Crotty, 1998). The problem statement of this research highlighted this emphasis on individuals interacting with other players in their business encounters. I also adopted grounded theory as my methodology. Alvesson & Skoldberg (2010) considered symbolic interactionism as the most important source of inspiration for grounded theory.

Figure 4. Conceptual framework

As depicted above, this study is located in constructionism at the epistemological level. The theoretical perspective adopted is symbolic interactionism while grounded theory forms the methodology. Data analysis in grounded theory leads to a core category which in this study was entrepreneurial compass. This core category represents the substantive theory derived from interview data.

This study was housed in the qualitative domain. Its theoretical framework or lens was symbolic interactionism. The underlying assumptions of symbolic interactionism are that people interpret the meaning of objects and actions through their social interactions. They thus proceed to define their own identities arising

from interaction and communication with others and their environments. Symbolic interactionism highlights that social interaction have a dynamic nature in which people continually change. A person's identity is therefore not something given: it is continually reconstructed. Because of its emphasis on action, interaction and meaning, symbolic interactionism has sometimes been described as a bottom up or grassroots approach to understanding human behaviour. Social order is thus characterised by a fragile fluid and dynamic quality.

Through these processes, individuals acquire a sense of self-identity, self-image and self-esteem embedded in interactions: past, present and even imagined futures. Symbolic interactionism developed from the Chicago School. Its founder was George Herbert Mead. However, the term itself was coined by Herbert Blumer in 1937 (Chamberlain-Salaun, Mills, & Usher, 2013). These authors further demonstrated the strong link between an emphasis on meaning, action and interaction from symbolic interactionism with key themes in grounded theory namely: concurrent data collection and analysis, constant comparison and lastly theoretical sampling. In line with grounded theory methodology, a substantive theory was derived from human practices and interaction in the trading arenas as interpreted by the researcher. Data was analysed progressively leading to a core category anchored on actual field data and not conjecture (Glaser, 2011).

Crotty (1998) went further and defined methods as "techniques or procedures to gather and analyse data related to some research question or hypothesis". The principal data collection methods used for this study to gather and analyse data included predominantly interviews coupled with concurrent observation. Grounded theory, interview methods and observation techniques are therefore described in

detail in the latter pages of this chapter. Grounded theory itself expects us to produce theory based on our data. This process inevitably involves an interpretation of facts in their uniqueness (Gray, 2009). As Denzin and Lincoln (2011) assert, “All research is interpretive; it is guided by the researcher’s set of beliefs and feelings about the world and how it should be understood and studied”. King and Horrocks (2012), quoting Schutz (1962), similarly assure us that, “All facts are from the outset selected from a universal context by the activities of the mind. They are, therefore, always interpreted facts”. A qualitative approach therefore was naturally the method of choice in the informal trading activities of flea market trading.

3.2 Method: Navigating the Way

There is no universally accepted definition of the vast field of qualitative research (Klenke, 2008). The following description of qualitative research from Denzin and Lincoln (2011), also quoted in Lyon and Coyle (2007), however, captures the essence of this practice:

Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.

In this study, therefore, I went out to collect field data, to interact with flea market traders through interviews and to observe their activities at the sites from which they operated. Subsequently, I analysed and interpreted such data as it became available in the manner demanded by grounded theory. Thus, I visited some sites a number of times. Each interview session shaped subsequent data collection in an emergent fashion. This involved theoretical saturation as well as overlapping data collection and analysis. At each site, I took field notes and subsequently I listened to the audiotapes all over again to help in conducting future interviews. In due course, I conducted transcription of my audiotapes during which process I got close to my data. After this stage, I proceeded to preliminary coding and analysis of that data.

One virtue of qualitative research is that it is concerned with the emic or insider view of phenomena (Klenke, 2008), which I sought to obtain through interviews and observations at flea market stalls. King and Horrocks (2010) also highlight that qualitative approaches involve detailed descriptions of specific social settings, processes and relationships as would be the case for the flea market sites and operators in the CBD of Gweru.

In line with the definition of qualitative research given above, Creswell (2007) has metaphorically depicted qualitative research practice as an intricate fabric composed of minute threads, many colours, different textures, and various blends of material. This view accords with the variety of forms of flea market trading, the multiplicity of players as well as the range of product offerings and trading practices in Gweru flea markets. Qualitative research allows participants to describe and

depict practices, meanings, and understandings in fine detail. The free flowing unstructured interviews conducted allowed this to take place. This study, therefore, aspired to honour the spirit of Denzin and Lincoln's (2011) representation of qualitative research in its essential respects. Klenke (2008) underlines that qualitative methods emphasize processes and meanings instead of measurement of quantity, amount or frequency. Thus, qualitative methods provide depth and detail through rich description of persons, situations, events, interactions, and behaviours. Beyond these rich thick descriptions, there is also the prospect of discerning themes, patterns, and theory in the flea market sector. Consequently, thick description should not be an end in itself but rather the foundation for development of theory; both substantive and formal. According to De Vaus (2006), research should answer two fundamental questions, namely: (i) What is going on? (description); (ii) Why is it going on? (explanation). In this respect, good description forms the foundation for good explanation and substantial theory formulation at the very least.

Creswell (2007) warns that, in attempting to represent the perspectives of participants, the researcher should not however be reduced to a mere vehicle for the voices of those researched. Thus, although the voices of flea market participants (through interviews and transcripts) formed an integral part of the research, my own perspectives and interpretations as a researcher impacted on research outcomes through the grounded theory method. However, I did not attempt to produce a transformative or advocacy agenda in this research, except to the extent that Charmaz (2011) suggests when she argues that the very process of witnessing participants' lives and analysing their data may elicit concerns about

social justice. It was perhaps inevitable that after many hours spent analysing data and using computer software (NVivo, in this case), my own interpretations as a researcher may have found some expression.

Several authors attested to the value of qualitative methods clearly articulating the value, superiority and appropriateness of the qualitative approach to a topic of the nature of flea market trading (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Hammersley, 2008; Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012). Furthermore, Creswell (2007) stresses the importance of identifying clearly the research approach chosen in a qualitative study out of the several options available as well as the need to cite credible studies that have relied on such approaches. However, as stated earlier, there is a dearth of research and literature on retailing in Zimbabwe at large and especially so on its flea markets. Even then, various empirical studies also supported the benefits of qualitative methodology in the context of informal trading activities in general and flea market retailing in particular (Burgess & Nyajeka, 2007; Chikweche & Fletcher, 2012; D'Andrea et al., 2006; Mhango & Niehm, 2005). For the study of innovative platforms in Latin America, D'Andrea et al. (2006) adopts a qualitative approach, first to choose 43 retailers from which group seven were selected for inclusion in the final sample. Semi-structured interviews were used in a multi-case approach to extract the fundamentals of successful business models and emerging conceptual insights. These researchers complemented their studies by using public information on selected retailers.

Corbin and Strauss (2008) assert that qualitative research allows researchers to get at the inner experience of participants and thus to determine what meanings

are formed, how they are formed and, further, to discover concepts and themes from the data rather than merely test existing theories derived from the literature or other sources. The discovery of theory is achieved by following an evolving and dynamic approach that recognises diversity as well as regularity. Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2012) also suggest that in qualitative research, meanings are derived from words rather than numbers and that such words, by their nature, may have multiple meanings and at times even unclear meanings as well. In these contexts, opportunities arise to explore a subject in as real a manner as possible often by using “thick” or “thorough” descriptions which, nevertheless, proceed beyond mere description to generate theory. Hammersley (2008) supports these views and further made the point that qualitative research has the ability to understand people’s perspectives over time because its methods aim to study and observe *in situ*, and indeed across different contexts, as well as over relatively long periods of time because human behaviour is not stable over time or place. Indeed, even the flea markets in Gweru reflected signs of adjustment and expansion with changing trading conditions during the study period. In circumstances like these, an emergent and contingent approach becomes desirable. Additionally, all informal activities (including flea markets) touch intimately on the lives of participants and so offer an appropriate context for the use of qualitative methodologies.

According to Creswell (2007), qualitative research designs embrace the entire process of research from conceptualising a problem to writing the research question and, on to data collection, analysis, interpretation, and report writing. This qualitative analysis of flea market retailing in the Gweru CBD area was located in

the qualitative domain to allow for such deeper and extended exploration of practices and relationships in an adaptable and vibrant sector that involves large numbers of individuals seeking to raise incomes and sustain livelihoods within a specific Zimbabwean context, in addition to meeting the needs of underserved consumers. Butler-Kisber (2010) argues that qualitative inquiry exists on a continuum from realist, positivistic research through to constructivist and relativistic qualitative research. In the constructivist arena, she argued that, “reality is known only through socially constructed meanings”. There is thus no single shared reality but instead a variety of social constructions through social practices, interactions and experiences. It appears that such social practices, interactions and experiences are most pertinent to the business practices of informal traders generally. In this study, one major aim was the discovery and generation of themes and patterns as well as theory arising from practices, interactions and experiences of flea market traders. Grounded theory methodology offered an appropriate medium for achieving this.

3.3 Grounded Theory

As qualitative research gained prominence it also became fragmented into numerous, even competing approaches (Hammersley, 2011). For example, Creswell (2007) identifies five major approaches for qualitative inquiry, namely narrative, phenomenology, ethnography, case study and grounded theory. Narrative research focuses on stories consisting of events and actions told by one or more individuals often given in some chronological form; phenomenology emphasises the lived experiences of several individuals while seeking to identify what those individuals have in common. Such individuals need not be in one place.

Thus, phenomenology may study such subjects as anger, and grief to bring up common meanings. Ethnography, on the other hand, places the spotlight on an entire cultural group involving many individuals who interact over time in a defined geographical area. The fourth type that Creswell identified is the case study which explores an issue by studying one or more instances of it. The contribution of grounded theory lies in the discovery or generation of theory through the examination of many individuals who are engaged in the same processes, actions or interactions as the flea market traders in Gweru do. It is for this reason that in their 1967 seminal book, *The discovery of grounded theory*, Glaser and Strauss (1967) define grounded theory as “the discovery of theory from data – systematically obtained and analysed”.

In the realm of grounded theory, the literature also generally acknowledges that there are variations or families of grounded theory. The founders of the grounded theory method, Glaser and Strauss (1967), assert from its inception that grounded theory takes many different forms. So grounded theory has been described as a contested field as demonstrated by its history. Urquhart (2013) glowingly describes grounded theory as a revolutionary and controversial way of analysing data. Perhaps due to its varied nature and its controversial history, Klenke (2008) has referred to grounded theory as an underutilised methodology.

The principal strands of grounded theory method are Glaserian and Straussian, especially consequent to the major fallout between the two founders of the grounded theory method. Denk, Kaufmann and Carter (2012) make the point that the two approaches are however not mutually exclusive. Bryant and Charmaz

(2011) also identify a third route: the constructivist approach whose distinguishing characteristic is that data analysis and methodological strategies become constructed in the light of the research context, the researcher's positions (that is reflexivity), priorities and interactions. Glaser on his part, sought for a method which, although necessarily systematic, would be free from too many restrictions.

Seldén (2005) projects the appeal that generating theory must have for any prospective researcher because exploration can then become an attractive academic activity. In support of this observation, Urquhart (2013) describes grounded theory method as a “brilliant (*method*) for investigating innovations, processes and what people do in various settings”. Hood (2007) has said that grounded theory elucidates processes and actions. Bryant and Charmaz (2011) describe the grounded theory approach as the most widely used and popular qualitative research method. Birks and Mills (2012) also assert as much by offering the reassuring assertion that grounded theory is the most popular research design the world over capable of explaining the phenomenon under study. Statements like these, therefore, make grounded theory an attractive proposition for inquiring into flea market trading. Birks and Mills (2012), however, warns that, due to the magnitude of information on grounded theory methods, studies using these methodologies remain complicated, especially for the novice researcher such as I am.

Idrees, Vasconcelos, and Cox (2011) identify a range of fields where grounded theory has been used including tourism and hospitality management, medical studies, psychology, information science and information systems, knowledge

management and discourse studies. Geiger and Turley (2003) hold the view that, because grounded theory is conceived as a way to study social actors together with their relationships and interactions, it is particularly suitable for marketing and sales research because it is capable of accommodating complexity and fluidity. The background to this study has already identified several different informal flea market settings in Gweru and that in all these markets, hundreds of individuals are engaged in sets of related activities and processes.

Birks and Mills (2012) and Urquhart (2013) identify three situations that recommend themselves for using grounded theory. Each of these manifests itself in this study of flea market retail practices in the CBD area of Gweru:

- Where little is known about the research context or for new phenomena where no previous theory exists. Flea market retailing in Zimbabwe is relatively undocumented with little that is known about it. It could therefore be explored without the restrictions of pre-existing theory arising from the immediate context. The processes and activities of flea market retailing are unique and different from the prevailing modern retail forms and they thus deserve study in their own right.
- Or those cases where the research goal is the generation of theory which conveys explanatory power and thus going beyond mere description. This study attempted to do just that.
- Finally, where there is an inherent embedded process at the core such as in the case of the practice of retailing. The emphasis on process is a

characteristic feature of grounded theory. Thus, in analysing data, for example, researchers are urged to use gerunds to highlight both process and action.

From the beginning, the founders of the method, Glaser and Strauss (1967) had recommended the use of grounded theory in non-traditional areas where there is little or no literature thus offering the opportunity to escape the shackles of existing theory. My study was conducted in a context where a yawning deficit in the substantive literature of flea market retailing in Zimbabwe existed. Glaser and Strauss (1967) also assert that generating theory through grounded theory is a manageable exercise which does not always take a genius to implement. As an approach for collecting and analysing data, the grounded theory method goes beyond mere description and instead it seeks to generate and discover theory which is anchored or “grounded” in data obtained during fieldwork. The writer/researcher gets deeply involved; and the theory that results is therefore authentic and not merely speculative.

The term grounded theory has often been used to refer to both the method and process as well as the product of the research process itself which is the theory that emerges. However, the two (process and product) often proceed hand in hand. For this reason, initial analysis of data may suggest the need for further data collection; a process referred to as theoretical sampling. “Fundamentally, grounded theory is an iterative, comparative, interactive, and abductive method” (Bryant & Charmaz, 2011). Therefore, I started my data analysis at the end of Day 1 after conducting a few interviews by listening through the audio recordings before

proceeding to further data collection the next day. Thus, analysis and data collection inform each other as a result of their concurrent nature.

Bryant and Charmaz (2011) found it necessary to encourage the “novice researcher” or “neophyte theorists”, according to Birks and Mills (2012), to be experimental and to develop their own theories, to assume the role of the “conceptual entrepreneur” and to avoid confining themselves merely to serve the interests of “theoretical capitalists” (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). As a novice researcher, I therefore found grounded theory rather appealing and liberating because it encouraged me to develop my own theories instead of fine-tuning existing ones (Bryant & Charmaz, 2011). Clearly, flea market trading in Gweru was such uncharted territory and it offered abundant opportunities for theory development from an early stage.

In developing such theory, the notion of emergence holds a central place in the armoury of grounded theory, starting with engagement with data to defining new theories through comparing data with data, data with code, then code with category and finally category with category (Bryant & Charmaz, 2011). This is the role of the constant comparison method which, together with theoretical sampling and theoretical saturation, forms the so-called ‘*troublesome trinity*’ (Hood, 2007). Idrees, Vasconcelos and Cox (2011) have referred to the same three processes as generic principles.

3.3.1 The “troublesome trinity”

The key ingredients of grounded theory according to Hood (2007) are the ‘troublesome trinity’, namely theoretical sampling, constant comparison and a focus on development of theory via theoretical saturation. Theoretical sampling ultimately leads to theoretical saturation. According to Bryant and Charmaz (2011), these three (theoretical sampling, constant comparison and theoretical saturation) constitute the essential properties of grounded theory and unsurprisingly they are among the most difficult to understand and apply. Without them, a qualitative study would not amount to grounded theory (Bryant & Charmaz, 2011).

In dealing with data analysis, Kelle (2007) argues that, “Categories must not be forced on the data, they should emerge instead in the ongoing process of data analysis” through the process of constant comparison which supports the emergence of categories. This process of constant comparison enables the researcher to establish whether data exists to support the emerging categories by alternating data collection with coding processes during open and selective coding. New data is compared to existing data (incident to incident comparison) while emerging concepts are similarly compared to data to achieve saturation and densification of concepts. When one develops categories from data, they are tentative and provisional at the initial stages, but are subject to further elaboration through additional observations to achieve theoretical saturation. Such elaboration continues until categories are saturated; and this occurs when fresh ideas run out (Dey, 2007). According to Holton (2011), “one stops when one no longer needs to continue”, and when no new properties or dimensions are emerging.

During the first phase of data collection, I carried out 25 interviews; all of them were audio-recorded except in one case where there was some equipment failure. I then carried out partial transcription on all the interviews and subsequently conducted initial open coding using NVivo 7. I later upgraded first to NVivo 10 and finally to NVivo 11. This open coding process produced 38 codes (called nodes in the terminology of the NVivo computer aided qualitative analysis software) (See File named Tree Nodes in Appendix). The majority of these codes were in fact produced in the first two days of coding from the first interviews coded. Correspondingly, the codes which received the highest references from interview transcripts (the 10 top ranking) were created almost exclusively on the second day of substantial coding. By the same token codes created subsequently had declining numbers of references. From the very first codes created during initial coding, any fresh interesting themes or ideas encountered were compared to the existing list of codes; and new codes were created only if the themes did not fit codes already created. Thus, constant comparison was the key to the progression of the coding process in accordance with the dictates of the grounded theory described above. Usually, I listened to the interview audio record with the transcript running side by side. This was the essence of word by word; line by line coding and constant comparison of new materials with the already coded materials.

The two principles of theoretical sampling and saturation were used both to direct sampling by determining its depth and breadth as well as to guide analysis. The two principles impacted on the nature and quantum of data collected. Creswell (2007) argues that codes and categories are sorted, compared until saturation is reached, that is, "until analysis produced no new codes or categories and when all

of the data were accounted for in the core categories”. However, deciding when enough is enough has enormous import on the volume of data collected and analysed. A balance needs to be struck between too little and too much data.

Setting sample size in grounded theory has received considerable attention. In many ways, setting sample size illustrates one consequence of the application of theoretical sampling. Idrees, Vasconcelos and Cox (2011) submit that in grounded theory, “there is no pre-definition of what the sample should be or of how large it should be or what sites exactly should/would be...groups are chosen as they are needed”. Geiger and Turley (2003) also assert that “grounded theorists do not believe in the value of a representative sample. There is no minimum or maximum sample size.” The critical requirement is to saturate theory, with categories and themes as they emerge during analysis of data. Any estimates attempted at the initial stages are subject to correction as the analysis proceeds. Glaser and Strauss (1967) state that the researcher is unable to cite the number and types of groups from which data is to be collected until the research is completed.

Additionally, judgements on whether saturation has been reached are never precise (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Fundamentally, theoretical sampling as a concept can be described as a form of theory-directed sampling as a result of which it is not possible to specify in advance the type and nature of data to be collected; the number of participants or data sources or when, where or how data would be collected (Birks & Mills, 2012). Thus, it was important to reflect on the data as it came in and, on that basis, to determine what further data was needed and how much and from what sources.

I conducted initial open coding on the first batch of interviews using NVivo. This was also a stage of consolidating my proficiency with the software through the casebook using case attributes; using sets as well as search and query procedures. I also built up annotations, links and memos in the process. This stage revealed that most codes were rather descriptive hence needed scaling up (Urquhart, 2013). Also, by comparing the range of goods and services covered by the first batch of interviews with the list of trades supplied by Council some trades were not represented. Thus, at a subsequent stage I proceeded to interview people dealing with crafts including a traditional herbalist. I also sampled the traders in '*mabhero*' (second hand clothing imported in large 'bales'). Council had opened this area in mid-2014. I also decided that there it would not be rewarding to carry out as many interviews in a stretch as I had done previously. I needed more time to work with the software and understand the emerging patterns and ascertain the incremental improvement in new insights, and thus arrive at some determination whether I was reaching saturation. Thus, I was engaged in collecting coding and analysing data from the stage of initial coding on a concurrent basis.

There is ample justification in the literature for the procedures I adopted. Glaser and Strauss (1967) originally defined theoretical sampling as a process of data collection for generating theory whereby "the analyst jointly collects, codes, and analyses his data and decides what data to collect next and where to find them". According to Bryant and Charmaz (2011), theoretical sampling occurs even at the stage of the initial data collection and analysis. Its function is to fill out the properties of emergent categories. Decisions are then made as to which groups or locations to turn to for illuminating data and theory. Theoretical sampling is thus an

active and purposeful way of data collection. In addition, Glaser and Strauss (1967) refer to this as “continual intermeshing of data collection and analysis”. Such sampling is conducted after tentative codes and categories have been developed from data. It enables the researcher to decide where to sample next, what additional data to seek out and so build justification for the emerging theory by following emerging themes and storylines suggested by the data itself not the existing theory for example.

All this serves the purpose of densifying and clarifying categories by following particular paths of analysis. The goal of theoretical saturation is theory construction and refinement either by maximising diversity or minimising similarities between groups or concepts in data (Urquhart, 2013). I maximized diversity by covering all the flea market sectors included in the official records from the Council. At the same time, I also conducted several interviews in some locations. In her study of stepfathers, Stern (2011), for example, used theoretical sampling to seek out families with teenage and adult children instead of just those with school age children. Such sampling therefore serves the purpose of advancing the theory through a process that overlaps data collection and analysis. Theoretical sampling in this manner also allows the researcher to build a chain of evidence by building instances that saturate concepts and categories. This audit trail ensures that the emergent theory is firmly anchored and grounded in empirical data rather than conjecture or prior concepts.

3.3.2 Induction and theory generation

By analysing different forms of data (mostly interviews and some observation conducted during interviews), I hoped that insights and patterns would emerge to reflect the state of flea market retailing in Gweru. To achieve this, I employed an inductive approach based on data that emerged. Such an emergent approach is one further key feature of grounded theory which allowed me to build a theory firmly grounded on the received data.

The inductive method begins with a range of individual interview cases then extrapolating from them to form conceptual categories (Bryant & Charmaz, 2011). It has therefore been defined as a process whereby theory becomes the end point. It proceeds from data to broad codes, themes, patterns, theories, and generalization thus working from the bottom up. However, Saunders (2012) notes that, in practice, research often combines both inductive and deductive elements to the extent of reliance on some pre-existing theoretical base, for example. Thus, for this study, I steered away from the use of codes derived from literature. Instead, I derived my codes from the data (mostly the interviews I had conducted). These were used to derive categories and eventually producing models of flea market operators.

Induction therefore aligns with the emphasis that grounded theory method makes about the emergence of theoretical relationships among constructs grounded in data. Bryant and Charmaz (2011), however, have warned of the danger of reliance on a limited range of individual cases so that conceptualisation overreaches itself. The purpose of theoretical saturation within grounded theory is to guard against

such tendencies by ensuring that theory is firmly grounded on adequate data. As Creswell (2007) puts it, qualitative researchers should use an emerging or inductive approach to inquiry, including the collection of data in a natural setting, while remaining sensitive to people and places under study. For these reasons, I conducted interviews in phases. Even within each phase I limited the number of interviews conducted on any single day. At the end of a day of interviewing, I spent time listening the audio tapes. Thus, by the time I embarked on transcription, I was already familiar with the main elements and themes of each interview. This familiarity gained from listening to the audio records further allowed me to conduct partial transcription as explained elsewhere.

For this qualitative study, most aspects of data collection were conducted in loco, that is, in their natural field settings, to achieve detailed understanding of the issues through interviews and observation. Most interviews carried out were at the premises of participants, namely their trading stalls. I would pause whenever necessary to allow my participants to serve customers as they arrived. Interviews were therefore conducted in their natural settings and not in a contrived or foreign/unfamiliar environment. This allowed participants to relax and, when necessary, to illustrate issues by references to their practices and the goods and services they dealt with. Perhaps the exception to this was through the limited use of some deductive procedures in respect to documentary data (such as that from City Council) in particular, and some references to theoretical frameworks from the literature. However, as presentations so far have shown, the bulk of this literature is from outside Africa except for Mhango and Niehm (2005), Mavondo (2000), Mhonde, Nyamwanza and Sikomwe (2011), and Burgess and Nyajeka (2007).

Examples of such theoretical frameworks include localisation and emotional proximity (Coca-Stefaniak *et al.*, 2010), transition to formal retail forms by the same researchers and Yessenova (2006). Anand (2009) mentions the coexistence of several retail forms. However, the availability of studies was handled in such a manner that it would not contaminate or compromise the purity of the emerging theory during analysis.

A key aspect of grounded theory is to go beyond mere description and thus generate theory from field data. Emphasis on theory founded on data is a constant recurring theme in grounded theory. Stern (2011) establishes the essential qualities of this emphasis as:

- The ability to make sense through creating instant recognition that the theory derives from a given context; that it is about particular people or objects to which readers can relate.
- That theory is developed from data instead of an existing theoretical framework.
- The derived theory can be applied to the larger world.
- The theory produced can be related to existing theory in one's discipline and to other fields in the later stages of the study.

I started my data analysis by focusing on the interviews which constituted my main data source. This generated a large number of initial open codes. My very first codes arose from that data. I built these codes into a hierarchy to reflect the

emerging structure and relationships in the data. Thus, my analysis was anchored and grounded in the field data itself. In due course, during selective and theoretical coding, this structure was interpreted and analysed through reference to the existing literature.

Thus, the resulting research outcome would be an authentic depiction of processes and activities of flea market traders in Gweru. The derived theory was subsequently related to existing theory in retail, business management or other fields thus yielding formal theory. At the lowest level, phenomena are merely described by attaching labels to them at the initial stage of open coding. Description may be followed by further analysis then by relating categories during theoretical coding.

As Creswell (2007) asserts, theory derived through grounded theory aims at generating or discovering theory to help explain practices, processes, actions or interactions among many participants. Similarly, Urquhart (2013) emphasises that the major goal of grounded theory must consist of the production of theory through induction. This emphasis on discovery of theory is appropriate for this study of flea markets in Zimbabwe to enable uninhibited exploration of practices and activities within an under-researched context. Other than the singular study by Mhonde, Nyamwanza and Sikomwe (2011), this research is a pioneering study and no direct academic studies have been conducted into this topic on this scale.

Glaser and Strauss (1967) assert that comparative analysis which puts an emphasis on theory formulation as a process rather than a product is a vehicle for

the generation of two types of theory, namely substantive and formal. Substantive theory develops from an empirical area of inquiry, namely retailing and flea market trading in the case of this study. Formal theory, on the other hand, is broad and conceptual. Thus the two types exist at different levels of generality (Glaser, 2011). According to Urquhart (2013), substantive theory is that which the grounded theory method produces in the first instance; it pertains to the phenomena/context being studied; it does not seek to generalise beyond that particular phenomena. In this study, such theory relates to flea market trading within the CBD in Gweru. Seldén (2005) contends that such substantive theory is developed for an empirical area as opposed to formal theory which would relate to a broader conceptual area. Because substantive theory is induced systematically from empirical instances in the data via the coding process it therefore acts as a springboard or stepping stone to formal theory.

Formal and substantive theory should not be merely descriptive; instead, it should be conceptual and spanning time, place and people. Theoretical sampling and constant comparison help to achieve this goal. The end product is that grounded theory is anchored on empirical data (through the derived substantive grounded theory) and ceases to be merely speculative. This increases breadth and power of grounded theory. Thus, Glaser (2011) sums it up by saying that, "The grounded theory researcher is modest and grounded. He is not a generator of immaculate conjecture". Grounded theory, however, aims at creation of abstract knowledge from concrete observations.

Induction thus grew from individual interview data elements. Coding and analysis led to categories and themes. These processes produced a substantive theory in the field which could later be broadened in scope and related to the literature.

3.3.3 Use of prior knowledge

Because grounded theory seeks to generate new theory from data, the role of prior knowledge, especially that arising from the literature, has been discussed extensively. Birks and Mills (2012) describes the use of literature (especially in the initial stages of a grounded theory study) as perhaps the most contentious and misunderstood aspect of grounded theory. Indeed, from its inception Glaser and Strauss (1967) urged researchers to “ignore the literature” or otherwise run the risk of contaminating emerging concepts at the stage of analysing of data. Nevertheless, authorities continue to be divided on whether or when to use prior knowledge in analysing qualitative data under the grounded theory framework. In this study, I decided to describe theory from the literature (as laid out in this chapter and elsewhere), but I have refrained from using the literature as a basis for my analysis. Thus, I started my coding with no pre-existing list of codes. Translation from vernacular (mostly Shona) limited the scope for using *in vivo* code and coding. My very first codes were, however, anchored on the data, especially through continuing access and use of audio tapes. Thus, all my codes at all the stages of analysis were divorced from any prior knowledge, especially that arising from the literature. As Kelle (2011) suggests, my review of the literature was used in a non-committal manner to serve as a safety net to avoid aimless drift. I was aware of the literature but my goal was to set it aside until the later stages of data analysis.

Thus, in general, a formal review of the literature is to be delayed to prevent imposing existing theories and knowledge on a study and its outcomes. As Birks and Mills (2012) advised, in the early stages, the literature provided me with examples of how other researchers have deployed grounded theory methods. Holton (2011) argues that “as a generative and emergent methodology, grounded theory requires the researcher to enter the research field with no preconceived problem statement”. However, in an often-quoted statement, Dey (in Bryant & Charmaz, 2011), on the other hand, reminds us that: “an open mind does not imply an empty head”. Accordingly, it is possible, and perhaps even desirable, to have a bank of pertinent prior knowledge while also employing an emergent methodology in which even the problem statement itself may be subjected to modification in the light of the accumulating data. This is so because in a grounded study, data collection and analysis often proceed in tandem.

Regarding prior knowledge, Charmaz (2011) has advanced the candid view that few doctoral students and professional researchers begin their studies without some prior knowledge of their field. I have therefore disclosed such prior knowledge in a separate literature review section for this study. Kelle (2011) further reinforces this position by saying that the development of categories cannot start “*ab novo*”: it must therefore use existing stocks of knowledge. However, at the beginning of data analysis, I tried to set aside theoretical ideas so that these would not contaminate, stifle or impede the emerging theory. Glaser (1978) asserts that theory (that is prior knowledge) should not be forced to data: it should emerge from the data. Therefore, all codes from the initial coding stage were derived from the interview data transcripts.

Setting aside all prior literature undoubtedly creates a substantial and challenging dilemma because, as Stern (2011) argues, “one cannot unknow what one knows.” In addition, I have been a resident of Gweru for many years myself and have also obtained goods and services from flea market traders. Some intuitive knowledge was thus inescapable. I could not pretend to unknow that knowledge and exposure. My aim, however, was to come back to the theory after the completion of data collection and analysis as shown in the later stage of this research.

It may be unavoidable that a researcher’s previous work and knowledge (however that was obtained) impacts on ongoing research. Idrees, Vansconcelos and Cox (2011) contend that some initial review of the literature serves to provide a context or overall picture of the research problem: it reduces uncertainty regarding the context and focus of the topic. While obeying the injunction to set aside prior knowledge may offer a better chance of discovering something new, it remains that the challenge to stay open to emergent theory by forgoing prior knowledge constitutes one of the most difficult issues confronting those new to grounded theory (Holton, 2011) in particular, and therefore myself included. As researcher, I however did not embark on a research agenda as a blank slate (*tabula rasa*). Tang, Chen and Xiao (2010) have called such a blank slate a mere ideal because we all carry a “backpack” of prior knowledge, meaning and prejudices about our discipline. In this respect, I compiled a statement on reflexivity to capture glimpses of my own “backpack” and how it may have impacted on this study.

Once I had developed some tentative theory, I then had an obligation to engage existing theory in order to enhance densification of the emergent theory (Urquhart,

2013). According to Urquhart (2013), densification is a process of scaling up from the emerging substantive theory. I have noted that studies of informal market trading in the reviewed literature identified earlier are mostly from outside Zimbabwe. Their relevance is thus perhaps limited. Most of those studies covered would therefore serve for comparison only and for indicating links to existing theory. I felt in this that they are less likely to pollute the emerging theory. Urquhart (2013) suggests that literature should be taken in phases: non-committal initial stage to be followed by an integrative phase which links the emergent theory with the extant literature.

The literature review I undertook at the stage of crafting my research proposal enabled me to sample the state of conversation on informal and flea market retailing. In addition, the review provided some support in developing and comparing any emerging theories at the later stages of analysis while retaining the avowed emphasis on emergence. Kelle (2011) has said that, "Although qualitative research does not start with readymade and precise hypotheses, the development of categories from empirical data is dependent on the availability of adequate theoretical concepts". In undertaking this research of flea markets in Zimbabwe, I cannot claim to have worked with an empty head. A stock of existing knowledge about flea market retailing was available to me to provide an anchor and a basis for comparison. This stock of knowledge has been identified elsewhere in this proposal as follows:

- Ecological perspective of growth and development of flea markets (Mavondo, 2000) in describing market conditions in Zimbabwe.

- Coexistence of economic and hedonic motives on a continuum (Pryor & Grossbart, 2005)
- Mutually beneficial coexistence of retail forms (Anand, 2009) serving different income groups and product categories in Mexico.
- That flea market retailing may perhaps be an endangered retail form no longer making any valuable economic contribution (Jones et al., 2007) in the UK. On the other hand, Mhonde, Nyamwanza and Sikomwe (2011) had a gloomy prognosis of these enterprises.
- A history of successful retail which has its roots from humble beginnings undertaken by low-income entrepreneurs (D'Andrea, 2011) in Latin America.
- That flea market retailing occurs under dual economies (Burgess and Nyajeka, 2005)
- Flea markets may be classified based on the motives of their operators and on the basis of their levels of efficiency into clear and distinct stages (Mhango and Niehm, 2005) in Malawi.
- Informal trading as arenas: as both 'markets' and as 'marketplaces' (Shepherd, 2009) in Washington DC.

All the studies cited above demonstrate how, in the majority of instances, flea markets play positive roles in various ways and how they are integrated into modern main stream retailing. However, few of these studies are Zimbabwean as already noted above.

3.4 Participants

In a qualitative study, samples are generally small (compared to positivist/quantitative studies) in order to allow for the collection of rich data, especially where interview and observation methods are used (Masocha, 2015). According to Morse (2007), the best participants in grounded theory must be thoroughly familiar with the experience under investigation; they must be reflective and of course willing to participate. The sample of participants used must be representative of the experiences arising though not perhaps representative in the statistical sense. Thus recruitment of participants needed to be purposeful in order to avoid what Morse (2007) terms excessive data which could itself be an impediment to analysis because too much data leads to a kind of “conceptual blindness” whereby the investigator is swamped through scanning rather than processing data cognitively. Stern (2011) also highlights that collecting huge amounts of data may be both unnecessary and even self-defeating as a lot of data may go unanalysed. On the other hand, too little deprives the research of potential richness while too much runs the danger of compromising thoroughness of analysis. The effect is that sampling must rely on concurrent analysis of incoming data. When emerging themes are saturated, data collection needs to be terminated.

Thus, I took care to obtain rich and thick description without sacrificing the ultimate development of theory through too much data. At the end of each day, I spent time listening to all interviews conducted in order to improve the quality and relevance of subsequent interviews. As Bryant and Charmaz (2011) have cast it: in undertaking grounded theory, student researchers need to avoid the Scylla of

'mere description' as well as the Charybdis of 'immaculate conceptualisation' which is not sufficiently grounded in field data.

In choosing research participants, I took the admonition that the choice of participants ought to be deliberate and purposeful because "excellent qualitative inquiry is inherently biased" (Morse, 2007). According to Morse, such bias implies that participants are deliberately sought and selected to achieve research goals until theoretical saturation is reached. Morse further argues that such "bias" in no way impairs research rigour: the best examples of the occurrences under investigation should be identified rather than pedestrian ones to achieve adequate clarity of the emerging concepts as efficiently and as cleanly as possible. These participants comprise those cases from which one can learn the most because they are information-rich and they are relevant to the emerging issues. For these reasons, Morse (2011) argues that randomly selected samples impede and obscure the focus of the inquiry.

To start with, I drew up a list of flea market traders that I knew spread across a diversity of trades. I used these to introduce me to other players. This was especially useful at the beginning. As I gained confidence, I was able to expand the circle and recruit more interviewees as I saw fit guided by the requirements of theoretical saturation. For this reason, my first interviewee (BH) introduced me to some three seasoned players. A trader in the book and stationery sector proved an eloquent spokesperson who brought in two fellow booksellers in his sector. From that base, it was not difficult crossing the aisle to speak to a dealer in crafts and then hopping on to an herbalist. These last two had seen me conducting

interviewees with the bookseller. This awareness inspired much needed confidence and rapport for me. I believe that this contributed to more authentic data. It is also worth noting that although I had designed a draft interview protocol, I did not take in pilot interviews. I followed Richards's advice that even in the case where a 'pilot' stage is included; there would be no need to exclude the pilot data from analysis (Richards (2012). Unstructured interviews are by nature and definition unscripted.

As commonly happens in qualitative research, and as the arguments presented above suggest, I used non-probability sampling techniques. I was aware of the range of products and trading sites within the CBD after touring the markets and preliminary discussions with City Council officials at the time of seeking authority to conduct the study, and subsequently when I came back for additional information. I have described these sites in Chapter 1. My principal goal was to interview owners and operators themselves rather than employees. However, I found out that on occasions, owners/operators were unavailable or even if present sometimes they preferred to stay in the background. At the proposal stage for this research, I had approached the City Council through their Housing and Amenities Department and obtained written permission. Council officials are important gatekeepers. So, I interviewed a senior official who assisted me in getting broad data about flea market activity in general within the CBD in Gweru. Moreover, this contact proved useful also in leading me to participants who would be expected to be thoroughly familiar with the sector as traders themselves as suggested by Morse (2011) above. Riding on the back of this contact, I accepted an arrangement to conduct interviews with these. With the goal of achieving information richness, I

further accepted an offer made by the president of the local hawkers and vendors association to interview some long-serving individuals at Kudzanai. The association is an important lobby group. These suggestions were added to a list of potential interview participants.

I had also drawn up a list of potential interview candidates who operate flea market stands by relying on acquaintances, colleagues and relatives. The list included two individuals I interviewed in the first phase. Both contributed to a diverse network of referrals constituting a form of network or snowball sampling. I interviewed these individuals later.

Urquhart (2012) emphasises that it is usually obvious when to stop: a category that is saturated is “full”. Additional data search yields nothing new. Sampling procedures therefore illustrate the use of the concept of emergence in grounded theory. I also organized my data collection in stages. After data collection, I personally transcribed the interviews from the digital audio tapes to enable initial analysis to begin. Listening through the audio tapes and transcribing the data allowed me to get close to the data once more following the interviews themselves which I had conducted in person. This intimate contact with the data allowed me to identify further areas to collect data from before going back to the field for further data collection.

At the beginning of the process of identifying participants, Morse recommends systematic procedures beginning with convenience sampling where participants are selected based on accessibility and availability. This stage allows for mapping

out the scope of the project, its dimensions, boundaries as well as its major components. I planned that my data collection and selection of interview participants would span diverse market and product types in the Gweru CBD. This process was designed to lead to the establishment of a global and holistic overview of the critical issues involved under the investigation. King and Horrocks (2009) stress the need for diversity and variety in selecting participants most likely to throw light on meaningful differences of the experience under study. At this initial and exploratory stage, my goal was to maximise the variation of meaning and scope of the phenomena based on how participants themselves characterise the emerging concepts and their trading practices. At Aspirations Village (one of the privately managed flea market sites), I started by interviewing the Manager/proprietor. Subsequently I spoke to flea market traders introduced to me by the manager. I suggested the various trades I thought I could usefully cover the range of product and service types at that site and the manager introduced me to the participants. But in other cases, I made my own approaches without involving the manager. I also went on to cover other sites such as the *'mabhero'* section at the Old Post Office and at Kudzanai Bus Terminus.

Increasing understanding of the emerging theory and categories directed sampling with the selection of participants who had the most relevant and illuminating experiences in accordance with theoretical saturation which seeks to fill or saturate emerging concepts and categories. Negative or deviant cases (those who did not respond in the manner anticipated or had opposite reactions) would, however, not be discarded but integrated into the emerging theory as they serve to indicate the range and reach of the emerging theory. I was guided and motivated by the

emerging theory in a purposive manner and through the need to identify candidates who are the most knowledgeable on aspects of flea market retailing within Zimbabwe in general and Gweru in particular, and for the products or product categories in question. Many of the candidates I spoke to had spent more than a decade in their chosen trade. At Aspiration Village, 9 participants were drawn from clothing (including the specialized Rastafarian sector), gas accessories and events management. One interviewee was selected through referral from the Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises. His name came with impeccable credentials. Besides being the president of the local hawkers' association, he also had accumulated a wealth of experience as a flea market trader.

In a study conducted into customer purchase decision making, Tang, Chen and Xiao (2010) used respondents chosen from their own personal contacts in the preliminary stage of their study whereas participants for the second and third stages were known to the researchers second-hand. The preliminary stage used in-depth, and open-ended interviews. However, these processes were modified in the later stages through interview questions derived from the preliminary stage. Interview questions at these later stages then had greater focus and so lasted shorter durations than earlier interviews. Similarly, Geiger and Turley (2003) explain that sampling evolved from an initial broad sample proceeding to a more focused sampling approach. This exemplified the concept of emergence and theoretical sampling. It also illustrates that grounded theory is not conducted through a recipe book: it proceeds according to the dictates of the research context and its surrounding possibilities. It is flexible. In my case, later interviews were

certainly assisted in focus, fluency and flow by earlier ones. However, if anything, these later interviews tended to be longer such as when I spent more time exploring the issue of motivation on entry and continued participation in the sector contrary to the opposing views of Tang et al. (2010).

In the case of sampling for interviews, snowballing procedures appeared most appropriate for the choice of participants. According to Kumar (2011), snowball sampling relies on a few key individuals in a network. It seems that (especially for permanent flea market sites) a researcher coming in from outside would need to lean on trusted individuals in the group to gain initial entry and acceptance. Thus, in a qualitative study of Zimbabwean consumers living at the bottom of the pyramid (consumers living on less than \$2 a day), Chikweche and Fletcher (2012b) recommend personal introductions and social networking available to the researcher to facilitate access to respondents. Hood (2007) and Carson, Gilmore and Perry (2005) make the same argument. A few known contacts would provide initial introductions to a growing sample of participants across market sites proceeding in that fashion until theoretical saturation was achieved, and additional data yielded no new information. Put another way, saturation occurs in those circumstances where redundancy in response begins to emerge so negating the need to collect more data (Klenke, 2008). In such cases, new interview/observation data, for example, merely replicates what has already been generated (King & Horrocks, 2010).

There are, however, cases where Chikweche and Fletcher's recommendations may falter. Pena and Norte (2000), for example, found little cooperation from the

Mexican vendors they studied. Indeed, some deliberately gave unreliable information to outsiders for fear of harassment by government authorities. In the cases where Pena and Norte had prior connections, it was easier to create rapport and overcome such mistrust. I therefore rode on the back of known participants for a start as well as depending on introductions to additional participants from an initial set. Whereas reliance on acquaintances helped in creating trust and rapport, especially at the beginning, there was also potential for bias which needed to be counteracted through a growing list of referrals. With the passage of time I opened avenues for direct approaches to potential participants. One of the most informative and interesting interviews was with someone I bought products from before I had embarked on this research. He spoke in perfect fluent English throughout and through him I ended up with a threesome focus group of flea market booksellers.

3.4.1 Gaining access

To be able to gather field data, the researcher needs to gain access to data sources; principally the flea market traders themselves in my case. I therefore needed to obtain the consent and cooperation of participants as well as permission to enter flea market sites and premises for the purpose of interviews or taking photographs or conducting observations. To this end, several gatekeepers counted. Initially, I obtained written permission from the Director of Housing and Amenities at the City of Gweru for this research (See appendix). Such permission covered publicly managed municipal markets on the main. Separate permission was also sought from private owners of other flea market sites. For my interviews, when I approached managers at privately own markets I soon found out that my

credibility was enhanced by producing a letter of introduction from my Faculty Dean (Copy attached in Appendix). Access occurs at three levels: physical, continuing and cognitive. Access is thus not a single event; it “may be an iterative and incremental process” that extends over time through processes of negotiation (Saunders et al., 2012). In this respect, once I had gained initial acceptance, subsequent engagement concerning observation done at a later stage no longer required elaborated consent procedures. It is often necessary to gain overall permission from gatekeepers at different levels (King & Horrocks, 2010). This procedure facilitated contacts with flea markets participants and gave reassurance of my credibility and trustworthiness.

I always carried a copy of written authority from the Director of Housing and Amenities on me always throughout data collection. This, together with the letter of introduction from my Faculty, was a handy tool in opening pathways. Another key gatekeeper came through the Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises in Gweru. They suggested to me the name of the leader of an association of flea market traders operating, especially around Kudzanai. This participant (RKT) suggested additional interviews with some traders who have been at Kudzanai for many years. I accepted this arrangement, wary of the danger of creating self-reinforcing trends.

Interviewing key gatekeepers further allowed me to gather necessary background information about flea market settings generally and so help me improve my interview protocol. Clearly it also afforded me the opportunity to generally gain access and credibility with the rest of participants.

Establishing rapport and securing informed consent is especially important in the case of grounded theory as data collection and analysis may require the researcher to revisit the same participants or to others in the same locality on a repetitive basis. Access and consent arise from ongoing relationships rather than a single moment of consent (Butler-Kisber, 2010). Thus, when I interviewed two brothers dealing with fabrics, I seemed to gain credibility when it emerged that one person I had interviewed earlier was in fact a role model of theirs.

Interview and observation involve many processes and activities such as recording, taking notes or photographs, watching and witnessing events and activities. Each of these processes and activities involves special sensitivities about which participants should be informed fully to enable them to make appropriate informed consent on all or some of those activities. When I went out for my first interviews I was armed with a consent form. During the initial stages of data collection, I religiously asked participants to sign the consent form. In addition to that, I still explained to my participants the purpose of my visit and again requested permission to record the interview session. It soon dawned on me that I was engaging in what participants regarded as some needless ritual. So, subsequently, although I always had copies of the consent form with me, I audio-recorded my introduction and captured their consent in that fashion. In this way, I provided my participants with full information concerning my identity and credentials, the aims and objectives of the study or the methods and procedures to be adopted. Specific permission was also needed for recording interviews, especially where this involved audio-taped interviews. One participant initially

objected to being recorded on tape when I made my appointment with her. However, on the interview date, when I raised the matter she had clearly changed her mind and welcomed the idea with open arms. But she sought assurances that the device would not take pictures of her as well doing a voice recording. We agreed that I would switch the recorder on, zip it in my bag with only the microphone showing on the outside! Thus, one method was acceptable while another was objectionable.

However, where a participant objected to tape recording, I planned to rely instead on keeping detailed field notes. As King and Horrocks (2010) points out, in most qualitative research traditions, a recording of each interview is preferable though not essential. Field notes, by their nature, featured throughout in both interviews and observations whether or not tape-recording took place. I proceeded to expand and refine these notes soon after each interview.

Familiarity with the organisation or group under investigation is helpful. For me, this started from the level of the City Council from whom I had written permission. Existing contacts (a friend, relative, or professional colleague with existing networks to build a basis of trust) are useful. This was especially so at the beginning before I had gained confidence and at privately run sites where I sought approval from the management who were often on site. In fact, I also would introduce myself to the management nearly every day upon arrival. However, as I gained trust and confidence, I also developed additional contacts on an ongoing

basis once I was on site. These own contacts were necessary to counteract possible bias arising from overusing recommended candidates.

Confidentiality and anonymity for research participants are important considerations in dealing with participants throughout the research. Some participants may feel vulnerable at times. Thus, data should remain confidential with only the analysed results appearing at an appropriate level of generalisation so that identification of individual participants is not possible. Readers should not be able to identify individual participants, and it should not be possible for any response can be identified with any individual source.

In using the consent form, I was careful to explain the purpose of the research to each interviewee. I was also careful to ensure that participants agreed to have a tape record of the interview. Even beyond that, I gave frequent and detailed oral explanations during the interview. The consent form and my standard self-introduction stressed these issues. In addition, these oft-repeated assurances at the start of the interview ensured that there would be a digital audio trail of consent as well. After that, I kept the audio data in protect files at all stages.

Sometimes there is a danger that consent becomes too legalistic or ritualistic and those procedures may interfere with the act of establishing real rapport. Thus, many of my participants appeared to regard form completion as a type of such redundant, formalistic and ritualistic behaviour. Substance, rather than form, needs to be respected at times. Hence in the majority of interviews (except for the early stages), this form filling was omitted and substituted with explanations during which

interviewees orally recorded their consent. For some, it appeared that documentation even added to a level of discomfort. For Chikweche and Fletcher (2012), the researcher's ability to use local Zimbabwean languages – Shona and Ndebele in their case - helped create relationships and build trust. At the planning stages of this research, I assumed that all informal flea market retailers in the study area are indigenous Zimbabweans for whom English was a second/foreign language. I am a fluent speaker of Shona, but I have limited competence in Ndebele, especially written Ndebele. However, as Chikweche and Fletcher were quick to add, most people in Zimbabwe mix English and local languages. This is the situation I found myself in. As expected, everyone comprehended Shona, even when it was not their mother tongue. So, all my interviews were predominantly in Shona or English.

The fact that most of the respondents in the study by Chikweche and Fletcher (2012) had a working knowledge of English, which they used liberally in combination with a vernacular, is reflective of a high level of literacy among Zimbabweans. ZIMSTAT (2013) placed literacy rates in Zimbabwe at 94% among women and 96% among men. Chikweche and Fletcher also found that attitudes of suspicion and mistrust towards strangers were variable. Respondents aged 45 and above were more cautious in granting recorded interviews. Verbal consent was often preferred over written consent. I required a flexible and responsive stance in handling the issue of consent even though a Participant Consent Form was used in some instances. My own research participants were of various age groups but mostly in the 30-50 age group. For most, the written consent form seemed like a tedious bother. In the end, I felt that the recorded description of consent issues

was adequate. I felt this recording reflected the substantive consent of many interview participants.

3.5 Trustworthiness

Birks and Mills (2012) assert that research credibility depends on the adoption of measures for ensuring quality throughout the entire research process. For Birks and Mills, the pursuit of quality is synonymous with the exercise of rigour. One virtue of grounded theory is that it pays attention to procedural detail which contributes to rigour. Klenke (2008) observes that there is no consensus on quality criteria for qualitative research or the terminology for describing it. Klenke points out that, while some writers have urged the adoption of the same standards as those applied in positivistic research, others reject those standards as inappropriate and therefore advocate for establishing separate criteria arguing that the scope of qualitative research is too broad for a single set of standards to be applied (Crawford, Leybourne, & Arnott, 2000; Guba & Lincoln, 1989). A more radical camp pitches for a complete rejection of any pre-determined quality criteria.

Birks and Mills (2012) identified three sets of factors as contributory to research quality, namely methodological congruence, research expertise and procedural expertise. Because the study of flea market retailing in Zimbabwe is also unexplored territory, it is a learning process, a form of apprenticeship involving both knowledge acquisition and skills development. The merits of the grounded theory methodology that I adopted has already been justified based on its appropriateness in investigating new topics and offering the prospect of discovering and generating new theory on the topic of flea market retailing. Specific

practices such as record keeping and memoing providing an audit trail enhance procedural precision.

Trustworthiness is also enhanced through the adequacy of the data itself. Birks and Mills (2012) suggested that this is done through capturing a range of contexts, perspectives and time frames, and documenting the views and actions of participants in rich detail. In this vein, I interviewed over 40 participants covering several types of trading activities. Grounded theory possesses a range of tools for supporting the adequacy and quality of data, especially through the employment of the constant comparison method together with theoretical sampling and theoretical saturation - the so-called 'troublesome trinity' (Hood, 2011).

According to Denk, Kaufmann and Carter (2012), Glaser describes four indispensable pillars of evaluating the efficacy of grounded method, namely:

- Fit of the emerging concept to the social reality under study and especially to the core category.
- Workability which includes the theory's ability to explain the study phenomenon
- Relevance to the chief concerns of participants.
- Modifiability, i.e., that additional data might modify the emergent theory.

To illustrate the lack of convergence on research quality, Butler-Kisber (2008) has identified six quality issues that are critical for qualitative research, namely validity or trustworthiness, generalisability (which she calls particularisability), access and

consent, reflexivity, voice and transparency. Butler-Kisber argued that many qualitative inquirers prefer focusing on a study's trustworthiness or credibility, which is "its degree of persuasiveness, authenticity, and plausibility", rather than its validity as would be the case in positivistic studies. Thus, a rigorous or trustworthy study embodies a coherent and transparent process together with explanations of the researchers' assumptions and biases. Such a condition is enhanced by the length of time spent in the field, the range and form of field texts and contexts that may have corroborative effect as well as the breadth and range of participants who contribute different perspectives. In the first phase, twenty-four interviews were held, each one lasting 28 minutes on average and together accounting for over 11 hours of interview time. The length of time spent in the field, the range and form of field texts and contexts that may have corroborative effect as well as the breadth and range of participants who contribute different perspectives. These matters therefore required comprehensive documentation during data collection and analysis in particular.

Butler-Kisber (2008) explains that in positivistic/quantitative studies, generalizability has an important role to play. In such studies, generalisability is achieved through large samples and adherence to clearly defined and prescribed procedures so that results cannot be regarded as having occurred by chance. However, the philosophical foundations of qualitative research, as well as the unavoidable use of small samples of participants and the varied, emergent and contextualised processes rule out generalizability in grounded research. Instead, what matters is the extent to which a study resonates with people in other situations so that they can find confirmation and/or new understandings of experiences and

phenomena even in rather different settings. Butler-Kisber (2008) calls this 'particularisability'. In this study, particularisability is therefore the extent to which the conclusions derived from this Gweru-based study of flea market trading carries meaning for similar practices in Zimbabwe or beyond. Similarly, as a measure of the degree to which multiple researchers could arrive at the same conclusions if they were engaged in the same study and adhered to identical procedures, reliability is not considered appropriate or possible in qualitative research. The equivalent concept in qualitative research would be transparency which permits a clear understanding of the inquiry process which persuades readers to build on or adapt processes revealed. Chapter 4 details the data and how it was analysed starting with open coding up to selective coding which produced a core category.

3.6 Data Collection: Instrumentation

Urquhart (2013) argues for three broad categories of data collection methods in a grounded research study - interviews, observation and fieldwork plus documents; with interview being the dominant instrument. For this research, I relied heavily on interview intermeshed with observation; and to a much lesser extent on documentary sources.

Denzin and Lincoln (2011) describe grounded theory as a method of qualitative inquiry through which data collection and analysis "reciprocally inform each other through an emergent iterative process". In this research, data collection involved interviews and observations running concurrently. Indeed, it was difficult to separate interview sessions from observation activities because the majority of interviews were done in loco, that is, in very confined spaces flea market traders

use. Thus, sometimes customers came and the interview could be interrupted. The customer thus inadvertently became part of the interview audio record. I also added field notes to fill some spaces. The research instruments themselves therefore had the power to reinforce one another apart from the role of theoretical sampling. In line with the very nature of grounded theory method, the sharp distinctions between data collection and analysis phases common with other research methods were thus deliberately blurred as Bryant and Charmaz (2011) assert.

The fact that the sites chosen for this study were close to one another allowed me to go back to the field for data collection whenever analysis suggested the need to collect additional data in order to achieve theoretical saturation. All my study sites were barely 10 kilometres from my home and workplace allowing me to stay close to the sites and interact with participants during data collection using both interviews and observation.

Interviews formed the primary method of data collection in this Gweru flea market study. An interview by its nature involves the collection of data through direct contact between the researcher and participants through a two-way conversation. This is consistent with the definition of qualitative research as a situated activity which locates the observer in the real world to study phenomena in their natural settings (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Such procedures allowed me direct face-to-face contact and interaction with participants mainly flea market traders themselves. I was therefore able to tap into what respondents know, what they like or feel as well as what attitudes and values they cherish, uphold or promote and how they

conduct their trade; even of their hopes, plans aspirations and dreams for the future. To be able to discharge these goals, structured interviews would have imposed unwarranted/undesirable restrictions on conversation during the data collection process. Thus, I placed emphasis on unstructured interviews. This way, I was able to gather rich data for subsequent analysis using the grounded theory method. Unstructured interviews also allowed sufficient flexibility to probe and follow up on emergent issues and thus achieve theoretical saturation. Consistent with the basic tenets of overlapping data collection and analysis within the grounded theory method, emerging issues guided subsequent sampling and data collection.

Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2012) explain that unstructured interviews allow the researcher to explore reasons for practices and preferences by probing deeper and thus gathering a rich and detailed data set leading to the discovery of inner meanings and theory. Such flexibility afforded greater opportunities for close interaction with flea market retailers in the light of the range and depth of research questions raised in this study. Thus, in-depth unstructured interviews allowed for more open exploration of personal experiences and perspectives unlike standardised structured interviews. Such an approach allowed for diversity of accounts of different flea market traders and trading practices. In addition, as noted elsewhere, carrying out interviews in loco entailed a level of integration of interview and observation. Although I had an interview protocol for guidance on the issues to discuss, the nature, path and depth of treatment depended on the participants and my interaction with them.

The principal contributors and players in this study, apart from the researcher, were the flea market operators themselves. In some cases, interviews involved employees, especially where the owner/operator was either unavailable (for example, a shoe trader interviewed at Aspirations Village) or was otherwise pre-occupied with other tasks and participated only occasionally or intermittently (such as at an eatery at Kudzanai Bus Terminus).

Interview data was captured through tape recording although Glaser and Strauss (1967) advise against the practice. The use of a tape recorder, however, enabled me to concentrate on listening, probing and reacting to issues raised by interviewees. For the interviews, I had two digital voice recorders; one acting as a standby/backup. The sound track was recorded as an MP3 file. Recorded data was loadable directly to a computer and a special Sound Organiser software allowed me to listen to the audio tapes on headphones and carry out the desired levels of transcription. A similar facility also existed in NVivo. The resulting transcribed text was then saved directly to the computer. This form of recording is an inexpensive and convenient way of capturing voice data which formed the basis for analysis. It also permitted the extraction of verbatim quotations whenever these were needed. I found out that a good way to do coding, especially in the later stages, was to listen through the audio tape with the transcript before me. This allowed me to present rich and detailed data representing different perspectives and insights about flea market trading activities. Such a record was also supplemented through field notes. A diary was kept and maintained for recording observation of market activity and conversations with traders, customers and

others for anecdotal notes during interview sessions. Integration of interviews and observation allowed me to reach the levels of data saturation through triangulation.

Field notes during interviews needed safeguarding as well both in the field and subsequently during and after the study under secure storage. Similar precautions were also adopted with any electronic recordings, documents or audio recordings or transcriptions either as hard/soft copies. Interview data which stored initially on the digital audio-recorder was subsequently password protected. This automatically provided for backup in the case of digital data. These procedures also allowed back-up to Dropbox, a procedure which allowed me convenient access to and appropriate security of my data.

Concerning the conduct of interviews, I paid special and close attention to the advice of Chikweche and Fletcher (2012) on several particulars concerning practical interactions with research participants. Their study carried out in central Zimbabwe, which included the city of Gweru where I conducted my own study, resonated well with my own study of flea markets. The context of their research was similar to mine in many respects as it also involved informal and self-employed traders engaged in general buying and selling of commodities. Therefore, I paid special and close attention to their advice in several practical particulars concerning interactions with research participants.

Chikweche and Fletcher (2012) suggest that older respondents in particular might be more hesitant to participate when speech is recorded. Many of those that I encountered in my study had no serious hesitation in getting involved. A hair salonist I dealt with at Aspirations Village was one exception. However, even she had no problem allowing me to conduct the interview with an employee in her presence. In general, participants were especially keen to listen to a few minutes of the recording at the end of the interview. This seemed to represent a moment of fulfilment. This practice, undoubtedly, lengthened the time I spent with each participant. However, I felt that the investment in goodwill was worth paying as I would be returning later to most sites to seek clarifications.

The use of a voice recording device allowed me some freedom to take notes relating to contextual issues such as the mood or other non-verbal communications. All my interviews were designed to be face-to-face individual interviews. Initially, I had considered conducting interviews at participants' residences or some other agreed location arrived at through negotiation with participants instead of their trading stalls. In the end, most interviews were at trading sites. I had however arranged to conduct some weekend interviews at a city primary school close to the city centre or the university some six kilometres away. Ultimately, those venues were hardly ever used. At first, I thought flea market sites would be too busy and crowded and thus inappropriate for interviews. In practice, some interruptions inevitably occurred. However, most of these tended to enrich the interviews instead of detracting from their quality. In only a few cases, interviews were at agreed venues other than trading sites such as when I interviewed traders who were not full time operators, for example, at my workplace.

In their Zimbabwean study, Chikweche and Fletcher (2012) conducted most interviews covering informal traders at participants' residences. In their case, most interviews lasted 30-40 minutes. My own interviews also fell within that range as well. The researchers reported that while conducting their interviews at participants' residences helped over confidentiality concerns, these locations unfortunately involved unavoidable "noise" factors which unduly lengthened the duration of interviews. Furthermore, the researchers felt that the presence of family members in these locations created a tendency for socially desirable responses to be given due to the presence of family members. The nature of informal flea market activities also complicated logistics for the conduct of interviews for this research concerning timings and duration of interviews in several ways. Conducting interviews in the natural setting of participants' workplaces however allowed me to gain greater appreciation of real life situations and offered opportunities for informal interaction and impromptu interviews with consumers. In my case, I found out that interviews were thus conducted in a natural uncontrived manner. Some of the interactions with customers were in fact captured on tape, thus enriching the data. In other cases, however, I managed to switch off the recording. The downside was that the interruptions in the flow of the main interview itself, as well as incidents of socially desirable responses, as noted by Chikweche and Fletcher, may have been enhanced. Interviews at trading sites were held within earshot and sight of others. It is therefore possible that this arrangement may have induced caution and restraint over what participants said. Notable cases in this category include the booksellers, the eatery or the banana traders. These three examples brought in other participants besides the principal target.

For the bulk of interviews conducted in the initial phase when I could take episodes of leave from work (stretching from late September-December 2015) to conduct interviews. In general, I took no more than three interviews a day even then. I planned to leave the weekends to other commitments and for further refinement of my work. These data collection episodes were followed by a further period in which I tried to ensure that I brought myself up-to-date with necessary transcription of data as described earlier as well as some preliminary analysis (mostly from the audio-tape and subsequently from transcripts) as these become available in order to identify appropriate persons and issues for further interviews. This preliminary data analysis corresponds to the open coding stage. Selective coding and theoretical coding followed later after more data became available. These measures, especially the breaks in data collection, allowed for the process of emergence. As discussed elsewhere, I settled for semi-transcription (partial) which I did personally. Whereas this was time consuming, it nevertheless allowed for early and intimate engagement with the data.

A typical interview day would usually proceed as follows:

- I had to travel and conduct the interview at an appropriate venue; usually the trading site. The interview would begin with an introduction of myself and the research topic before exploring the issue of consent. A consent form was available for each interview participant and if the participant wished, the consent form was duly completed. A copy of the consent form is attached in the appendices section. At the beginning of the recorded interview I went through a script in which I mentioned the issue of consent once more and that participants were free to terminate the whole interview or ask me to skip

any issues they were not comfortable with. In the end, few took advantage of this and so all questions I raised were responded to. In one case, though, a lady proprietor refused to tell me the name of her business even though, in fact, it turned out that the name was prominently displayed at the entrance. This illustrates that, despite genuine efforts, rapport may be lost.

- I planned to spend up to an hour reviewing field notes and augmenting the same by recalling details of the interview or improving their general readability. Later, those notes were typed and incorporated into memos. Any unusual or interesting occurrences were also noted. An important preliminary before analysis involved downloading the digital audio-file from the recorder to the computer. For this, I had the sound organiser software which allowed me to name the audio file once it was on computer. On playback, the software also allowed undistorted slow playback with an accompanying integrated transcription file on Word. Later, when I migrated to NVivo 11, I was able to skip the sound organiser software as I could do transcription within NVivo.
- I developed memos of various kinds. These too needed typing.
- I reserved up to two hours to listen through each interview, reviewing it and preparing the interview file for transcription as necessary transferring interviews to computer, inserting track marks/time markers, considering issues arising from the interview and incorporating these into subsequent interviews; and reflecting on the choice of additional participants. Each tape

was then fully labelled by identifying the participant and the date/time for the interview.

All observations, by their very nature, were carried out in the natural settings of flea market activities (Creswell, 2007). In reality, I noticed from an early stage that conducting interviews inevitably involved an element of observation and the reverse would occur in that those observation sessions necessarily also captured dialogue. Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2012) admit that, though observation has not been used much in business management research, it can be a very valuable tool, especially in combination with other methods. In fact, Urquhart (2013) identifies observation as part of the basic toolkit of grounded research methods. Hence, I combined observation with the use of unstructured interviews. Of the four types of observation types discussed by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2012), I limited my role substantially to that of an observer rather than a participant, namely a more restricted but overt spectator and recorder role. It allowed for a detached stance buttressed by systematic recordings of events and activities over a period of time and at different selected sites. For this reason, I designed an observation protocol with issues to focus on. However, actual practice departed from the protocol set out in advance. This protocol is shown in the appendices section.

The type of observation described above was appropriate for this study because time for deeper involvement was rather limited in the course of a doctoral study. In any case, there were several flea market locations and participation in all of them would not have been possible. Moreover, acceptance by existing flea market traders in a fuller participant role would also have proved difficult to get as such

participation might lack authenticity and credibility. In addition, it also appeared that stalls were in very high demand in some sites thus making entry difficult for full time engagement. I also reasoned that it would not have advanced my study if I stood as a competitor in opposition to research participants as this would compromise the establishment of rapport.

According to Crowther and Lancaster (2009), the key advantage of observational methods is the ability to identify subtle and hidden issues and problems beyond the spoken words of the participants themselves. Whereas interviews involved the identification of individual flea market traders, observation inevitably would also involve groups of traders in a single location or site all trading in similar goods. This widened the theatre of activities. For the interviews (which in many instances were one on one), consent was much easier to define and implement. Observing a whole market scene clearly represented new and special ethical challenges concerning the nature of consent. Apart from initial clearance by gatekeepers such as council officials it would not have been possible to secure individual consent from all traders or the many customers passing by.

The third major data collection method often used in grounded theory is documentary analysis (Urquhart (2013). Perusal and analysis of documents was important because it allowed for factual description and documentation of flea market provisions before engaging traders themselves, and exploring meanings and perspectives. In using qualitative methods, document analysis and interviewing would ensure that the research addresses issues of external validity or trustworthiness (Butler-Kisber, 2010; Duncan, 2006). Interviews with council

officials or managers of flea market sites often yielded some useful quantitative data. Some such documentary data on general administrative issues and background information available from Gweru City Council records was used to create a description and profiling of participants and of background and contextual issues in flea market retailing in Gweru as a backdrop to the main interviews with flea market traders.

3.7 Researcher Role: Positionality

One characteristic of qualitative research is to embrace varied and multiple realities. In this study of flea market trading, I listened to different participants through unstructured interviews. Beginning with the choice of participants through the interviews and on to the analysis, I imposed my own perspectives and world views as researcher. Qualitative research therefore has an axiological and value-laden nature to it. As Denzin and Lincoln (2011) assert, "All research is interpretive; it is guided by the researcher's set of beliefs and feelings about the world and how it should be understood and studied".

Bailey (2007) avers that what we learn as field researchers is keenly dependent on our personal and academic biographies as well as our professional and experiential histories. In addition, Bailey submits that she does not "... separate the research process from the characteristics of those involved in it". Thus, for example, access may be allowed or denied depending on the particulars of those involved or the quality of interactions between researcher and participants. What the researcher includes in field notes, or what one chooses to observe or what detail to raise to prominence or to overlook: all these are idiosyncratic issues

whose outcomes are affected by the researcher who can thus be regarded as a research instrument responsible for collecting, analysing, interpreting and finally writing the finished product. In data collection, for example, I was a key instrument in the collection of that data as well as in making a number of decisions on what sites to visit, participants to interview and the way the interactions unfolded. Although I used CAQDAS (NVivo) software, I still exercised insight and judgement in the way the analysis unfolded. Similar decision and judgement was exercised during the writing stages.

I have lived and worked in Gweru, the location of this study, for over 20 years. As a consumer, I have at times purchased commodities from the same markets covered by my study. Some of the persons I interviewed already knew me from some previous interaction in other roles as a customer.

Positionality or reflexivity is therefore about “thinking critically about how one’s status characteristics, values, and history, as well as numerous choices one has made during the research, affect the results” (Bailey, 2007). It is about introspection; it implies reflection and thoughtfulness which require the researcher to look “inwards” and “outwards” (King & Horrocks, 2010). Who we are affects the choices we make and ultimately the results we obtain from our research efforts.

Samples in qualitative research are generally small. The total number of vending bays in the CBD is nearly 2 000 covering many product sectors as shown in *Table 1*. I chose a limited number of sites based on my own judgement of diversity and coverage of issues sufficient to achieve saturation. As Birks and Mills (2012) maintain, “Acknowledging your assumptions, experience and knowledge of the

area of research is an effective mechanism for establishing where you stand in relation to your proposed study”.

When I started this study, I had been teaching retailing for no more than five years when my university introduced a degree programme in this discipline. But I have been a teacher all my life having had a short sojourn at primary school level followed by a longer spell at a secondary school. Latterly, I taught at a various teachers' colleges. Then, I became involved in educational administration. For this research study, I hoped that my career had given me some abilities to communicate with individuals and so acquire relevant data, especially through interviews and observation. But I was also concerned that I might tend to talk down to other people like elderly teachers are sometimes wont to do. Nearly all participants I interviewed were people younger than me. Save perhaps for one, none held degree qualifications. There is no knowing how such matters might have induced deferential reactions from interview participants or how it might have affected what participants were prepared to disclose to me.

Perhaps because of a life lived through rather trying times in this country's recent history, and witnessing the earnest efforts of so many of my compatriots seeking alternative employment and livelihoods apart from holding a formal job, I had become aware of the reality of the informal market and of flea market activity as a serious form of enterprise giving meaning and substance to individuals and households. At some point in time, I came to associate flea market trading with the formal retail activity it so often competes with. In this research, however, I strove to avoid glamourising it. But I may have failed in some instances.

I am a teacher and an administrator by profession and practice and, far less a researcher. I was encouraged to undertake research and I then thought I might help some of my students to do this better if I took this journey myself. I was therefore a mere novice researcher striving to be a neophyte theorist (Birks, & Mills, 2012; Bryant & Charmaz, 2011). First, I set my mind to study flea market activity. At the beginning, I groped for a method. The more I read of grounded theory the more I became attracted to it. I also came to realise that qualitative research was not very well regarded in the nascent research community at my university. Many colleagues tried to steer me away from the methodology and advised some clearly positivist/quantitative study. But I was personally convinced that positivist/quantitative approach would miss out on the richness and authenticity of the experience of this business activity. So, one challenge was getting academic support and nourishment. Later, as I embarked on data analysis, especially when I embraced CAQDAS (NVivo), I again felt the loneliness. I had to learn NVivo on my own. In the effort, no doubt, I missed some of the richness and potential the software could offer.

3.8 Analysis

For this study, thematic analysis was constituted through the search for patterns in the data and for explanations for such patterns. Bernard and Ryan (2010) explain that analysis in fact starts before the data is collected; as decisions are made about what data to collect; the sources to use and the instruments to deploy. Analysis also continues throughout the research. Searching for patterns and themes involves simplification and reduction of data. The mere process of recording data does violence to the complexity of the events recorded and thus

stripping those events from their contexts (Kvale, 2007; Richards, 2015). Richards (2015) also emphasises that all data requires reduction if a story is to be told. Thus, for this project, interview data and field notes were committed to partial transcripts as detailed and argued below. Subsequently, coding and detailed analysis was carried out. In the following sections these stages of the analysis process are described, justified and explained.

3.9 Transcription

Data collected in this study was overwhelmingly verbal/textual rather than numerical due to the data collection instruments adopted, namely predominantly unstructured interviews and concurrent observations. It is common practice for interview data (which in this case was audio-tape recorded) to be transcribed to text form to facilitate analysis to the depth that the systematic procedures of grounded theory require as a prelude to analysis (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2012). This transcription process involved transforming raw spoken data from field interviews into a textual form suitable for coding and analysis (Lyons, & Coyle, 2007). Kvale (2007) argues that transcription is not a simple clerical task but that rather it represents an “interpretive construction”.

I faced special problems in deciding on several practical issues in this respect. However, these issues were not totally unique to me or this study. Several of them have been discussed in the literature and a range of possible solutions suggested. The principal issues I faced included whether or how to translate and then transcribe considering that the bulk of the recorded voice data was in Shona (the local vernacular).

The bulk of the data for this research was derived from unstructured interviews, field notes and field observations. The authorities acknowledge that analysing qualitative data of this kind is always a time-consuming and demanding task for the researcher (King & Horrocks, 2012) especially at the stage of converting the audio recorded material into text, namely transcription which is traditionally regarded as a necessary precursor to analysis. Because of the time demands involved, the transcription task is often contracted out to individuals who possess the necessary skills. The downside for this choice though is that the researcher then loses an early opportunity to gain familiarity with the data.

Interviews had been conducted with several participants using one of the local indigenous languages (Shona or Ndebele) and/or English – in some cases two or three of these languages used randomly. Many local speakers often used a mixture of any of the three languages in different proportions as Chikweche and Fletcher (2012) testified in their own research in the same area of Zimbabwe. Finding dependable individuals able to comprehend randomly across three languages and thus able to translate and transcribe accurately across those languages was never going to be an easy task. The implication of this scenario was that several transcribers would have had to be used for the same interview in a large number of cases in order to cope with the number of conversational languages used. There would also be translation problems arising. I reasoned that this would greatly compromise the integrity of the transcribed data as well as raising challenging ethical issues (such as concerning protection of confidentiality) as well as delaying engagement with data. For these reasons, I decided at an early stage to limit the use of full text transcription following interviews. In addition, I was

going to do the transcription myself. So, I needed to limit time spent on transcription to what was absolutely essential.

I had personally done all the interviews in the field while recording them on tape as well. That exposure allowed me to gain early intimacy and familiarity, not only with the spoken words of the interviewees, but the context as well as the non-linguistic elements of the interviews. Subsequently, I took time to listen to all the interviews by replaying – several times in most cases. I could also rely on the field notes that I had initially sketched out in the field and which I had subsequently enhanced through additional notes soon after each interview. So, I was aware that, while full transcription of interview data would undoubtedly enhance convenience of analysis, it probably was not going to advance grasp of the issues to a significantly greater degree. However, these personal impressions were used together with insights from the literature to make the decision whether to transcribe or not to transcribe and, if so, to a certain degree and contexts. Lyons and Coyle (2007) have pointed out that an alternative position to making transcription in grounded theory analysis is to conduct analysis directly from the spoken word rather than transcripts so as to gain access to prosodic (stress, intonation and accent) and paralinguistic (spoken communication not involving words) features of the data. Furthermore, Lyons and Coyle (2007) contend that this is adequate for capturing the content of talk in the interviews. At a later stage when I engaged NVivo 10, I came to realize that advancements in software development are making transcription from MP3 audio tapes increasingly redundant.

As indicated above, several transcription issues needed to be addressed, including what to transcribe, how much to transcribe as well as who should do the transcription. On who would do the transcription, three options presented themselves. I considered using speech recognition software but I quickly dropped this route when I realized that the bulk of my data would not be in English. Engaging a professional typist presented challenges of translation, cost and overall accuracy. I would still need to check both translation and transcription accuracy in any case. This logic again led me to own transcription. But with that decision, several consequential issues cropped up. These are discussed below.

The decision to make full word-for-word or verbatim transcriptions of all the data was always going to be difficult. However, not all qualitative research requires detailed transcription. If the methodology relies on discourse or conversation analysis, then verbatim or full transcription is called for. In such cases, detailed transcription schemes have been drawn up. Thus, Richards (2015) advises researchers to always consider partial transcription which can subsequently be expanded upon according to necessity as the analysis progresses. In my case, I had the original audio tapes on both my computer and on the digital recorder so expansion could be undertaken whenever the need arose. Most audio tapes were track marked and my partial transcripts contained a time (minute/second) count to enable location of segments of the interview.

King and Horrocks (2012) estimate that at the simplest level transcription of an hour-long interview could consume up to eight hours. King and Horrocks thus advance the view that transcribing everything verbatim may not always be

necessary. They suggested listening through the tapes to identify the main areas of interest which would then be transcribed in full while the rest of the material is summarised; or identifying key informants whose interviews are transcribed in full and again summarising the rest. Tang, Chen and Xiao (2010) conducted a grounded theory study of consumer purchase decision-making using semi-structured interviews. These were not even taped and therefore not transcribed but were analysed in the process of interviewing. They justified this as a means of affording themselves opportunities to analyse data in the process of interviewing, namely real-time, live and simultaneous data collection and initial analysis. This initial analysis was followed by further re-analysis at a later stage.

Hammersley (2011) has underlined that qualitative research involves the exercise of judgements which adapt the research process to the situation at hand. It cannot be contained in a manual or rule book: it must be flexible in application. My study also was subject to flexible adjustment. Therefore, I decided at an early stage that a disproportionate investment of time, effort and resources across all interviews would not be beneficial given the other challenges listed above. As I worked, I had the advantage of seamless integration from my digital audio recorder through sound organiser which facilitated transcription to the management and analysis of my research data in NVivo software. As a result, I could listen to the full sound track while viewing the abbreviated transcript. I felt that I had a richer and more authentic data source that way rather than sole dependence on the transcripts. At any time, I could edit my transcript and do any necessary coding as well. Initially I had relied on NVivo 7 and, at that time, I had transcribed the first batch of interviews from sound organiser before importing them into NVivo. I subsequently

migrated to NVivo 7 up to 2015 and the NVivo 11 when that version became available. In NVivo 11, I was able to transcribe directly using NVivo itself instead of using sound organiser as an intermediary. Indeed, I could now code the sound track itself directly if I chose. The argument for full transcription hence became rather academic on a progressive basis. However, with either route I no longer worried very much about accuracy in translation as I could run the sound track alongside the transcript. I could then do my coding by relying on the “discovered truth, rather than the less important what-did-they-say-exactly” (Holton, 2011).

The multi-lingual dimension raised by interviews in this study also had implications for analysis. Three languages featured in interviews and in the conversations I had with participants as part of the research experience. Urquhart (2013) advises that, where interviews were done in a native language, it would be better to code in that language as this allows meaning to be clearer than if a translation were to be used. However, for me this might have involved coding and analysis in three different languages (sometimes for the same interview) thus contributing to some conceptual difficulties and to losses in accuracy. Indeed, many interviews might have involved speakers (including myself) migrating randomly across two or three languages.

Binder and Edwards (2010) have dealt with grounded theory research (in operations management) where the transcripts were produced in German while the coding was conducted in English. Expert translation and back-translation then became necessary. It should be admitted that such expertise would not have been available to me. Sheila Payne, in Lyon and Coyle (2007), describe how in a study

of older Chinese people, interviews were first transcribed into Chinese and then translated into English. They then had to battle with some problematic words in the translation. It is possibly for cases like this that Birks and Mills (2012) suggest that full transcription may be impractical in some instances. The examples in this paragraph over translation and transcription underlie the decision I made to steer away from full transcription. And because I did transcription myself, I could combine the transcription and translation and so I avoided a complicated two-stage process of translation followed by transcription or transcription followed by translation then verification for accuracy and consistency of meaning.

Urquhart (2012) also describes the case of fieldwork conducted in a native language and recommends coding in the language of the text and then translating the codes to English. The author contends that meanings are easier to appreciate in the original interview language than in a translation version. Again, in my case, it was not one, but two or three languages. On this basis, I settled for greater reliance on the tape record of the interviews together with partial transcription of interviews. My partial transcription focused especially on what interviewees said and, to a lesser extent, what I said as an interviewer, beyond indicating the subject matter of my questions.

Transcription attempts to preserve accuracy in a form suitable for analysis. Quoting Glaser and Strauss, Stern (2011a) has warned against the danger of paying too much attention to the accuracy of interview data. Her advice for researchers is to watch out for the essential 'cream' which rises to the top. Thus, researchers are encouraged to use field notes to keep track of the key issues arising from

interviews and observations. She concludes by saying: "I never do a line-by-line analysis... Rather, I do a search and seizure operation looking for cream in the data." Stern (2011) thus urges researchers to concentrate on emerging theory with less emphasis on detailed accuracy of collected data to yield theory not mere description. Holton (2011) has written in the similar vein, encouraging the use of field notes and dispensing with the meticulous and often time-consuming efforts of recording and transcribing interview data and, consequently, being overwhelmed in descriptive detail.

Alluding to the 'cream' mentioned by Stern above, Holton (2011) argues that: "field notes enable the grounded researcher to capture the essence of the participant's main concern ... without the burden of laborious transcribing followed by the tedium of reading through and coding lengthy transcriptions". The ideas above, from both Holton and Stern, certainly enhance capacity to cope with the volume of data such as would be generated from a qualitative study of flea market traders of this nature.

When to start data analysis is also a point of some debate. Birks and Mills (2012) recommend the use of theoretical sampling from the first interview or data collection event and that preliminary analysis of interview recordings and field notes may even be undertaken before full transcription. These authors make the further radical argument that it is not always necessary to tape all interviews as Glaser & Strauss (1967) recommend. Clearly, the issue of verbatim transcription is therefore a matter for individual choice and reflection. Birks & Mills (2012) recommended transcription for the novice researcher especially in the earliest stages of the research. The authors further explained that whereas interview data

may, in some cases, be transcribed for purposes of coding, it may also be retained merely as back up for reference purposes or for accessing verbatim quotations. Glaser himself spoke strongly against tape recording which forms the basis for full verbatim transcription. As stated earlier, my decision was to settle for partial transcription.

3.10 Coding Procedures

The coding process resides at the core of data analysis in grounded theory ultimately leading to the discovery and generation of substantive and formal theory. Despite its centrality, there is no standardised approach to analysing qualitative data (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012). Coding procedures in grounded follow a thematic approach. Once data has been transcribed (where transcription has been adopted), the stage is then set for analysis which begins with open coding procedures. Many approaches apply and the terms for describing the various stages leading to the discovery of a grounded theory also vary. Creswell (2007) warns, however, that “complex terms or jargons, diagrams, conceptual maps, and systematic approaches... detract from grounded theory”. Indeed, Charmaz (2011) considers that a simpler, streamlined approach is beneficial for developing an emergent theory while Selden (2005) speaks strongly against the labour of coding, namely the quantity and meticulousness of the coding process which may create barriers to creativity. Selden refers to this activity as a case where “the technical tail wags the theoretical dog”. Manuj and Pohlen (2012) also criticise this route for being too “formulaic and directive”. The application of coding therefore needs to be applied with a measure of flexibility rather than mere proceduralism and formalisation (Hammersley, 2011; Idrees et al., 2011). Hammersley (2011) terms

this genre methodology-as-technique typified as an attempt to codify methods through a process of excessive adherence to rules.

3.10.1 How coding was done

Choosing what analysis procedures to adopt is influenced by a number of considerations which include the research context, the methods used for gathering the data, the circumstances in the field and even the person carrying out the analysis (Urquhart, 2013). Fundamentally, coding ought to be a practical rather than a technical, hugely prescriptive activity. Glaser (1992) mentions three coding steps standing at different incremental levels of abstraction, namely open, selective, and theoretical coding. Urquhart (2013) takes the view that the choice of coding versions and the accompanying terminologies should be one of personal preference. I opted for a flexible procedure much in line with the original 1967 formulation by Glaser and Strauss in *The Discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*.

While acknowledging that grounded theorists take a number of philosophical and methodological positions, Birks and Mills (2012) attempt to steer a neutral course in the coding debate and classify the coding process into three stages which they labelled simply initial, intermediate and advanced. Idrees, Vasconcelos and Cox (2011) also attempt to steer away from the polemics associated with the founders of grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss) by representing grounded theory research process as a four-stage engagement, namely:

- The uncertainty stage which begins to indicate the primary focus of the research.
- The emergence stage where core categories which eventually form the foundations of the theory emerge.
- Ambiguity resolution stage which resolves and clarifies the grey areas of the emerging theory.
- The maturity stage where the research findings are linked to the literature.

In their study of the use of Glaser's grounded theory in accounting research, Alberti-Alhtaybat and Al-Htaybat, (2010) also advocate for a flexible approach.

Urquhart (2013) also documented a flexible approach to analysis with numerous examples in her book, asserts that, "It is altogether simpler to follow the Glaserian stages of open, selective and theoretical coding ... as they have the virtue of being separate and easy to understand". She therefore recommends a three-stage analysis process starting with open coding (identifying categories, properties and dimensions) proceeding through selective coding (grouping categories) and finally theoretical coding at which stage a core category is expected to emerge. These three coding stages represent different and increasing levels of abstraction (Urquhart, 2013). This is the approach to coding and analysis that I adopted for this study in which there were 40 participants in a total of 34 interviews.

Open coding ought to start with very detailed examination of the data; fracturing and analysing the data at the word, line and sentence level thus generating much

richness of data even from the first few interviews (Urquhart, 2013). By doing so, little is missed. Holton (2011) asserts that such coding yields potentially rich outcomes even from a few interviews. Accordingly, the coding process itself is a detailed and involved set of procedures which forms part of what Glaser and Strauss (1967) refer to as systematic procedures inherent in grounded theory: “the discovery of theory from data—systematically obtained and analysed”.

During coding, I attached concepts and labels to chunks of data. These concepts later contributed to building theory through a process of identifying relationships between and among concepts. By so doing, data was broken down into smaller and more manageable portions leading to the identification of categories and description of their properties. Codes and categories were then subsequently compared and contrasted systematically to produce more complex and inclusive categories through the techniques of constant comparison.

At any of the three stages of coding (open, selective and theoretical), themes emerging from the interviews were coded under the same label. In the jargon of the NVivo software, each code corresponds to a node. Inevitably, the creation of new nodes was rapid in the initial open coding stages. From the very beginning, and by its nature, coding involved the process of constant comparison. Whenever a new idea was encountered on subsequent interviews, I would search the list of codes (nodes) already created to establish whether the new idea fitted an existing code. Only when a statement or idea from the transcript or sound track could not be accurately captured through an existing node was a new node/code created. Dealing with transcripts therefore involved detailed examination of the interview

data base: from word for word analysis through line by line analysis up to sentence for sentence analysis. Mindful of the fact that I was using abbreviated/partial transcripts, I also made concurrent use of, and comparison with the audio tape which was conveniently accessible to me from sound organiser software and embedded in NVivo itself on my computer. I also had resort to the alternative and original record made on the digital recorder whenever necessary. In fact, the bulk of coding procedures were done on NVivo. The variety of touch points available to me allowed me to keep close to the data and ensure that ideas coded actually arose from the evidential record.

In the NVivo software, where codes are referred to as nodes, I could rely on the hierarchical structure of tree nodes to achieve consolidation and begin to identify relationships among codes. Various additional techniques were available for exploring patterns within the software such as memos, links of various kinds and annotations. I discovered that CAQDAS was grandly suited to this initial fracturing process and, subsequently, for integration of elements coded at the open coding stage (a process termed aggregation of child and parent nodes).

At the end of the first phase of data collection, I had coded at least 23 interviews and I had placed the emerging themes into 36 different codes. Each of the codes created was also described in order to enhance the chances of consistent coding subsequently. Descriptions of these codes are included in a table in the appendices section. It is instructive to note that about half the codes in the table above were created in the first two days of coding. Thus, from an early stage coding was beginning to show a trend towards saturation of themes. Indeed, after

the first coding phase, the only new codes were the result of re-arrangement and re-labelling. A related procedure consisted of re-organising the codes identified in the early phase into hierarchical structures consisting of parent nodes and child nodes in line with the NVivo software. The bulk of this process was also documented through procedural memos. The outcome of that was the emergence of a nested structure consisting of nodes at different levels. This arrangement was facilitated by the aggregation feature within the NVivo software which allowed for the exploration and identification of key nodes which would then be candidates for key categories. Child or subordinate nodes could then be subsumed under a major parent/principal theme or idea. Further coding took place subsequently as additional interviews were conducted and transcripts produced. Each of the nodes in the table below has sub-nodes. The table below listed 13 codes derived from the original 36 after additional coding and amendments to the coding scheme.

Table 2: Parent nodes, sources and references coded

Name of Node	Interviews coded to Node	References
Trading Practice	35	454
Sourcing from	25	154
Spirit & the Passion	25	153
Business Challenges	30	137
Family Member participation	28	101
Players. Who they are	21	100
Diversity of operations	24	99
Returns on Investment	30	92
Procurement Strategies	21	80
Business idea origination	26	71
History Issues in Flea Markets	20	69
Work and Leisure Time	25	39
Source of Capital	7	18

The coding process was also accompanied by the production of memos which helped shape emerging ideas and formulate strategies for additional data collection. Several memos were of a procedural nature, especially at the earlier stages as I listened through audio tapes and prepared to get back to the field to conduct additional interviews. I recorded some of the memos outside the NVivo software. Subsequently, when I resumed coding, new memos were embedded in NVivo which also allowed me to use its annotation and see further links to explore relationships. All these tools and processes were key to shaping ideas and themes.

The key outcome of the three progressive levels of coding is the birth of a core category following the consolidation of sub-categories at the selective coding stage. The identification of a core category happens at the level of theoretical coding, the third level of coding. Grounded theory requires the emergence of a core category from the coding process especially during the final stages of theoretical coding. Denk, Kaufmann, and Carter (2012) assert that no more than one core category should be derived. Glaser allowed for only one core category to emerge; one that pulls together all shades of data into one overall scheme leading to the production/generation of a grounded theory. The core category is one that relates to as many other categories and their properties as possible. Creswell (2007) suggests that criteria for such core status should include:

- The category's centrality in relation to other categories.
- Frequency of category's occurrence.
- Inclusiveness and ease with which it is related to other categories.
- Clarity of implications for a more general theory.
- Its movement towards theoretical power as details of the category are worked out.
- Its allowance for maximum variation in terms of dimensions, properties, conditions, consequences and strategies.

According to Bernard and Ryan (2010), at the stage of final theoretical coding, it is crucial to separate core themes from peripheral ones on the basis of centrality and salience. This depends on how often a concept appears in the data across

participants and situations as well as the degree to which a concept relates to other concepts (Creswell, 2007).

Selden (2005) further characterises a core category as a nucleus or model around which lesser categories and sub-categories circle and congregate thus promoting the development of theory. This central category captures a pattern of behaviour that touches on participants and so carries meaning for them. In addition to the generation of theory, the coding process also allows the researcher to reflect on the research questions established at the beginning of the study. Therefore, according to Urquhart (2013), selective and theoretical coding can lead to the discovery of extended dimensions of the research problem and so the research questions may be subjected to modification as a result of the overlapping of data collection and analysis up to the stage when saturation is achieved. The intensity of the coding process thus offers opportunities to reflect on the initial research questions and possibly even to review them yielding new and more specific research questions.

One related research decision concerned the timing and initiation of coding and analysis. Urquhart (2013) underscores that, "You can start analysing the data as soon as the first interview or document. You can then sample future interviewees or documents". By implication, not all documents are therefore subjected to the same level of detailed analysis; they are merely sampled in the way the data warrants. I, however, subjected all interviews to the same transcription standards and procedures. Pre-analysis activities and appreciation of data was carried out initially by listening through the audio-tapes and perusing related field notes and

annotation of tapes and beginning to identify broad issues. Analysis was thus a multi-stage process where interview data, transcripts, field notes and memos were subjected to minute and repeated scrutiny (Geiger & Turley, 2003). Because of the above, I conducted no more than three interviews per day throughout the data collection phases.

Easterby-Smith (2008) recommends starting analysis by reading and re-reading transcripts to gain familiarisation leading to coding through to linking and re-evaluation of emerging concepts. In my case, because I used partial transcription, the original digital audio tape needed to be revisited in the process of analysis. This posed no hardships as I had numbered the transcripts for time and track-marked them for easier navigation. In any case, I had the benefit of full integration from the audio tapes to the NVivo software. Indeed, the procedures I took allowed me to preserve sensitivity to some of the non-linguistic cues embedded in the interview context.

3.11 Computer Aided Data Analysis

A further concern was whether to use computer aided qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) or stick with manual procedures. Qualitative research often generates large volumes of data (mostly through interviews, observation, field notes, and documentary analysis). As a result, researchers often have to consider whether to use computer aided analytic techniques such as NVivo, Atlas.ti, MaxQDA, Qualrus or HyperResearch. Creswell (2007) warns that data generated in a qualitative study can be overwhelming and that most beginners do not have an appreciation of the volumes involved. He reports that, in a study of survival and

coping strategies used by women who had endured childhood sexual abuse, Morrow, and Smith gathered data which consisted of 220 hours of audio/video tapes documenting many hours of interviews, group sessions and follow-up interactions with participants. This was in addition to field notes and reflections through theoretical memos. Manual processes would be hard put in handling such volumes of data although my data was not as voluminous as Creswell quoted. Nevertheless, I opted for CAQDAS despite the drawback of a steep learning curve associated with this software. The ability of CAQDAS software to handle large amounts of data was a strong attraction. I realised, and accepted, that manual processes would impose limitations on the depth of coding, analysis, and data management.

Urquhart (2013) considers the use of computer-aided analysis as a distraction from analysis. Indeed, Glaser (1978) even describes the use of computers as “burdensome and terribly time taking”. In my case, I went on to use CAQDAS (beginning with NVivo 7 ending up with NVivo 11) after some initial hesitation. I found out that learning to use the software was indeed time consuming. However, the software allowed for easier and quicker handling of data leaving me more time for analysis and reflection.

I did not undertake a formal comparison of the various CAQDAS options before I settled for NVivo. The IT Department at my university had given me NVivo 7 for a start by way of a free download. So, by default, I took what was available to me. Later, I upgraded that to NVivo 11 as I gained more appreciation of the value of

the software. I noted, however, that Creswell (2007) has advanced a number of attractive attributes for NVivo:

- Its ability to manage and analyse qualitative data together with its streamlined look which makes it easy to use.
- Provision of security through its ability to store the database and files together in a single file.
- Varied functionalities enabling the researcher to manipulate and visualise data, and to conduct searches easily.

Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson (2008) did not recommend computer-aided methods of qualitative data analysis if there are fewer than 20 interviews. My data was well above that limit. For Creswell (2007), the cut-off point is a massive 500 pages (of course this being dependent on the amount of transcription detail). Urquhart (2013) has suggested that researchers doing coding for the first time should master coding manually before even contemplating using a computer software package. For this study, all the coding was done through NVivo. Urquhart further contends that, whereas software packages offer great help in data management and retrieval, these packages are rather limited on analysis per se. From an early stage, I realized that CAQDAS does not itself analyse data, though it does an impressive and commendable job handling massive data compared to manual processes. I acknowledged from an early stage that the demands of mastering the software can interfere with mastering analysis itself. Similar sentiments come from Bailey (2007) who recommends manual data analysis for

beginners which is what I was. She regards the intimate involvement with data as a valuable learning experience and concludes her argument by asserting that software programmes cannot fully perform analysis. My own contact with the data started with the interviews all of which I had conducted personally. With audio tapes at hand, I felt I would never digress too far from the authentic data.

Using NVivo was greatly facilitated by the fact that all interviews had been audio recorded as MP3 files which I could transfer easily to computer for subsequent coding and/or transcription. However, there were technical failures in two cases. For these cases, I used my field notes to construct summaries which I also coded. I conducted all the interviews personally and took sole charge of the translation/transcription processes. For reasons of confidentiality, all interview participants were anonymised as implied in the consent form that I used during data collection process. Within NVivo 11, this was done through the nickname facility which also allowed me to switch between nicknames and real names as needed.

3.12 Memos

An important tool of qualitative data analysis is the writing of memos (memorandums) to keep track of the researcher's thinking, reflections and musings about the data, especially during coding. According to Stern (2011), data constitutes the building blocks for theory while memos form the mortar that holds it together. Thus, memos have been described as the bedrock of theory generation (Glaser, 1978, quoted in Urquhart, 2013). It is important to record such thoughts as they arise lest they vanish over time. Holton (2011) describes theoretical

memos as notes about data and the conceptual connections between the categories. During coding and analysis, the researcher can sometimes break off to write creative thoughts and other good ideas about the data as soon as such ideas arise before they evaporate. Once documented, analytic and self-reflective memos enrich the analytic process. Analytic memos consist of questions, musings and speculations by the author about the data and emerging theory while the self-reflective memos consist of personal reactions to participants' narratives. Both memos also add to the already existing data corpus. Hood (2011) demonstrates that analysis can also be conducted on the memos themselves as well. Thus, memos also constitute a kind of data. Indeed, NVivo 11 allows memos to be treated as a form of data source and hence subjected to coding in the same way as other data. In addition to memos, there is also provision within NVivo for annotations and links. All these contribute in the process of analysis and the emergence of core categories.

Memos can also be used to relate the emerging theory to the extant literature. Again, NVivo allows for coding literature and for creating a priori codes within the software itself as opposed to emergent codes. Memos constitute a process of writing and thinking both happening concurrently. Some memos may be brief, even consisting of just a few lines as attested by Creswell (2007) that, "I had written over 400 memos capturing the conceptual and methodological development of my theory. These memos ranged in length from a few lines to several pages". Limpert further reinforces this view by saying that initially, memos are often incomplete and messy consisting of "undigested theories and nascent opinions" created by the researcher himself about the data and the

unfolding analysis. Some of these may ultimately be integrated into the final written thesis. Thus, writing and analysis also move in tandem.

Memos also provide a means by which the researcher engages in intellectual conversations with data by defining properties and characteristics of codes and categories. Eventually, the researcher should move from descriptions into conceptualisation. Fundamentally, memos are therefore a storehouse of analytical ideas, patterns, insights, intuitions and properties of the data. They play a crucial role in facilitating the generation of theory. As memos are created they are banked to be sorted later and then integrated into the overall theory.

3.13 Research Ethics

Research ethics refers to the standards of behaviour that should guide the conduct of the research in relation to people who are subject to the study or are affected by it (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2012). Qualitative research by its very nature has the potential to uncover sensitive and personal data (Urquhart, 2013). This is not surprising because business and management research involves human participants and so ethical concerns are at their greatest (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2012). This study of flea market practice was no exception. Hammersley and Traianou (2012) describe research ethics as a form of occupational ethics about what social researchers ought and ought not to do, and about what matters or what issues count as virtues or vices in doing research so that the research enterprise can lead to honest and professional discovery and transmission of truth. According to Hammersley and Traianou (2012), “Qualitative researchers aim at discovering what is ‘really going on’ as opposed to what is officially claimed or

generally thought to happen and to enhancing understanding people's perspectives, attitudes and feelings in depth. Thus, qualitative research has greater reach which increases the tension as well as concerns for privacy. Qualitative research also generates personal relationships between researcher and participants. In carrying out unstructured interviews, I personally spoke to participants.

In some research contexts, organisational codes of research ethics have been developed to avoid poor practice and harm as well as to promote ethical practice and the public good. However, Midlands State University (MSU), under whom this study was conducted, was still working to define and elaborate such a code of research ethics. In the face of this work-in-progress, I was nevertheless guided by the broad principles of ethical research practice at all stages of the research. The researcher should seek informed consent and for this a detailed consent form was available for completion though many participants saw no need for it. At the onset of each interview, I particularly stressed that participants had a right to withdraw at any stage or to decline to participate in a particular aspect of our conversation. In some cases, I even re-stated and underlined the voluntary nature of my data collection making it clear that participants had a right to withdraw from their involvement in the process or elect not to respond to specific questions.

Where confidentiality has been promised, it is important to ensure that data collected remains confidential, especially data which is of a personal or sensitive nature. At the reporting/analysis stage data should not be misrepresented; and should not be used selectively resulting in distortion and misrepresentation.

For protection of participants, I anonymised data sources in order to maintain privacy and prevent harm to participants as suggested by Hammersley and Traianou (2012). NVivo 11 (and subsequently NVivo 12) allowed me to use nicknames instead of the original names. The range of other techniques used included the following for anonymisation:

- Replacing actual names with invented ones. For this reason, I created a file listingonyms and pseudonyms.
- Referring to people's roles not their names.
- Removing any personal characteristics of people or contextualised features of places or some way of giving disguise.
- Using pseudonyms in writing field notes or doing transcriptions.

In this chapter, I have traversed the research design employed for this study by describing the philosophical basis of qualitative research, its methodology and data collection and analysis. I have laid out the justification for the use and appropriateness of grounded theory in the study of informal flea market trading. In addition, procedures for data collection and analysis were established in accordance to the canons of grounded theory. Based on these, I subsequently went out into the field to bring the data in, then to present and analyse it in ways suggested in this chapter. In the next chapter, I therefore present findings and recommendations for action and suggestion for further research.

CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This research focused on flea market trading as a retail form and on the activities of individual traders who operate them. As set out in the statement of research problem, the principal goal was to investigate, describe, characterize, analyse, and interpret the essence of the practice and experience of flea market retailing in the Gweru CBD and discern from those practices and experiences the real meaning of this activity, especially by engaging directly with traders. This goal was addressed through unstructured interviews coupled with incidental observation in the natural settings in which these trading activities occurred. The research purpose included the challenges flea market traders encountered, and how those were addressed to gain understanding of how traders viewed themselves and their enterprises.

Data was collected through unstructured interviews conducted with flea market traders operating from registered sites within the CBD of Gweru in central Zimbabwe. The study excluded all perambulant traders and vendors. However, unregistered traders in the CBD probably outnumbered the flea market traders that this study focussed on as also established in a study of informal trading in Nairobi (Kinyanjui, 2014). First, I described the participants covered through this qualitative study as well as the contexts in which the data were collected. This was followed by a description of the initial (open) coding procedures as well as themes (nodes) identified through that coding process. Intermediate (selective) and final (theoretical) coding procedures are covered subsequently in line with the grounded theory methodology adopted for this study. Data analysis was done using NVivo

11 computer aided qualitative data analysis software. Pseudonyms in uppercase letters were used instead of real names for participants in the presentation of findings.

In this chapter, the emphasis is on presenting and describing data as a prelude to deriving substantive theory which is often the goal of grounded theory research (Richards, 2015). Such substantive theory is local and particular to its data (King, 2016, Glaser, 1967). In this sense, the findings of such research may not be generalisable beyond the confines of this study though they may be adapted to other settings (Richards, 2015) such as flea markets in other cities and towns in Zimbabwe or to unregistered traders in Gweru itself or elsewhere. The substantive theory derived may therefore provide the gateway to broader formal theories and constructs. To ensure that theory rests securely on its data, rich, thick descriptions of persons, situations, events, interactions, and observed behaviour were called for (Klenke, 2008). This procedure aligns with the research goals of this study, namely to investigate, describe, characterize, and interpret the essence of the practice and experience of flea marketing in the CBD of Gweru city.

4.1 Interviews Conducted

Thirty-four interviews were conducted in two major phases: October 2014 and April/May 2015. Most participants (69%) were full-time traders. Such traders derived their income exclusively from flea market trading and were not employed in the formal sector as opposed to those participants who had a leg in both. However, part-time traders were also captured. Two interviews were conducted

with administrators of flea market premises: one privately owned and the other falling under the city council of Gweru.

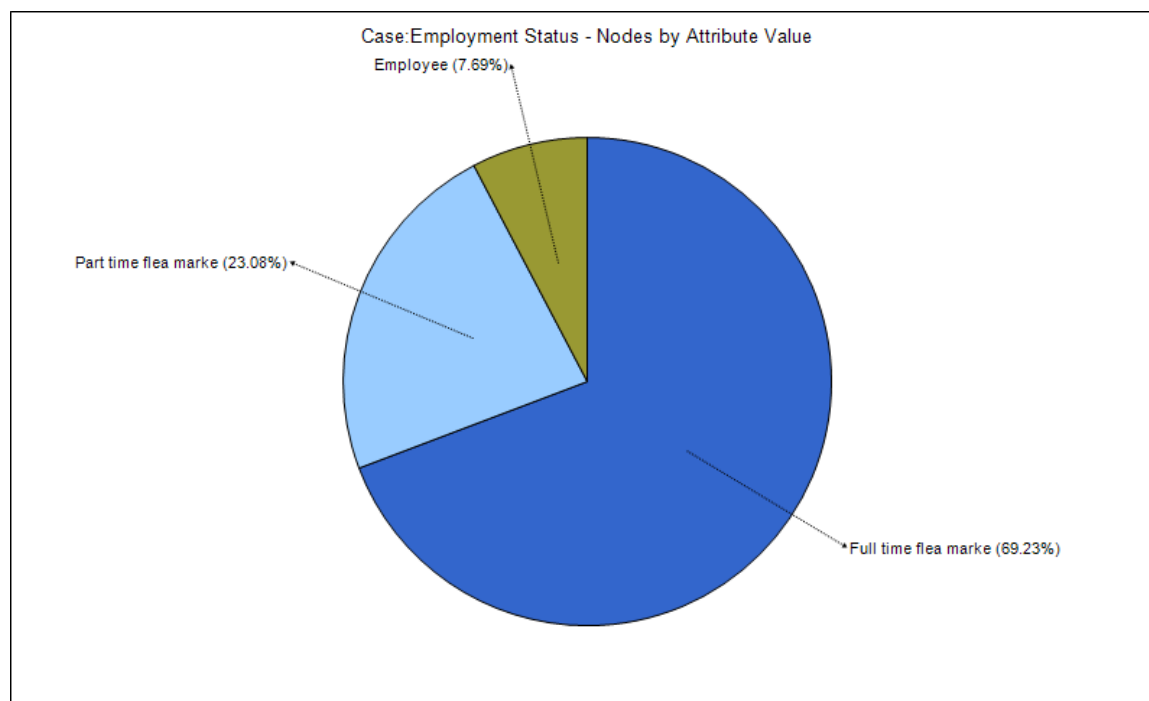


Figure 5: Employment status of participants

Source: Primary data

On average, interviews lasted 30 minutes each; the longest was 56 minutes. Five of these interviews (15%) involved related parties, namely a husband and wife in one case, two brothers in another, a business colleague to another interviewee and, finally, three other partners involved in a banana selling enterprise. For this reason, the banana enterprise was decomposed into one main interview and transcript, and three additional interviews and transcripts of the three minor players were featured in parts of the main interview. This arrangement became necessary in order to tap fully into all the features of NVivo 11, especially case node classification. Two of the interviews conducted in the first phase were with

administrators rather than traders (one with a senior officer in the Housing and Amenities Department at the Gweru City Council offices; another at one of the privately-run flea market village, i.e., Aspirations Village in Third Street). These two interviews served the purpose of clarifying flea market trading issues such as regulation, compliance, and operation of the flea market sector.

Except for three cases, all interviews at trading sites were conducted with flea market traders themselves. The three exceptions were YMJ at the eatery at Kudzanai Market, NM (boot soles, Aspirations Village) and MP (another eatery outlet, Aspirations Village) where I spoke to employees in the absence of the owners. Nearly all owner-operators were full-time traders who conducted hands-on operations. Only two traders out of 41 interview participants had engaged employees on a regular basis (NC and TJ). Three traders were in formal employment; one ran another business enterprise and conducted flea market operations mostly during weekends (YC). Four traders were long-distance operators who were also banana farmers in Chipinge. They came to Gweru's Kudzanai Market complex to sell their produce from time to time. Thus, apart from these farmer-cum-flea market operators, all participants were residents of Gweru.

4.2 The Setting

In all cases covered, traders operated from small stalls. In the case of Gweru Council owned stands, a city council official described the stalls as just two metres by two metres. Thus, when a fire started at one such stand at Kudzanai in 2015, it spread quickly and destroyed merchandise belonging to several traders. The stands at privately owned flea markets have similar dimensions. At Aspirations

Village, the stands are only a metre longer each way. At neighbouring Global Village, only narrow alleys provide for customer movement surrounded by merchandise hanging from display racks. The privately-owned markets (Aspirations and Global, for example) being newer, at least have a smarter, cleaner appearance. At Kudzanai, traders accepted that they had to make do with what was on offer. Clearly, flea market traders are small operators working in very confined spartan environments. Conditions such as these place a cap on growth potential for the majority of players.

Because trading bays at council run markets are very small, many traders frequently encroach upon the pavement and on to the streets. With no partitioning between stands, there is invariably no visible clear-cut line of division between the wares of different traders. These traders are typically micro-entrepreneurs as depicted by Maloney (2004). Originally, city council stands were roofed with asbestos sheets. In due course, the operators improvised roof extensions and, in the process, used any available materials including non-durable flimsy materials such as plastics and cardboard boxes. This gave these trading areas a distinctly unsightly appearance. Sometimes the various trading activities were incompatible with one another, as was the case with the positioning of the books and stationery area adjacent to sorcerers and traders roasting maize on open fires, contributing to a smoke-filled arena for a marketplace. One of the book traders in this sector had this to say about their conditions:

Where we are it's not very conducive for stationery. It's dirty and smoke-smeared. We are not into stationery in a big way due to the smoke and dust

around us. This place would not be seller-friendly once the stationery is coated with smoke or soot. So now stationery is not conducive because of the conditions in which we are situated. It would not sell very well.

The run-down appearance of council-operated markets was not alleviated by the often-infrequent collection of refuse by the city council itself. The markets are also noisy neighbourhoods full of human and vehicular traffic (buses, cars and push-carts called *scanias*). Doing business there was thus often a challenge to traders and their customers alike as the bookseller above aptly described.

4.3 Interview Participants

Although the balance by gender would vary from one flea market trading sector to another, the overall balance among those interviewed was slightly tilted towards men as the table below shows (57% men against 43% women). The clothing sector, for example, seemed to be the preserve of women while the men took up the space for the sale of plain fabrics. Thus, a female participant [SVM] took up sewing of garments at an early age to fulfil a childhood passion nurtured under the tutelage of her late father. Two brothers held fervent hopes that they would rise to the top on the basis of their fabrics business.

Table 3: Gender balance among participants

Gender	Number of Cases	%
Female	17	43
Male	23	57
TOTAL	40	100

Source: Primary data

One male trader [KEG] explained that whereas he had considered the clothing sector, he acknowledged his handicap in the following manner:

I thought I might have problems in the selection of skirts.

So, he settled for fabrics in what was clearly a gendered textile sector.

The interviews conducted covered a diversity of undertakings involving the sale and provision of goods and services. Some of the prominent activities included clothing and fabrics, beauty therapists and food catering, stationery and bicycle parts, events management and the sale of gas stoves and accessories; grocery sale and retailing of foodstuffs, fruits and vegetables; cosmetics and electronic goods; traditional and herbal medicines. The diversity of trading activities covered allowed for triangulation of results thus enhancing credibility and trustworthiness of findings and conclusions. This diversity also made it possible for the perspectives of different players to rise to the surface: old and younger players, new entrants against veterans, male and female participants and traders from different sectors.

Educational levels of participants were varied. All interviewees held at least a primary school level of education. This was a reflection of high literacy levels in Zimbabwe standing at over 90% (ZIMSTAT, 2014b), and considered to be one of the highest in Africa. The majority of participants (75%) had either primary or secondary education as their highest level of educational attainment. Just over 17% of participants (such as BB and PC) had tertiary level qualifications. Clearly, the flea market sector was not a mere preserve of lowly educated individuals. It encompassed all levels of Zimbabwe's highly literate populace up to university education. However, the more educated and older players tended to sojourn into the sector to augment lowly incomes from formal employment. They might thus be regarded as opportunity seekers. Among holders of tertiary level qualifications, two had attained university degrees. These two were also part-time traders as they held formal sector jobs. Both, however, found the trade highly lucrative at times. Due to job pressures and their assessment of market opportunities, they tended to move in and out of different sub-sectors. For them, both necessity and opportunity stood out as important drivers. Whereas security and stability of income in flea market trading were variable, these additional incomes were highly rewarding for some participants. In comparing her income streams from formal employment and from trading, one participant (NSV) said to me:

In comparison; I know that what I was getting from my business was by far more than what I was earning at work.

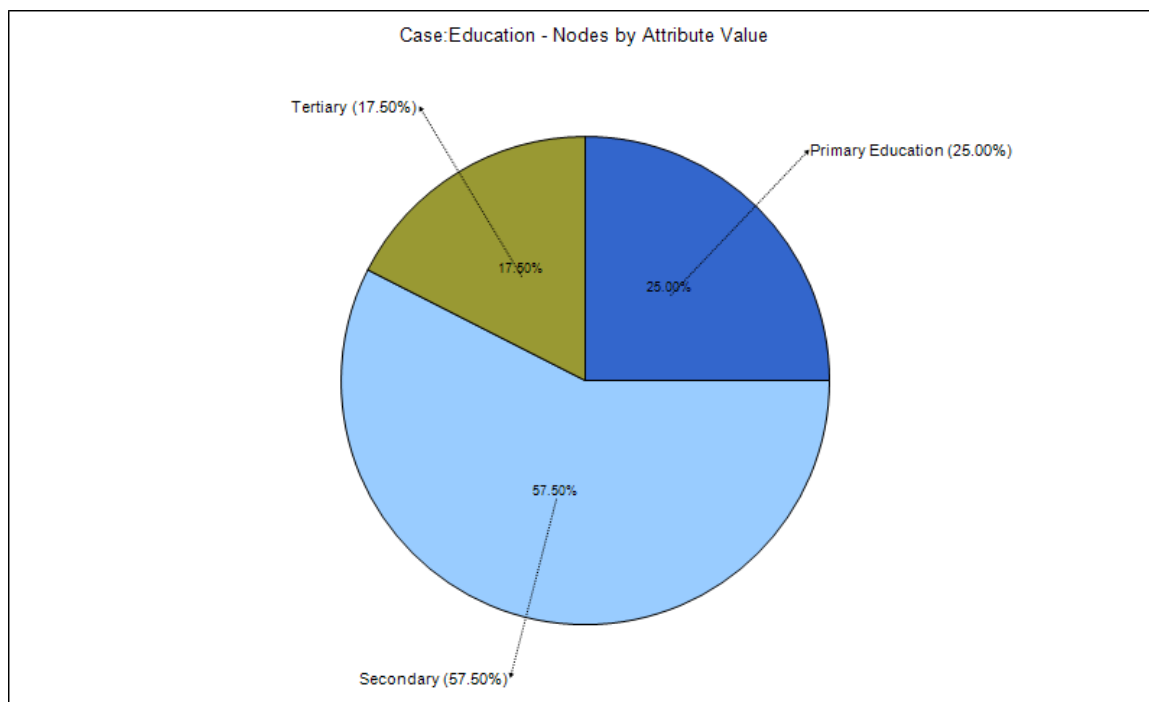


Figure 6: Participants by educational level

Source: Primary data

The very fact that holders of formal tertiary qualifications had taken up flea market trading was also a clear reflection of the depressed employment prospects in Zimbabwe in the formal sector (Luebker, 2008). In this vein, NC, a 35-year old dealer in bales of clothing and fabrics, expressed his frustration in the following terms:

I said to myself, I have an education but I don't have a job. I have a diploma in mechanical engineering. I have just turned 35. We are expecting our third child. My wife is however formally employed as a teacher.

Despite having perhaps one of the highest level of literacy on the African continent (ZIMSTAT, 2014a), most interviews were conducted in Shona (the predominant

local vernacular in Gweru). Notable exceptions were a bookseller of long standing (BKS) at the Kudzanai Market, a holder of a secondary education qualification, and NSV, another holder of a university degree who was in the flea market trading on part-time basis. It needs to be remembered that the ZIMSTAT definition of literacy for statistical purposes is a mere three years of education (during censuses) and ability to read a short sentence (during surveys).

As might be expected, few flea market players held qualifications relevant to their chosen fields of operations. Many had absorbed the demands of their trade on the fly due to the absence of training facilities even at the simple level at which traders operated. At one food outlet, two ladies spoke of their dedication to interpreting the needs of their customers and doing their best to meet those needs even without the benefit of formal training. As one of them said:

We take care of tastes and modern preferences. Firstly, we should not put soups, tomatoes and onions. People are more discerning these days. But we have not taken any courses.

Comments such as these provide demonstration that, despite lack of training in customer care, flea market traders had an awareness of the needs of their customers and took serious steps to meet those needs.

Another trader operated a smoke-filled food outlet in the corner of a designated flea market area, apparently without licence. He said he was the chief cook at this outfit: he claimed he had undergone some formal catering course as a result of which he had worked at a leading hotel in Victoria Falls. A woman specializing in traditional herbal concoctions claimed that she had absorbed her trade from the

spirit of her late grandmother who, she said, guided her especially in the difficult process of scouting for herbs in the bush. She maintained that, on this basis, she had been able to pass her knowledge to younger, more energetic persons who had gone on to ply the trade successfully in such places as neighbouring Botswana. She retorted:

Digging for herbs is the difficult part. But the spirit of my grandmother directs me. I also teach some others about herbs. They go to sell herbs in Botswana and they are able to buy cars especially the younger ones.

In contrast to the above, one lady seemed to have qualifications perfectly fitted to her chosen flea market operations. She was the exception among the cases interviewed:

I have gone to school for this business. I did my beauty therapy at Oasis School of Beauty in Bulawayo. I'm the right person for the right job. My friend here is a cosmetologist – this includes hair in addition to manicure and pedicure. She trained in Nigeria.

In general, the relatively simple and unsophisticated nature of flea market trading allowed for the participation of persons with very varied backgrounds, as well as wide-ranging levels of education and skills. Characteristically, there were low barriers to entry into the sector creating a highly competitive trading environment among operators. Any prior trade knowledge or skills came as an added bonus which many could cover through on-job skills acquisition.

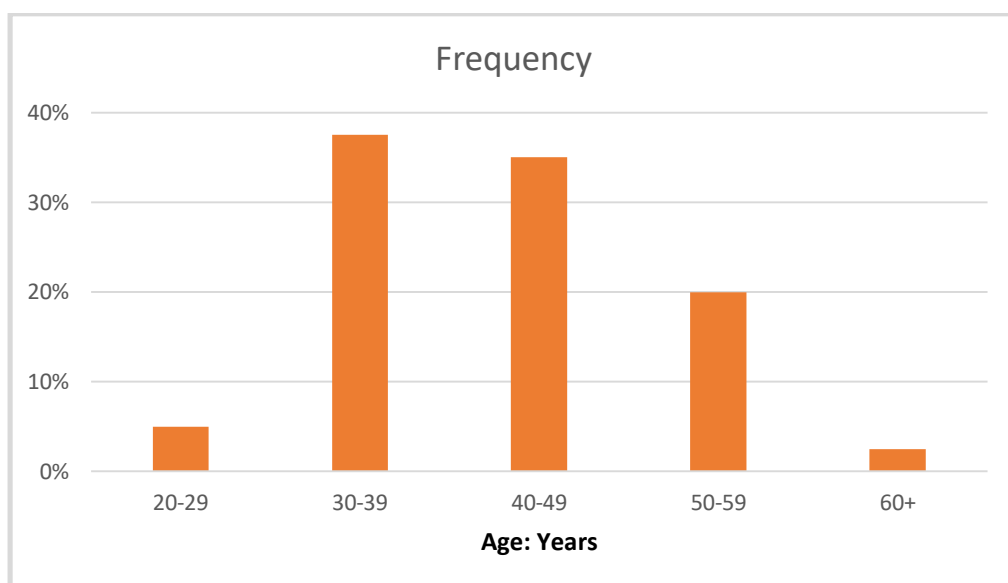


Figure 7: Age distribution of traders

Source: Primary data

From the diagram above, the clear majority of those interviewed for this study fell into the age range 30-49. The under 30 and over 60 were outlier groups. This statement of course, is not intended to be representative of the age distribution among vendors in the area under study. The youngest trader (NC) was 22 years old and had had to abandon (at least temporarily) diploma studies in tourism and to defer career goals in order to raise the cash to embark on a joint venture involving gas stoves and accessories imported from South Africa. She said:

I just sit (sic) down and started to think. I thought of a business idea. I was supposed to go to school and do hospitality and tourism. I still want to do my hospitality programme in due course. People discouraged me. I had secured a place at Poly. I became confused. I wanted to be a lecturer in due course.

Sometimes traders indeed appeared confused and uncertain in their business decisions and held murky insights into what would work and what might not. Decisions were thus random and intuitive rather than rational and well considered.

Table 4: Duration in trade by age of participants

Age	0-5 Years	6-10 Years	11-20 Years	21+ Years
20-29	2	0	0	0
30-39	9	6	3	0
40-49	5	3	7	0
50-59	0	1	4	4
60+	0	1	0	0

Source: Primary data

The most pertinent point raised in the table above is the fact that the newest entrants (0-5 years as traders) to flea market trading activities were among younger citizens. The two individuals in the 20-29 age group comprised an employee (NM) and NC (a 22-year-old young woman) who sacrificed money given to her to undertake a diploma in tourism to take up trading in gas stoves and accessories. No participants in the age groups 50 and above had joined in the last five years. This may be attributed to continued uncertainty in the economic prospects in Zimbabwe even in the period that immediately followed the introduction of the multi-currency regime in 2009.

Table 5: Distribution of participants by duration in flea market trading

Years as Trader	% of Matching Nodes
0-5	34
6-10	21
11-20	34
21+	11
TOTAL	100%

Source: Primary data

When it came to duration spent as flea market traders, one striking observation was an equal proportion in the lowest category as well as the under 11-20 years group, i.e., 34% in each case. The relatively high proportion in the 0-5 years group reflected a stronger gravitation towards the informal flea market sector in recent years due to economic hardships in the country as the formal job sector shrank (Meagher, 2013). Those who entered the sector earlier have remained in it over the years either through lack of viable options elsewhere or a real commitment and preference for this sector. Indeed, some 11% of participants had been in the trade for over 20 years. In addition, flea market trading undoubtedly had its own attractions as testimonies from participants showed. Examples of those who were committed to this sector for the long haul include MD (a woman) with over a decade of trading, and TJ (a man) with over two decades to his credit. Both MD (who quipped, “I think doing your own things is better”), and TJ (who had expanded and diversified his flea market empire beyond Gweru) had no desire to move out.

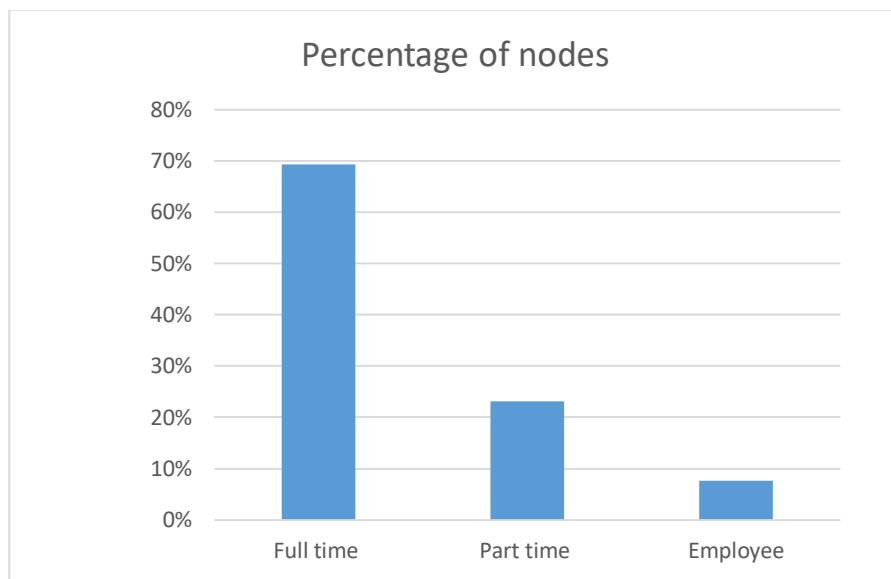


Figure 8: Distribution of participants by category

Source: Primary data

Evidence from interviews revealed that flea market traders were, by and large, solo operators carrying out their duties single-handedly with little outside help. Even family members were only marginally involved. In any case, flea market enterprises covered in this study were small modest operations that often would not warrant participation by many individuals. For that reason, traders themselves spent their time at their business premises or out on procurement errands that sometimes took them out of the country going as far as Cape Town in South Africa or Dubai in the United Arab Emirates, or even China. They worked all day long and sometimes all seven days of the week. A few took a break for Sunday church services. For example, the booksellers at Kudzanai Market worked seven days a week as well as most public holidays. Few engaged employees, even then it was usually part-time as in the case of an events manager who would call up needed help with décor and other tasks when there were several functions to arrange on a single day. One trader even had a negative view of employees:

Now workers are not dependable. They spend the day selling their own commodities. Then they also misappropriate your cash resources.

Indications from interviews were that traders usually travelled by *kombis* (passenger omnibuses) to Harare or Musina (Messina) just across the border in South Africa for procurement of goods. Even when the family had a car, the *kombi* was the preferred mode of transport due to the ready availability, cost and convenience of such means of transportation.

4.3.1 Retailers of Goods and Services

Flea market traders were involved in a wide range of activities providing goods as well as services to the market. The account that follows describes some of the key arenas of operations. Most traders devoted their business efforts on a restricted range of goods. Flea market traders therefore operated as specialists rather than generalists. This was somewhat inevitable given the size of the stalls and the restrictions of their operating licences.

4.3.2 Agricultural and horticultural products

Several interviewees dealt in agricultural and horticultural products. Four cases concerned retailing of bananas. These participants were farmers themselves, growing the crop in the eastern highlands of Zimbabwe. They were therefore part-time flea market traders who brought their own crop in its green state using hired trucks for transport. These bananas were packaged in bags and, upon arrival in Gweru, the farmers turned traders would wait for up to six days for the fruit to ripen before sale either at wholesale or retail basis. Perhaps due to the long distance from their source (some 400 kilometres), they travelled as a team of four to share

costs and provide mutual security and support. Each person, however, had their own bananas in the products and fruits consignment.

Another participant who also dealt in agricultural produce (sweet potatoes, groundnuts and sometimes wild traditional fruits) was a teacher at a primary school outside Gweru. His part-time dealings were somewhat seasonal. He dealt with a variety of crop products depending on availability coupled with his assessment of market dynamics. His sources were also varied though he seemed to favour Gokwe (a district 200 kilometres northwest of Gweru). A lady flea market trader specialised in fruit (such as oranges and bananas) and vegetables (cabbages, onions and carrots) which she bought from farmers and other suppliers who sold the commodities at the markets. Occasionally, she would go out to the farms for her needs.

4.3.3 Fabrics and clothing

Flea market traders dealing with fabrics and clothing depended on a variety of sources. The principal ones were Harare (Zimbabwe's capital city – nearly 300 kilometres to the north) and South Africa (at least 400 kilometres to the south depending on the actual point of supply in that country). Harare, as the largest metropolis in Zimbabwe, created such stiff competition among traders there thus driving local prices in the city downwards. This scenario gave flea market traders from Gweru opportunities to buy from there and resell products in Gweru for a good return. A trader in Rastafarian attire used destinations as far-flung as Cape Town in South Africa because of the specialised nature of his niche market. This trader had however started his business at a time he was working in South Africa. He

later returned home to continue his trade. He seemed to have identified suppliers for these specialised garments at the time he lived in South Africa. So he had continued to capitalise on his established network of suppliers.

4.3.4 Services

From the interviews conducted, those traders whose focus was towards the provision of services depended primarily on local Zimbabwe sources. Clearly in the case of catering services, because of the perishable nature of the commodities they dealt in, local sources were unavoidable. The same is true of traders trading in herbs and medicinal preparations. One innovative trader focussed on events management. Her requirements for creative and decorative materials needed in her trade were satisfied mainly from Zimbabwean sources. Another service provider (BJ), regarded herself as an upmarket/exclusive flea market operator (she conducted her operations from a small building originally set apart from other traders). She also had the amenities of an office. This trader obtained her specialised cosmetic and beauty products and accessories from as far afield as China and Dubai. At times, she travelled to those destinations every three weeks. One trader, whose speciality was bicycles and bicycle spares, had partially migrated from the flea market arena. He, however, still maintained a presence at the weekend flea market which operated up to 2016 and was also running an operation where he did final tuning and adjustments for bicycles bought from his shop adjacent to the Kudzanai bus terminus.

My participants also included a young woman who had just ventured into retailing gas stoves and accessories which she imported from South Africa. Her business

arose as a joint venture with a friend who had experience in servicing gas appliances. Two participants dealt in grocery retailing; another was into hardware. Yet another focussed on traditional handicrafts.

4.4 Trading Practices

As is the case for most retail business activities, flea market traders engaged in a range of trading practices that cut across various flea market sectors. The practices documented here were gathered from interviews I conducted in loco. Some statements and insights arise from direct observation of sites and interactions between traders and their customers. The range of trading practices included such matters as procurement of goods, stock handling, and record keeping. Related to this was also the genesis and motivation for choosing flea market trading in general or a specific sector of goods or services trading. Understanding these practices advanced the research goals which sought to discover how traders set up and organised their business activities and what aspirations and motives drove their actions.

4.4.1 Use of employees

Although their operations are on a modest scale, flea market traders displayed sophistication in the creation and management of their supply chains. In nearly all cases, traders dealt directly with downstream and upstream customers and suppliers even though they generally operated as sole traders. Family member or spousal participation was limited although children helped occasionally in the conduct of business. Few traders generated employment beyond themselves

except when casual workers were taken on a need basis. A lady engaged in events management had this to say:

I hire workers only when I have a function to help with the decor. Otherwise I do not need an assistant at other times. There would be nothing for them to do here.

Consequently, traders were engaged in self-employment and, in general, did not have the capacity or desire to provide employment. Indeed a lady who was into grocery shunned workers altogether. She justified herself by arguing that some employees might sell their own goods instead thus competing unfairly with their employers.

It was however also clear that most operators had little need for employees due to the limited scale of their operations which, in nearly all cases, were restricted to one stand. In the 4m² stand that comprised the trader's business premises, there would be little room for two people. However, one trader who, having been in the business since 1987, and having acquired some adjacent stands, out of necessity, was now employing nine people to handle his mini complex consisting of a mobile phone outlet, a food outlet, clothing joint as well as an EcoCash facility for mobile phone cash transactions. Indications from interviews were that most flea market traders were cautious in the decision to employ and, where they did so, they relied on trusted persons, normally family members:

I intend to hire someone; even a close relative I can trust to go to Gokwe and buy those things... an unemployed relative.

Clearly issues of trust held prominence. However, these considerations were cast aside in the few instances where expanded operations required additional hands for their sustenance.

4.4.2 Source of goods

Traders had developed a keen understanding of the needs of their customers and had crafted ways of meeting those needs in order to maximize revenue inflows. South Africa and Harare were the principal sources of the goods and commodities on offer. The exceptions were in the case of agricultural produce, food service outlets, traditional crafts and herbal medicines which were locally supplied. A trader in electronic goods had clearly identified the conflicting attractions of quality, price and the cost of distance. In an interview, he declared that:

I order from Francistown in Botswana. In South Africa, electrical goods are more expensive. Of course, quality is better in South Africa. But for my business, Botswana is better. We spend one night in Botswana. I never go beyond Francistown. There is a good range there.

South Africa, as the biggest economy in the region, was understandably an attractive source for supplies for many commodities. This was an instance where entrepreneurs applied Kirzner's concept of pricing to exploit price differences between countries (Welter & Xheneti, 2015). However, some players have used Zambia, Tanzania, Mozambique, and even Dubai in the United Arab Emirates. Importation, however, raised several challenges which traders had articulated and had addressed in different ways. One trader confidently declared that:

We are used to the border. It's easy for us.

For many, however, the border presented challenges and, in addition, the border also raised the cost of business. Evidently, traders considered the choice of available options by reflecting on the advantages and disadvantages of each source as well as reflecting on the preferences of their clientele. Harare was frequently used by traders dealing with various commodities but prominently books and stationery, and clothing items and fabrics. Such procurement decisions also involved price comparisons and weighing up differentials between Harare metropolis with a population of over a million compared to Gweru with about a tenth of the population. Traders also appeared to hedge their trading risks by relying on multiple sourcing compared to single sourcing (Christopher, Mena, Khan, & Yurt, 2011; Faes & Matthyssens, 2009).

4.4.3 Operational challenges

Flea market traders relied mostly on importation of goods; predominantly from South Africa; occasionally from Zambia, Botswana and beyond. These cross-border activities came together with several business hurdles exemplified in the cases cited below: A male trader (TJ) who had been in business for over a quarter of a century acknowledged that:

South Africa is cheaper but duty is killing us.

Customs duty, thus, constituted a significant cost factor; one that also limited quantities imported on a single trip by virtue of the magnitude of duty, especially where goods imported exceeded the duty-free limit. An importer of electronic goods (KEG) explained that he relied on rebate of duty at the border. This rebate was however limited to \$200 per month. In order to avoid paying customs duty, he was sometimes compelled to rely on informal arrangements with fellow travellers

on occasions when he wanted to bring in more goods or if he had exhausted his rebate entitlement for the month. This was at a cost of course. For those who relied on their own rebate to avoid payment of duty, this decision meant that they were restricted to one cross-border visit per month. This clearly impacted on revenues, overall turnover and profitability of their operations.

In some cases, traders simply broke the law: if tax avoidance failed, then tax evasion was substituted (Nyoni, Nkiwane, & Gonde, 2014). This seemed to have been especially prevalent with the importation of *mabhero* (bales of second hand clothing). A part-time female trader (PC) put it this way:

We would cross the border illegally. We were not doing it fair. It's rare for Zimbabweans to be allowed to import bales for sale save for short periods of time. They say it destroys the local market. Most times people are not allowed to import. These periods are short and interrupted. We are forced to do illegal things. Unotoita zvoutsotsi – you are forced to act like a tsotsi.

A young man, also specializing in second hand clothing (*mabhero*), described in detail how this contraband trade across the porous border with Mozambique was conducted:

To be honest with you it's smuggling actually; what happens is actually smuggling. Over 98% is smuggled into the country. Perhaps only 1% gets through the border. There is no ways a bale goes though the border post and gets charged by Zimra (Zimbabwe Revenue Authority). There is no rebate for mabhero. You are charged full duty. Just like people importing from China etc. There is only a fence at the border. People go up the hills and cross rivers and

they are already in Mozambique. Perhaps 15-20 km. You just pay the porters. If you pay them their money they deliver.

Others adopted more subtle ways of lessening the burden of duty and ensuring profitability of their operations. A lady involved in the importation of bed linen was emphatic that a lot of illegal activities took place at the border such as conniving with officials there. In the interview, she explained the risks when subterfuge failed:

Then one time when I went to South Africa I experienced a problem at the border. You can't declare everything otherwise you won't make a profit. We used to hide things under seats, or with the driver or by using someone who did not have much to declare. Many of my goods were confiscated.

Crossing the border using undesignated points was an alternative but one that was fraught with risks and dangers. One part-time trader interviewed set out the situation as follows:

We would travel as a team of 3 through the forest. You would not travel alone. The bales are heavy. Some boys would carry the bales for us from Mozambique through the forest. These boys do just that. We would then meet them later. You have to trust these strangers. Its 50:50. They travelled through forests while we took the road. The forest is near the border. However, there were few cases when they cheated us; rare cases for this to happen.

Other travel controls and restrictions also impacted on the conduct of business. A lady dealing in clothing and footwear explained that, whereas some goods may be cheaper in Zambia, she had forsaken that destination because South Africa, her principal supply source, required anyone who had been to Zambia to produce proof

of vaccination against yellow fever. This burdensome requirement had forced her to forego using Zambia. She had had to accept a trade-off.

In the competitive environments of flea market trading in the CBD of Gweru, traders realized that sourcing from the cheapest sources was critical for business success. For second hand clothing (*mabhero*), or electronic goods or clothing, those sources were across international boundaries: in Mozambique, Botswana, Zambia and, most importantly, South Africa. These choices were predicated on the depressed state of Zimbabwe's own manufacturing sectors where capacity utilization has remained low for years. In having to source from cross border markets, clearly traders used a variety of strategies, some legal, others more questionable, that is, through tax evasion and avoidance. Some of these activities were conducted at considerable personal risks by both male and female traders.

4.4.4 Handling stock

All traders accumulated stock regardless of whether they sold tangible goods or provided services to customers. All acknowledged that inventory management was key to profitability. Accordingly, none took it lightly. Indeed, many were prepared to pay for handling stock. Those trading from Gweru City Council stands faced greater exposure compared to those who used privately owned flea market malls as the later were enclosed under one roof. Indeed, some of the later had individual cubicles which they could lock up overnight. Operators from city council stands, being more exposed than their counterparts at privately operated stands, had devised various stratagems to secure their wares. Wherever conditions required or permitted, traders chose collaboration with fellow traders in order to minimize

costs by sharing the burden, spreading the costs and so finding strength in numbers. Proximity to neighbours was therefore a source of potency. BDF, who sold fruits and vegetables, explained as follows:

We have a security guard for the area overnight. We pay the guard weekly.

There are 45 stalls for this security arrangement all the way to the far end. We cover our goods with plastics overnight. Other areas have their own guards.

Traders in other goods adopted similar measures. A female dealer in grocery items (PSM), also spoke of such a collaborative arrangement among a group of traders perhaps just 200 metres away from BDF. These provisions illustrate how traders sometimes came together to address business issues of common concern.

All these goods on display here are kept here overnight. We just cover them up.

We hire a guard whom we pay per week. He patrols throughout the night. He is not from a company. There is a committee which arranges for these matters like security for this section only.

Furthermore, this group also relied on a symbiotic relationship with other traders to enhance their security. According to Leonard (2007), concepts from biological and environmental sciences can be applied to social conditions. In this case, however, the benefits flowed one way. The other parties (who were dealers in bananas) derived no reciprocal advantages. In one interview, a trader (WGS) indicated that:

There is a lot of activity here even during the night so the chances of thefts are low. This gives more security. The people who sell bananas behind us in fact

sleep here. There are also people doing various things overnight. That enhances security. The banana people have teams which come in turns in their bananas business. So there are always people around from the banana people.

Four hundred metres away a group of book and stationery sellers also enjoyed free security benefits from a variegated group of neighbours. They were so satisfied with this windfall that they took no substantial additional steps to bolster their security beyond the simple act of securing their books in lockers at their stalls during the night. As one book vendor (BKS) said:

Overnight we have lockers, with steel doors. We lock up for the night. There is no other security arrangement. But there are people who work till late here. It's a mixed market –meal cobs, roasting. Council decided to squeeze us here as they did not have space for us anywhere else. We leave it like that. Some will be cooking the whole night. There is always someone here. Others go home while others come. Over there are people who are in the home craft area: they bring their axes, hoes; and homemade things. They come from Nkayi. They sleep here. They are our guards. They guard their things and ours as well. There is always someone at any time of the night. That's the kind of security we have and we don't run short of them. When one group goes another arrives; weaving baskets etc. There is always someone around.

In other cases, operators took more elaborate supply chain arrangements for overnight storage at separate locations for a fee. A typical arrangement is that described by DM, a dealer in menswear, women's wear and children's wear:

At the end of the day we take our things to the cloakroom. It costs us \$20 a month regardless of the number of bags we have. Transport for taking our goods to and from the cloakroom costs a dollar a day.

Thus, merchandise is moved twice daily: in the morning and at the end of the day's trading; seven days a week in many cases. Some players had come up to offer logistical services such as storage, transportation, and carriage. One such entrepreneur was Mr YC who, in addition to his business as a licenced flea market trader during weekends and street (illegal) vendor during weekdays, conducted a thriving transportation business using *scanias* (two wheeled push carts) designed and positioned to serve traders taking their wares to storage rooms in the evening and back again the following morning. He had 18 *scanias* at the time of my interview with him. However, he claimed that he had had a much larger fleet until the advent of Operation Murambatsvina in 2005. He spoke regretfully that:

I started scanias in 1999. I now have 18. Some were taken by Murambatsvina. At that time, I had 35. Murambatsvina yakatisvina (Murambatsvina squeezed us dry).

Traders also had to deal with the burden of accumulation of slow moving stock in some instances. In the case of perishables, traders could quickly decide on price discounting to avoid total loss. Those dealing with non-perishables had other options. Thus, in addition to discounting prices when necessary, a dealer in second-hand clothing (*mabhero*) described a form of barter trade whereby goods were eventually passed on to other markets (usually in the rural areas outside Gweru) in order to salvage some value rather than incur total loss. One trader said:

Sometimes rural traders come and they may buy our stuff. These people would be able to do bartering. We off-load our stuff that way. This happens quite often.

On the other hand, with durable goods, holding on to stock awaiting improvement in market sentiment provided a viable and profitable option. Such was the case for the traders dealing in books and stationery items, as one of them explained:

We order, put a mark-up and resell your books save that the books might not be bought in the timeframe you would have wanted them to be bought. So, you may stay with them longer than anticipated. Later you would still sell at a much higher price albeit. Just follow the trend and charge the new price. So just keep the book well; in a good condition. We also go around and check prices in bookshops on a monthly basis and so we can determine our mark-up and follow in their footsteps.

A fruit and vegetable vendor discovered that instead of keeping her carrots too long on her racks, she could chop them and re-package them in a process of value addition. These carrots proved very popular, especially because she sold them for a lesser amount:

Chopped carrots (to avoid loss when they have been around for long) are popular among customers as they are ready for the pot. They are popular. They have less labour on customers. Those not chopped however give us more profit.

From the above, it was clear that all traders appreciated the central role that management and handling of stock played. Attention to inventory issues started with storage and security of goods on and off site. Inventory management further

concerned itself with the sales of stock or its lack thereof. Traders also understood the importance of salvage or residual value of their stock as a way of mitigating loss.

4.4.5 Record keeping

Many small businesses face numerous challenges related to records and information management (Okello-Obura, 2012). A matter closely related to handling and managing stock was record keeping. Most traders appreciated the value of keeping accurate records of stocks and of sales. However, being sole traders accountable to only themselves, record maintenance was variable, rudimentary, unsophisticated and sometimes inconsistent. The traders interviewed described the records they kept and, in some cases, showed me samples of such records. A chairperson of the vendors' association (who himself kept a record of sales and stocks) expressed the view that most association members would not bother much about record keeping. He noted:

There is very little understanding, so many vendors do not keep records. There used to be workshops for vendors on record keeping. That was in the 1980s and 90s. It was run by Fredrick Neumann Foundation. But it's no more.

Another trader highlighted the levels of informality concerning record keeping at their facility in these words:

We keep records. Anyone among us can write the records.

Clearly notions of segregation of roles were non-existent.

Many interviewees however, showed that, a few among them would ignore record keeping totally even though they held limited stocks. The following cases are illustrative of the range of practices as well as the importance flea market traders attached to the maintenance of business records:

A part-time trader who was also a teacher by profession (BB) summed up his situation in the following terms:

Only that it's really not book keeping in a strict way. By merely charging you can see that you remain with money to continue the business.

Traders' assessment of the worth of record keeping was therefore impressionistic. Thus, a trader might focus on deliverable outcomes of their accounting activities rather than adopting accounting best practices. Recording keeping was interpreted from a functional perspective, that is, in terms of its outcome and substance rather than form or format. In one case a trader said:

It's difficult to do records. When we have got our investment and we see we can do our housing stand. We really do not have records. If our construction is taking place in Woodlands. Anyway, this is not our first stand.

In another case, similar sentiments were expressed by the banana farmers-cum-flea market traders:

Individual farmers may keep their own records. However, we ourselves find that keeping records would be difficult for us. It would be a bother to us. We however see the proceeds as when we do things for ourselves e.g. building a house or buying asbestos roofing sheets.

In some cases, however, record keeping systems had evolved to a more formalized level as operations became more established. Thus, the nature of record keeping was influenced by sophistication of trading operations or the operators themselves, duration of operations or levels of education. Such was the case for one trader in groceries who now kept records in a more diligent fashion:

We keep records. (She showed me a book). Cash in, Cash out, Cash in Hand. Expenses e.g. airtime bought, some money used for own use, rest sold. School fees, stand paid for at the bank. At the end of the week we can then tell how much we have made.

Record keeping practices were thus contingent upon circumstances and therefore in a state of dynamic mutation. This was the case for the owner of an events management set-up (KR) who had elevated her record keeping to a higher degree and had even accepted the need for clients to complete and sign a contract form. This is the evolutionary path she had gone through over the period of her trading operations:

I now issue a receipt to a client when a client pays. At the beginning I did not issue a receipt. I would just take the money and use it and forget about it. I now receipt every cent. I also give written quotations for people who inquire about my services.

A part-time trader (PC), dealing mostly in clothing items, also had a more formalized system. Speaking of her fellow women traders, she expressed the optimistic view that flea market traders would keep records even with the limited knowledge and education they had. Forty-six-year-old PC had been in the

business for nearly a decade. She was also the holder of a college diploma qualification. About her own records, she had this to say:

I kept a book that I called cash analysis. We recorded the goods bought; the purchase price and then the selling price of the goods. Of course, the final price was negotiated, 'kuchema-chema'- 'to cry, cry'- as always happens at flea markets.

A 30-year old beauty therapist (SHMF) who had had management experience at a clothing retail outlet in Bulawayo had her sights cast for a fuller set of records. She said that she was also applying accounting knowledge she had learnt at school.

I have books for my proceeds. At school I did accounts as well. I write everything that I do. It's not really proper accounts but I write. (Details of sales of goods or services were shown to me). At the end of the day I balance things. I write opening stock; weekly I check my stock.

A trader whose main business consisted of selling second hand books and some stationery boasted of a set of records which spanned many years of careful record keeping. This trader had come to use record keeping on a consistent basis:

We just keep records of daily sales which can be translated into monthly or weekly sales. This (showing me a book) one is from way back 1 Jan 2012 up to now; in one book to today. I have the older ones as well. We record price and also my expenses for ordering and the like including books or stationery bought.

I keep records and I record my sales. I like to have records very much. My database should allow me to keep track of my stock. When I order, I record the stock and also when I have sold something. We can pick out any losses. Sales book should show mark-up. So, we know what our profits are. We can then see what our profit were for the month.

Mother and son cooperation produced the following account for their part-time trading in various commodities that they imported from South Africa. The mother (the owner of the flea market enterprise) was holder of a university degree. Her son chipped in to ensure that adequate records were kept:

I keep good records. My son had done accounting at A Level. He was very strict on that. He would record everything each time I went. He would insist on receipts. He enjoyed doing that for me. He kept prices; what I had brought in percentage; selling prices; profit etc.

Clearly, record keeping was widespread, contrary to the negative view expressed by the chairman of the vendors' association. Record keeping generally ranged on a continuum from basic to a modest level of sophistication. It was viewed as a beneficial exercise by the overwhelming majority of participants. Thus, participants offered varied explanations on why they found it necessary to keep records. The following statements indicated the variety of motives that justified use of records:

BSZ: *It helps to assess the business whether it's going up or down. Even in raising a loan I would know whether I can afford the loan and for how much. I keep records. After orders, I count my stuff and record. It helps for future plans.*

I take stock to see if I'm progressing or not. I should know if I'm making profit or not. It helps me avoid eating into my capital. Expenses determine profits.

KR: *To know whether one is making a profit.*

DM: *At any given time, I know what my stock is.*

SHMF: *I check whether it is balancing with the money that I have.*

BJ: *Sometimes it's easy to eat into your seed.*

Evidently, record keeping was a purposeful activity, entered into deliberately for present and future business goals. Similar diligence was reported from Harare flea market traders at Mupedzanhamo and Avondale (Mupambireyi, Chaneta, & Maravanyika, 2014). There were, of course, no standard forms of records. Dealers simply adopted a pragmatic approach about what worked for them in their situations. Flea market traders are a diverse heterogeneous group and so were their motivations for keeping records. However, it has been argued that failure to adopt formal accounting practices constitutes a handicap for growth among SMEs in developing countries (Nelson Maseko, 2011; Padachi, 2012).

4.4.6 Prices and pricing practices

One prominent item of record keeping concerned prices and pricing practices. I was interested to know how traders went about setting their prices. Many traders did not display their prices although in some sectors displaying prices was uniformly adopted. A frequently encountered sector where displaying prices was widespread was the selling of fruits and vegetables.

Often, flea market traders dealing in similar goods worked in close proximity of each other in one section of the market; the trader next to you getting to know the prices you charged and whether and when you gave discounts. This provided a measure of transparency to pricing arrangements but perhaps also some encouragement for collusive pricing. No pricing arrangement operates in a vacuum under such an arrangement. A good illustration of this was given by a trader who dealt in clothing (mostly imported from South Africa using the local currency there, the Rand).

Pricing is difficult. There are no standard fixed prices. The market has set the prices and you can't vary. We gain when the Rand goes down. We thus don't factor many costs.

Traders thus displayed a keen awareness of exchange rate fluctuations and maximized their returns through hedging and managing such risks.

Many traders sought to maximize their gains depending on what the market could bear. Thus, a trader in agricultural produce described his pricing decisions as follows:

We can even hire a truck and bring chakata or nyimo at \$2 a bucket which then sells at \$8.

Similarly, one trader described what she regarded as a rule of thumb:

But we had a floor price (reserve price ensuring at least some profit). Due to our system, an item bought for \$5 is sold for \$10. The general rule for flea markets is "times 2." It's not like 15% mark-up.

Yet another trader employed such a modified heuristic as a pricing strategy in the clothing sector:

You look at what the bale cost you; I count the pieces in the bale – clothing or shoes or T shirts. I work out a price to realise a profit. I price my things times 2 or times 3. I must sell less than half to cover my initial capital. That's how we do it.

Book sellers seemed to keep their ears close to the ground in the determination of prices. As these traders had to compete with larger players, they also made use of market intelligence.

We also get around and check prices in bookshops on a monthly basis and so on so we can determine our mark-up and follow in their footsteps.

In the case of these book sellers, this generally meant keeping prices a little below the competition in order to attract customers. There were further cases where price comparison was used. This is how flea market traders dealing in bananas handled the situation created by the presence of a leading banana wholesale/retail company:

Sunspun Bananas is different from us on quality. Sunspun looks for quality. However, not every customer can afford that quality. We however grade our bananas by size. Our prices are different. They are lower according to grades/sizes of bananas. Sunspun go all over the Eastern Highlands looking for quality bananas (1st grade bananas).

A trader (BJ) at the top end of the flea market business sourced her goods (mostly hair and beauty items) further afield even going as far as China and Dubai and charged a higher mark up:

The returns for stuff I get from China is good. My mark-up is 400%. This covers my duty and airfares.

This trader could charge higher premium prices due to the perceived upmarket ambience she had established in a secluded trading section of the market area.

Although they did not produce elaborate accounting records or engage in complicated pricing procedures, all traders were satisfied, in varying degrees, with the returns from their trading activities. Some were in it through sheer force of unfavourable circumstances at some moment in time; others had comfortably settled in it for the long run. Although many in the latter group recalled times when trading was better, they had no thought of seeking alternatives such as formal employment. One trader reminiscing of good times gone by said:

... taifa ne mari. (Literally “-We were dying of money.”)

Pricing practices clearly involved a discerning assessment of the surrounding business environment. There were cases where pricing choices were constrained by sectoral norms, as in the case where trade custom had established a rule of thumb. In other cases, discreet market surveys allowed the trader to fix a viable price as in the case of booksellers or the banana sellers.

4.5 Genesis of the Business Idea and Motivation for Entry

Decisions to continue as flea market traders were related to how long a trader had been involved in flea market trading and sometimes to the age of participants. Associated with these notions was how each trader had come into flea market trading in the first place, i.e., how the business idea had originated as well as their reasons for entry into flea market trading. With rising or continuing unemployment in the formal sector of the national economy, more people had joined flea market trading. The number of trading centres and sites within Gweru had also risen with Gweru City Council opening new avenues for trading especially in 2016. However, one trader bemoaned the erosion of trading incomes and attributed the decline of revenue inflows to these new players:

In the olden days, people were shy to do this trade. They see there is no choice now. That's the way of survival.

4.5.1 Reasons for entry and participation in flea market trading

Flea market traders in Gweru appear to resemble their counterparts in the rest of Africa or beyond. Benzing and Chu (2009) found that entrepreneurs in Africa exhibit a varied set of start-up motivations. Among flea market traders in Gweru, reasons for entry were often inextricably linked to reasons for continued engagement. Continued participation tended to reinforce factors that justified initial entry. Concerning their reasons for entry, evidence from interviewees revealed that these ranged from cases where participants saw no viable alternative (as was the case for ZB) to those who, such as TJ, had embraced the practice as a matter of passion, choice or opportunity. Thus, participation was sometimes voluntary and at other times involuntary. ZB acknowledged that he had embarked into the

banana trade hundreds of kilometres away from his home base due to a lack of alternatives even though the returns were low. For TJ on the other hand:

I no longer consider taking on employment. It's out. I started on this and I have never looked back. Even when things were difficult. I have grown with this, even today things are tough. But we keep going. Tichirova pasi. (We keep hitting the ground running).

One female trader whose husband held a secure job with a major haulage company had found her roots in the flea market trading arena. For her flea market trading was no longer just some temporary activity.

I have been on this for about 12 years. I have never worked anywhere. I don't think I would take up employment. Here you get money every day. We are used to daily takings. I would find it difficult waiting for month end.

The banana farmer-cum-trader mentioned above produced this assessment of his reasons for entry and for holding on:

I have 9 children. I have grandchildren. I stay with 3 children; some are still in school. This business helps me bring up my family and to care for them.

In this case, participants would spend weeks; hundreds of kilometres away from home selling bananas. His colleague retorted that, despite the hardships, the business gave him half his lifestyle; which is more than he would gain from formal employment, assuming he could find a job.

For people in formal employment, clearly flea market enterprises constituted a source of lucrative untaxed supplementary income especially during hard times.

Sometimes they seemed to enjoy the best of both worlds. In the words of one part-time flea market trader:

Flea market money is not taxed. It comes in everyday e.g. \$50 every day of the month.

For one young entrant (22 years old), flea market trading offered the opportunity for self-discovery as well as income augmentation before embarking on a lifetime career upon graduating from a polytechnic college. For two older women, a passionate interest also offered the avenue towards self-fulfilment together with the opportunity to derive an income stream. One contributed as follows:

I'm into management and decor. I had a passion for decor when growing up starting from church and stuff.

For one female trader, engagement in flea market trading was justified in terms of a passionate devotion nursed from childhood in her father's trade with the skills cultivated gradually over time. For yet another woman, she simply married into it. When her husband moved on later to driving the family *kombi* they had bought from the proceeds of their flea market business, she stayed behind to operate the flea market business at the stand. The commitment was thus in the nature of a legacy (Wilson, 2014):

I started in 1980. My husband Mr BB here was the first to do this trade. He started while we were inside the bus rank. We were working inside the rank. There was no tarred surface then. He was selling various things there. I married him and I joined the trade. We have been in art and craft all the time ever since.

In a further case, a daughter employed by her mother in a catering flea market enterprise described how her mother employed her to run the kitchen facility while she (the mother) did cross-border trading. The daughter explained:

Mother wanted to find a way of raising her family. She does cross border work. For years and she still does that. She orders fabrics from Zambia and makes them into clothing items. She then takes those to South Africa for sale.

Clearly the allure of the market was felt strongly during the hard and bad times before 2009 when the Zimbabwe dollar was replaced by the multi-currency regime; a period when hyperinflation ravaged the economy. For one part-time trader who joined during that hyperinflationary period, the push/pull factor was expressed as follows:

We used to have a good life through the flea market business. Many people envied us. Flea market traders would laugh at people employed as office workers. One former classmate of mine used to mock me as an office worker. He used to do money exchanging: 'If its ball-point pens you want with your office job, come to the 'rank' (i.e. Kudzanai market area and bus terminus) and I will give you more pens'. Friends encouraged me to move even when things were harder when the politics and social life etc. were down.

Tamukamoyo (2009) described how Tanaka, a Harare vendor, was very contemptuous of civil servants, especially teachers, whom he felt had wasted time by getting a higher education because they “earn peanuts.”

Then there are cases where some cataclysmic events had changed peoples' life fortunes or where individuals reassessed their future prospects resulting in a decision to engage in flea market trading activities. One woman trader recounted:

Madzibaba (my husband) gave up a managerial job at Meikles in 1996 because he saw that formal employment was not rewarding. He hardly got anything from employment. He had worked for 10 years. He left with nothing...He got an idea by observing some traders at the bus terminus. He tried it out and saw how it worked.

Similar sentiments were aired by a young man, a trader in electronic goods:

I started in 2009 ordering electrical gadgets. I had worked in the heavy industrial area. But things were not going well.

In some cases, entry was planned and deliberate: the result of careful contemplation. One female trader in the beauty industry was representative of this scenario:

I then decided to go to college to do this beauty therapy. Then I was ready to quit the job. I have almost 7 years' experience in this business.

Strong cultural and spiritual beliefs constituted important drivers in the decision to engage in flea market trading for a trader in herbal medicines:

Our midzimu (ancestral spirits) used to do this. The elders went to prophets, doctors etc....They used rukata (divining/healing herbs) and the patient would

be healed. These herbs are really effective...I have been doing this for 27 years. I was 15 years old when I started this.

Once started, trading gains allowed participants to build momentum. Before the hyperinflationary period which ended in 2009, higher returns drove players to run with the trade a little longer:

I have never looked back. I think I was 32 years old then. I looked at what the business was doing for us...I realised that I could get so much before my work salary came. My wife was selling bananas, books on verandas before Murambatsvina in 2005.

Two brothers persuaded one other to change career paths. One abandoned a formal sector job while the other graduated from being an assistant to a flea market trader to adopt his master's trade apparently after years of beneficial mentoring. Both brothers opted out of formal employment voluntarily (Maloney, 2004):

Before this I used to work at Hippo Valley 1995-2000. I stopped when I noticed that the wages were not enough...I now get enough to meet my needs; better than those in employment. A short while ago it was better. But now there is more competition. There is no money in the market. Those who remained in employment have been retrenched sometimes.

The participants in this research offered diverse reasons for their involvement. In deciding whether or when to join flea market trading, it seemed that participants assessed the relative attractiveness factors in their existing situation compared to the prospects in the intended destination market. There were examples of both

push and pull factors. In general, push factors propelled players away from their current sector while pull factors drew players to the flea market sector. Many traders therefore weighed the options confronting them and made rational decisions regarding the cost and benefits of initial entry as well as their decision to continue in it or to pull out. Pull and push factors operated jointly rather than in isolation. In many cases, exit from the formal sector was voluntary and deliberate (Maloney, 2004; Painter & Young, 1989). However, the idea of choice and voluntarism is disputed in some circles (Meagher, 2013).

Ease of entry is a factor often associated with retail activity in general. This is especially so for flea market activities as traders invest only in their merchandise and with their time. Mkandawire (1986) highlights that ease of entry is also often associated with ease of exit. He contends that traders do not easily enter into informal trading, but rather they simply fall into it. Despite that ease of exit, many players had no desire to exit, especially if they had been in it for extended periods. They valued the relative freedom trading afforded them as well as the prospects for a steady cash flow. Although the desire to generate income to live or survive by was a frequent driver, other forces such as desire for independence or filling a gap in the market also had potency (Williams & Round, 2009).

4.5.2 Dawn of the business idea

Coupled with reasons for entry, participation was also conditioned and anchored on the initial creation or generation of a viable, actionable business idea leading to entry into a particular flea market sector including where and how. Where there was a passionate driving force, the force itself often encapsulated the genesis of

a business idea. In the case where the driving force emanated from adverse ambient circumstances, participants clearly needed to search for an appropriate response; in some instances, by starting from scratch. Sometimes the search and identification was cautious and gradual; in others, it was spontaneous and precipitate.

A common source for business ideas was constituted through imitation as well as the desire to move ahead and keep pace with peers. This is how one young holder of a polytechnic diploma summed up his situation and how he had picked up a business strategy:

For the business idea it was copycatting. Someone has bought a car and they have built a house. I said to myself: I have an education but I don't have a job.

For some persons, the genesis of the business idea came from a mentor able to demonstrate the viability of an idea and hone the requisite skills. A role model constituted a fountain of confidence. Many business ideas had their origins from within family circles thus involving a level of trust and confidence in the source. A lady who took up sewing and dress making exemplified this.

I started sewing when I was young because my father was a tailor. I loved sewing from then. I taught myself gradually making my own clothing. From pants to dresses. Initially doing so by hand. Until I was grown up.

In some cases, a form of brainstorming provided the necessary springboard. However, sometimes encouragement and nourishment was still essential in order to nurse the fledgling idea:

I sat down and I thought of a business idea. I was supposed to go to school and do hospitality and tourism. I thought of a business with less competition. Different from clothing which has many players. My friend does gas filling and he helped me with the business idea...My parents had no objection when I started this business as I was leaving school. But my babamukuru (uncle) gave me much encouragement along the lines of management. I saved my own money initially meant for college fees. I later used that money to start this business. We sat and talked down and he said: aunt it's a good idea.

Then there were those cases where a personal passion and a hobby formed the foundation for venturing out into flea market trading:

I had a passion for decor when growing up starting from church and stuff. I then got a job and one of my duties was to organise events e.g. anniversaries. This gave me the business idea. That was from 2005 to 2009 when I left that job...Accumulating capital- I did not wait to get a lump sum to start the business. I did it in stages and bought things as I went along.

A Gweru City Council administrator I interviewed explained that formal provision for flea marketing was driven by the difficult socio-economic forces in the country in general. So, provisions had been made for trading avenues and platforms in the Gweru City Council area. In his own words:

Flea markets emerged in this country as a result of economic challenges people have had to go through from 2000. Our economy became unstable and unpredictable, resulting in closure of industries. Many people were out of employment. Most people decided to sell something to earn a living. At

Murambatsvina period (2005), people were selling from any point regardless of rules and regulations. Government then came up with intervention (Operation Murambatsvina) so that people could sell their wares in a systematic way or procedural way. Then these flea markets emerged.

Nevertheless, formal provision for trading bays outstrips the demand for them as explained by one council official. Hence, there are many illegal vendors and traders on pavements and shop entrances still jostling for customers with formal retail outlets and legitimate flea market traders.

In the case of one long serving participant, a parent provided the role model and inducted the son into the trade:

I started 1987/88. I was about 22 years old. I was already married. My father used to sell bananas in the rural areas. So, I would sell in the locations before flea markets started. I once worked at Katiyo Tea estates for 2 years then Aberfoyle for 6 months; then Harare for 6/7 months; then I came to Gweru.

Sometimes the business idea was born out of sheer chance similar to the account of a respondent who, as a tourist visiting Bulgaria, noted the price differences in neighbouring countries' markets and realised it was a good opportunity (Welter & Xheneti, 2015). Traders engaged in a form of arbitrage and capitalised on price differences across national boundaries:

As we travelled around Zimbabwe, the idea struck us especially when some people asked about produce from our area. So, we then started this business

when people asked us whether we could supply bananas. There was a shortage of this commodity –bananas. We had to put up capital as a group.

A lady dealing in grocery items took a long route learning the ropes gradually from her husband who himself embarked on flea market trading to supplement family incomes. Initial moves were rather experimental on his part. His entry was later followed by his wife's. However, ideas about the traditional roles of women had kept his wife on the margins until the exigencies of the economy compelled a review leading to the entry of the woman as well. Like many, she was drawing upon a reservoir of experiences and exposures to alternatives and options. The lady recounted:

He got an idea by observing some traders at the bus terminus. He tried it out and saw how it worked. We used to stay in Chinhoyi then and my husband used to go out to sell in the commercial farms. This was during weekends. He would do barter trade exchanging with sugar or matches, anything. He got hooked to it. I never went out myself at that time. Only he went out. I joined later because things got harder. At first, he would not let me do this business because he said it was not work for women. He would engage workers.

The wife eventually became a committed full-time practitioner with no further desire to move out of the trade. People transition from a cautious toe in the sector to comfortable settlement in it.

The road was also long for BKS. There was a period of gradual preparation and incubation of the business idea. But again, exogenous circumstances provided the trigger as BKS indicated:

I have been trading in textbooks since 2000. I used to work for SH Trakoshis. When the company was sold in 2000 I went straight into books. I had started at a lower level before. I had been doing this business of books on the side. My wife used to attend to this on the side. We used to sell in the street. My wife was attending to the books so I knew this business could meet my family needs on a daily basis e.g. paying rent. So, I came straight to work full time ordering more books. When we got our gratuities, I came straight to the flea market. I have never looked back.

Then for one man (BSZ), a form of apprenticeship while employed by a flea market trader convinced him of the prospects of flea market trading. In doing so, BSZ reined in his brother and the duo plunged into the trade at the same time. In an interview, BSZ revealed:

I had been employed by someone doing this selling of fabrics and clothing. He had a flea market outlet. I worked for him from 1994 for six years. He has since gone into brick making and durawalls and also into selling river sand. He now has an industry (sic).

From the accounts above, the gestation of business ideas appeared to reside in three important arenas:

- A suitable mentor or role model. Such was the case for BSZ who imbibed the trade from an employer in the flea market sector.
- As a form of inheritance.
- Through careful exploration and study.

Sometimes also a combination of factors operated.

4.5.3 The pursuit for profit and gain

Related to the generation of business ideas was the matter of the gains and benefits traders expected to derive from their participation in flea market trading. These gains appeared to be intimately related to how long participants stayed in the business or persevered for success. Such gains and benefits may be tangible while others are intangible in nature. Although family members (especially children) were often not deeply involved in the trading activities of the traders covered in this study, it appeared that the gains and benefits from flea market trading were realised and interpreted in the context of the family. As demonstrated by Ruth and Hsiung (2007), in the case of subsistence consumers in South Africa, the major household concerns revolved around adequate family housing and high-quality education for their offspring. These benefits represented wider long-term investments expressed in the form of a better quality of life for current and future generations and advancement up the social ladder.

Education was valued highly as the high literacy rate in Zimbabwe (ZIMSTAT, 2014b) testifies, and so education was viewed commonly as a vehicle for investment. Thus, children's participation in flea market trading was sometimes perceived as interference with that goal:

Children are too young so they can't help us. We do not want children to do this business. We want them to concentrate on their school work. They help perhaps on the odd occasions. Other times they may be taking extra lessons. Handling money may spoil them. They start thinking that their parents have plenty of money.

Basic shelter for own and family needs was one investment vehicle mentioned by a large number of participants. This was one common reflection of the emphasis on social capital and family bonding. Two quotations below illustrate this focus. YC, a proud owner of a flea market clothing enterprise and push cart business but still reminiscing of his rural 'home' away from urban life captured the sentiment in these words:

I can buy cattle or household goods. It's important to invest. The scanias (push carts) are one major investment. It is my life pension; even if I fall ill... This is like my life pension even if I decide to go back to my 'home'. I have my manager who collects money for me.

Mrs SVM (a tailor) also highlighted this emphasis on social capital and family bonding:

I built a house in Mambo Township (4 roomed) over and above meeting my basic needs. I have done a plan for extending the house. My plan was approved last year. I might put in tenants to help me in my old age. So, I can let out a part of it. I will continue to work for my own personal needs. As for retirement, I may step down at the age people usually retire from this trade; perhaps 60 years of age.

The provision of basic shelter for family was thus one oft-quoted benefit. Shelter and basic provision for one's family preoccupied attention of many as the next quotations amply illustrate:

KEG (32 years): *I have managed to buy a stand; that was in 2012. I have not*

started working on it yet. But payment is up to date. Of course, I have bought several household/domestic items.

BSZ (41 years): *I get enough to meet my needs; better than those in employment. A short while ago it was better. But now there is more competition. There is no money in the market. Those who remained in employment have been retrenched sometimes... I can make a living. I may even be better than those in employment; I send my children to school, I pay my rents. I have more plans for the future. The main one is to send my children to school and then build them a house. I wish to get a stand of my own.*

A mode of double-rootedness (Muzvidziwa, 2001; Muzvidziwa, 2010) was evident in many investment decisions. As a result of such double-rootedness, though the overwhelming majority of the interviewees had urban Gweru as their principal place of residence, many still took their historical rural home seriously. For these reasons, they balanced investment in an urban dwelling side by side with maintenance of the rural homestead:

I bought building materials and extended my house in 2008; then I bought some cattle for my rural home: zvimombe two (two cattle) - heifers. Then I bought some goats at another time when someone who was desperate sold them to me. Today I have many goats. My late mother used to look after them. The number at one time grew to 20. Every time I go home I bring goat meat.

Such returns reflected ambivalence: a nostalgia for a rural life from days gone by combined with the attractions of modern city life such as was expressed by 45-year-old RP:

We bought the stand through this business. I also bought four mombes (cattle). We also have a plot in Chivhu where we farm during the rainy season. We are still developing our plot. But I would like to try potatoes in future.

Part-time traders were clearly propelled by the additional income earned and, understandably, they visualised the benefits of flea market trading in comparison to the regular income they derived from formal employment. There was a case of double dipping by straddling or moonlighting in the formal and informal economies (Baah-Boateng, 2015; Meagher, 2013; Mkandawire, 1986). They thus conducted multiple livelihoods (Welter & Xheneti, 2015). A typical assessment evaluated the position in these terms:

To be honest; as a civil servant, my salary becomes the supplementer. The salary becomes a matter of security so I would not leave employment. Otherwise you could leave. If you can get times 3 of your monthly wage. My net is \$350. During the month of August when I was running around I managed to raise \$960 which I used to pay fees for my child at university. \$960 is after removing all expenses.

This part-time trader further reinforced the benefits by adding that:

Even if I did not have children at school, I would still do this business. It would improve my personal life. I could buy a car if I raised \$960 in one month don't you think? That's nearly a thousand dollars. In a year, I would manage to import a car from Japan like others are doing.

Clearly the urge to participate, even in the face of personal sacrifices, could be

strong and overwhelming. The trader quoted above was not alone in feeling the beckoning call of flea market trading:

I can no longer live on my salary. I came to that realization. My salary is alright but I stopped living on my salary a long time ago. It's of course not little. But my budget is times 2 what I get from my employer. Flea market money is not taxed. It comes in everyday e.g. \$50 every day of the month.

When asked to compare income earned from formal employment and from flea market trading, another trader (NSV) said:

I made a lot of money. I can't really remember how much exactly but I know that what I was getting from my business was by far more than what I was earning. At one time my bank phoned my employer to check to see whether I was still around. For some 6 or 7 months, I had not collected my salaries.

PSM evaluated the returns in the following terms:

We send children to good secondary schools e.g. St Patrick's (a leading secondary school in the Gweru area); we take care of our families. We even have a child at a crèche. We feed our families and cloth them.

Fundamentally, gains were reckoned through profits realized from trading activities. Of course, no one kept accurate books in accordance with professional accounting standards. Realization of a surplus and capacity to invest in tangible assets was a reassuring method of ascertaining that profits or surpluses were indeed being made. For some, payments for services rendered were made in kind as in the case of an herbalist who told me:

I was given a beast for protecting and 'ring fencing' a homestead. Some pay money, others chickens or goats.

It was clear from the interviews conducted that participants had modest expectations of the monetary returns from their flea market businesses and therefore of future prospects. Nevertheless, many had enthusiasm and commitments for the long-term. A number held up a sense of passion of their engagement and even saw benefits beyond tangible and personal gains. In one case, a participant attributed her involvement in flea market as an inheritance passed on from her mother:

When my mother died, I lost a friend. My mum was very intelligent. Even the selling/buying; my mum used to buy things from Bulawayo and she would sell them. So, it was in my blood from my mother and it came to me as well.

One female participant spoke of the period during hyperinflation and drew wider meanings and lessons beyond self. Thus, flea market trading satisfied higher needs beyond mere physiological needs especially during times of acute hardship as was the case in the period of hyperinflation.

...even when things were harder, when the politics and social life etc. were down. Flea markets helped Zimbabwe. People were kept busy; they were occupied. So, people did not fight; they became busy. I could see I was helping my country. When you got to Mozambique or South Africa there were so many Zimbabweans; also, elsewhere. These things opened our eyes. But it's not easy work. Of course, it's not respectable work. It's tough work. Women may sometimes feel bitter; a woman needs to be strong, to work hard; to think. It's

not good work. It helped us in our country.

Statements such as these were certainly true of the period up to 2009 when the multi-currency regime replaced the Zimbabwe dollar. However, many players felt that normalcy had not yet returned. So, the lessons learnt then applied even in their day:

The system taught us how to behave; behaviour was determined by what surrounded us, by flea markets i.e. a person's character (unhu/ubuntu) was determined by flea markets: character, courage: 'I can do this, I can change'. That's what I call behaviour. The things that bring joy or those that make me miserable. When I have money on me; I would be smiling. I would greet everyone. I wanted to be seen that I have money. Nhasi nokuti ane mari. Nhasi akadziruma (Because today he has money. He is in cloud nine). The opposite if things are down as when things are confiscated at the border. You can beat your child or refuse to go to bed with your spouse. No one is happy if things are not going their way.

Many players acknowledged that they had taken up flea market trading because it was the only option on the table. Thus, the lack of alternative employment in the formal sector created a survivalist mentality in the sense that players were pushed to take on activities they would otherwise have spurned. However, in doing so, they still exhibited an entrepreneurial dimension which led them to pursue growth and development beyond the confining survivalism of flea market trading. This view was felt rather more strongly where career opportunities were not fulfilled. A young man who held a college diploma and had been engaged in trading for

several years expressed it thus:

There is nothing attractive about flea market trading. It's actually desperation; a way of making a living. You have to survive. I opted for this. It's just a source of income. If I had a better option; if I had a job, I would not be doing this; you have to survive. It's not making money actually. It's a way of surviving.

In contrast, a veteran of the trade who had expanded his operations at Kudzanai and had set up shop in other towns had a sense of self-fulfilment and self-realisation about his trading activities even in the face of difficult odds:

I no longer consider taking on employment. It's out. I started on this and I have never looked back. Even when things were difficult. I have grown with this, even today things are tough. But we keep going. Tichirova pasi ('we hit the ground').

Sometimes there was a sense of nostalgia, even about the periods when business was down and about a sense of optimism about the future. One trader, referring to the period of hyperinflation which ended in early 2009 remarked with nostalgia that:

We used to have a good life through this business. Many people envied us.

One participant dealing in grocery items (PSM) interrupted an interview with me to chat to a colleague and to reminisce. They spoke of the good old times and the depressed state of business lately: metaphorically '*Kudhakwa*' *kwe-business*': "business being drunk".

There is no money nowadays. In the old days, we were 'dying' from too much

money. It's only now that many people started joining this trade in large numbers. I started in 1996. Recently numbers have increased. I built houses and did many things. Not just one. We sent children to top schools in boarding schools. I built 2 houses. I'm now building a shop though the shop has not started operating.

Another trader (dealing in electronic goods) shared those views:

But things are getting very difficult and I might change strategy. So many people are trading today unlike 2009: then "business raifaya now zvinorwadza"- business was blazing like wild fire; now it's a pain.

Despite such sentiments, there was often a sense of commitment; a faith that business would turn up in the end. And they would want to be around when that moment arrived. As it was, few were preparing to opt out. They adopted the view that business is cyclical. They would get over the trough. One book trader (with his colleague evidently in agreement) assessed their business prospects with these words of advice:

Put your head to what you want to do. This may affect you later. Do not divert money from the business. Plough your money into the business. Make the business grow. Invest in other assets. Don't make hasty impulse decisions to move from your current business. Or move to other sectors of flea market selling. Study the business first and establish its viability. See what you could improve: How could I improve the customer base? Stick to your principal business.

A Gweru City Council official stressed that allocation of trading space to a trader was not permanent. Thus, business operations were somewhat precarious at the formal level though none of the people I spoke to expressed any sense of insecurity. On the other hand, the chairman of the Vendors and Hawkers Association, which acted as a lobby group, spoke of a state of vigilance in defence of members' rights whenever these appeared to be threatened by the local council:

We represent vendors against Council when they seek to raise rates or when they disrupt things. Then the Association comes in.

Thus, despite the confinement of space, growing competition and an unfavourable business environment, traders could still plan ahead. Usually the direction of growth was towards an alternative activity rather than into flea market trading: away from the confinement of flea market trading. In addition, having a role model also helps as this trader indicated.

For a start, you can't call this space small. It gets small as you grow up...My plans are to do an industry (sic). I want to have a shop. Even with rents and ZESA (Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority) you can sell more. If one has money, it's not difficult to have a shop. For now, my problem is not having capital to get a variety of fabrics.

We also have a problem in getting things in bulk from SA. I don't have a licence to import. We have former colleagues who have grown up. Like Mr. MC. He was selling bicycles and bicycle parts. He is now a big man. We really don't know exactly how he got up. But we think he got capital and assistance from someone.

Despite the hardships, most traders felt that they were in control of their destinies. However, there were those also who felt that their fate was in the lap of the gods as the following quotation from a female participant illustrated:

If we are fortunate we might run a shop. God willing that day might arrive.

4.6 Discussion of Findings

So far, this chapter has aimed at providing rich data of the business experiences and activities of flea market traders in the CBD of Gweru. The interviews I carried out were conducted face-to-face; one-on-one. Thirteen key nodes derived from the interviews formed parent nodes with child nodes under them. All the parent nodes were created right from the beginning of coding and 80% of interview references were coded to those nodes. Subsequent coding thus tended to make use of existing nodes. In due course, some new nodes emerged. However, these turned out to be child nodes falling under one of the thirteen key notes which had emerged early on in the coding process. This state of affairs appeared to suggest that saturation was in fact achieved at an early stage (Bernard & Ryan, 2010).

Flea market trading operators hold many of the same concerns that occupy the minds of most business people. A frequency word count identified 50 of the most frequently used words in all the interviews I conducted. These words were represented in a word cloud. As most business people would do, flea market traders interviewed were concerned about people as customers; they visualized their activities as business forms; they spoke in terms of ordering, buying and selling and managing their supply chains as well as the markets they served or the sources they used to procure commodities. Some players took bold risks; others

were therefore centred on people, business and money. Therefore, the central message seemed to be that, “Business consists of people buying and selling things on the market”. This message dovetails with the core category of this research namely entrepreneurial compass.

Over half of the participants in this study had been engaged in flea market operations for periods of time ranging from 6 years to over two decades. To understand their perceptions of the flea market sector, its potential, and their role in it, it seemed that this could best be described and explained in terms of a core unifying category comprising business or entrepreneurial compass and the strategic intents of the participants (Anderson, Harbi, & Brahem, 2013). Anderson, Harbi and Brahem (2013) emphasize that entrepreneurial orientation is capsulated in innovativeness, proactivity and risk taking including the ability to establish strategic fit with circumstances. The concept of entrepreneurial orientation may therefore be described as an alignment that is consonant with surrounding temporal, social, and practical circumstances. Proceeding this way allowed me to discover and depict commonalities and meaningful sub-groups among flea market traders. It also enabled me to describe some typologies relating to flea market trading practices.

Using typologies is one way of making sense of data and seeing the whole out of individual cases and instances (Richards, 2013). The entrepreneurial compass of participants appeared to be related to how long they had been engaged in the business as well as their attitudes to future growth and practice. The entrepreneurial compass typologies covered in this study consisted of a

classification of types of practices together with the degree of bonding to informal trading as indicated by the data presented in this chapter.

Focusing on entrepreneurial compass as a core category formed the launch pad which raised the debate through substantive towards formal theory (Urquhart, 2013). Indeed, Richards (2013) argues that substantive theory is the common and modest goal in grounded theory aimed at producing a usable local theory and, in this case, offering an explanation of flea market trading practices. Although formal theory derived from such a study may not necessarily be generalizable beyond the local study, some of the theory constructs may lend themselves to testing and trial in other settings. In the case of flea market trading, there is an abundance of settings similar to the Gweru CBD in addition to the unregulated trading activities of street vendors commonly found in most towns in Zimbabwe. The three typologies related to entrepreneurial compass as a core category may also serve as a valuable platform for crafting public policy relating to the informal sector in Zimbabwe.

In the rest of this chapter, I have presented a description of entrepreneurial compass as the core category together with illustrations of the three different typologies identified through the use of chosen cases from the participants interviewed.

4.6.1 Core category

Glaser and Strauss (1967) highlighted that the essence of grounded theory lies in discovering theory from data through systematic analysis. For this study, this process of discovery was achieved through coding processes on the interviews that had been conducted with flea market traders. Such coding was done using

NVivo 11, a computer aided qualitative data analysis software. During initial open coding, 36 codes were generated. At the succeeding intermediate or selective coding stages, those codes were consolidated and a hierarchy of codes was created consisting of parent and child codes. The consolidated parent/principal codes constituted sub-categories which would then lead to a core category. This hierarchy of 13 principal nodes or sub-categories is shown below (Table 5). The codes labelled 'descriptive' formed the core of data presentation given earlier.

Table 6: Surviving codes after selective coding

Sub-categories	Interviews cited	References	Nature of code
Trading Practice	35	454	Descriptive
Sourcing from	25	154	Descriptive
Spirit & the Passion	25	153	*
Business Challenges	30	137	Descriptive
Family Member participation	28	101	Descriptive
Players. Self-image	21	100	*
Diversity of operations	24	99	Descriptive
Returns on Investment	30	92	Descriptive
Procurement Strategies	21	80	Descriptive
Genesis of enterprise idea	26	71	*
History Issues in Flea Markets	20	69	Descriptive
Work and Leisure Time	25	39	Descriptive
Source of Capital	7	18	Descriptive

Source: Primary data

From the group of 13 sub-categories, three of those appeared to go beyond mere description by approaching the analytical level in the sense that they focused on the essence of the practice and experience of flea market retailing in accordance with the statement of research problem outlined for this study. These residual sub-categories are described below together with their child nodes in the hierarchy. They led logically to the identification of a single core category for the entire study

of flea market trading. The existence of this core category, which subsumes all others, allowed for the construction of a substantive theory of flea market trading in the Gweru CBD.

Table 7: Three pillars of entrepreneurship

<u>Parent Nodes: Pillars</u>	<u>Child Nodes</u>
Genesis of Enterprise idea <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How the flea market operations in question started including the history of the particular operation. Identification of sources of inspiration or triggers for business activity. 	Motivation for entry <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reasons for entry or engagement. Drivers propelling action.
The spirit and the passion. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evidence of emotional attachment to the enterprise. Bonding. Enthusiasm. 	Vision and planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Proactive orientation and plans for action to manage the future and develop the enterprise.
	Patience. Persistence. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A sense of personal triumphs perseverance and tribulations in the sector and a desire to strive and overcome hardships and barriers.
Players. Self-image. Identification of self. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identifying the traders or their character and characteristics. Images of self. 	Relations with business partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evidence of interaction with fellow traders or business persons. Trading or social. Training. Source of skill or interest <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Special skills or competences held or acquired in relation to market activities. Statement concerning the need for or lack of relevant skills.

Source: Primary data

The residual sub-categories comprising the spirit and passion associated with the practice of the flea market trading, the genesis of the enterprise idea or the trader's own assessment of his/her role and worth in that sector constituted elements that determined the levels of flea market traders' bonding, attachment, commitment to

the trade, and connectedness to their trade ushered in an all-encompassing core category focussed on these issues. Embedded in these sentiments were feeling of contentment, fulfilment and achievement, aspiration or alternatively frustration and even, at times, a search for an exit strategy. These sentiments directed the aspirations of participants concerning a future vision (Wilson, 2014). In this study, the remaining sub-categories mapped out a path and pointed to a goal or destination: they constituted a compass. The three sub-categories therefore signified a perspective on the way business was conducted in the business lives of flea market traders. Many of the participants were forward looking individuals with a clear view of their futures (Tumen, 2016). Together these sub-categories represent an umbrella core category which I labelled entrepreneurial compass in the context of flea market trading in the CBD of Gweru. The relationships between the core category (entrepreneurial compass) and the three subsumed sub-categories are shown in Figure 10.

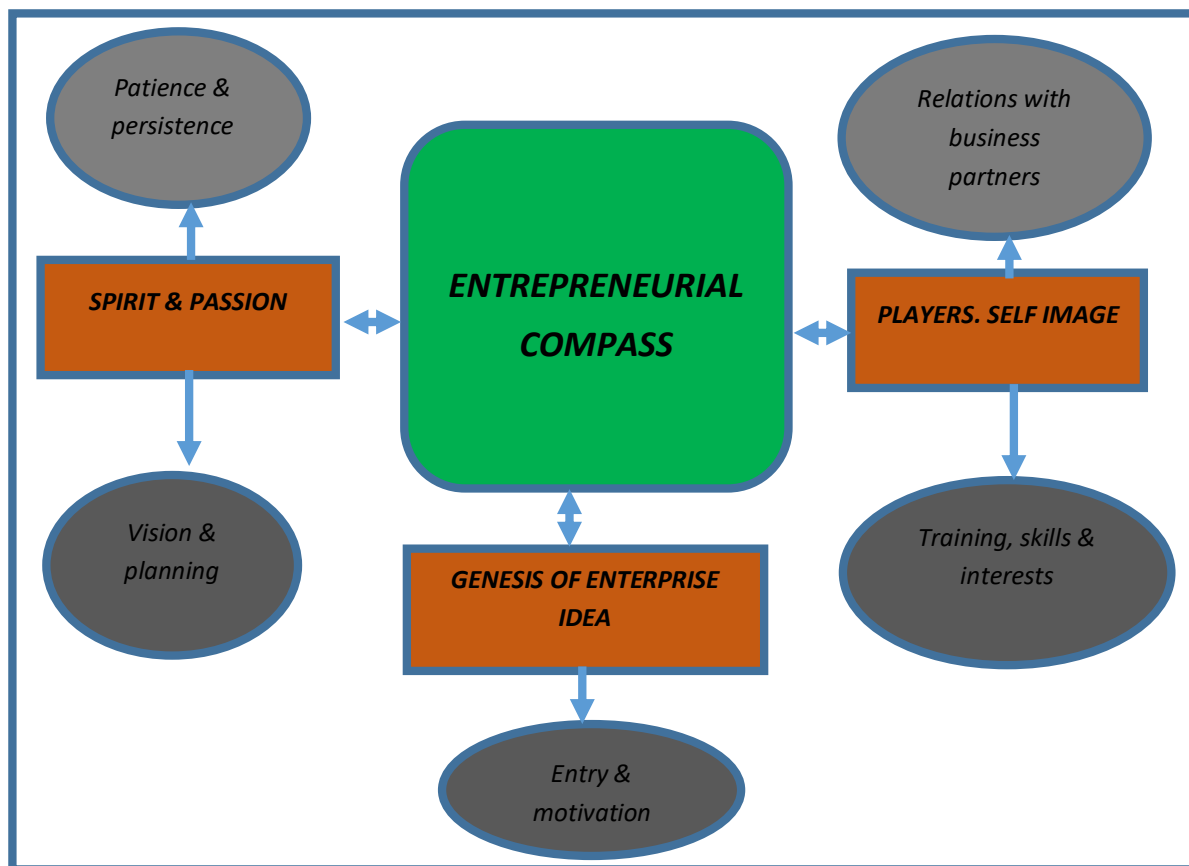


Figure 10: Core category: Entrepreneurial compass

Source: Primary data

The sub-categories surrounding the core category (namely spirit and passion; identification and self-image, and genesis of the enterprise idea) share common features with key elements of entrepreneurial orientation, namely innovation, proactiveness, and risk taking (Anderson et al., 2013). The concept of entrepreneurial orientation -first described by Miller (1983) in the organisational context- has also been further expanded to encompass two additional parameters attributed to Lumpkin and Dess (1996): namely competitive aggressiveness and autonomy (Eijdenberg, 2016; Nelson et al., 2016). The flea market traders in the

Gweru CBD indeed exhibited aggressiveness and alertness for opportunities (Foss & Klein, 2009). However, the concept of entrepreneurial orientation has been applied mostly in the context of formal organisations and not in the realm of informal trading such as flea markets. It is also a concept that has found little application in Latin America or sub-Saharan Africa (Martens, Lacerda, Belfort, & Freitas, 2016). The literature on entrepreneurial orientation generally highlights that the concept has achieved almost universal application at the organisational or firm level (Basso, Fayolle, & Bouchard, 2009; Randerson, 2016; Sauka, 2008) although, as an exception to the general rule, Eijdenberg (2016) has applied the concept to informal food vendors in Tanzania. In the case of individual players such as the flea market traders covered in this study, I considered it beneficial to distinguish the entrepreneurial spirit propelling small players from the imperatives guiding actors at firm level.

In addition, in light of the theoretical framework of this research (symbolic interactionism) with its emphasis on individual actions and interactions, as well as the grounded theory methodology which seeks to build constructs from the ground upwards, I chose to categorise the activities of flea market traders using the term *entrepreneurial compass* as the core category instead. My choice of the term *entrepreneurial compass* was therefore designed to allow flexibility in my handling of the core category for this research in line with the tenets of grounded theory. In particular, orientation focusses on perspectives drawn from past and current experiences and practices while compass has a directional and forward looking trajectory. Even in the face of challenges and hardships, it often seemed that the players in this informal sector in Gweru held hope and vision for the future.

Entrepreneurial compass can therefore be applied to the activities and interactions of individual traders in the informal sector while entrepreneurial orientation is restricted to the firm or organisational level in line with the literature. Further, the sub-categories on which entrepreneurial compass was anchored had the following concerns: the spirit and the passion of traders as market players, a sense of self image and identification and finally a proclivity towards proactive visioning and planning.

A core category in grounded theory offers a synthesis of complex stories which highlight what is central and crucial to understanding particular business practices (Richards, 2013). A core category therefore encapsulates the results of all coding activities: open, intermediate and selective. Creswell (2007) identifies the key characteristics of a core category as a blend of the following attributes:

- The category's centrality in relation to other categories or themes. For this study, the three categories above encapsulate centrality in relation to the rest.
- Inclusiveness and ease with which the category is related to other categories.
- Clarity of implications of the category for a more general and broader theory.
- The way the category allows for maximum variation in terms of dimensions, properties, conditions, consequences and strategies.

The core category, with its three pillars, embodied precisely that level of centrality and inclusiveness that Creswell envisaged as a core category. Entrepreneurial

compass for flea market traders comprised a state of mind in the contemplation of an individual operator at a given moment in time. That state of mind is not a static condition: it may mutate, assuming fluid multiple realities (Muzvidziwa, 2010) in the manner that symbolic interactionism suggests. Beyond this, an entrepreneurial compass suggests tangibility; implying a sense of vision and destiny which shapes future actions and also positioned on a continuum with different shades of intensity. Progression on the continuum may be partial and incomplete in some cases and in others almost total. Entrepreneurial compass also consist of processes spanning time and not mere episodes (Dobbs & Hamilton, 2007).

The flea market traders involved in this study were all of them small operators; but they were also self-made men and women who had persevered based on limited resources and through challenging times, as aptly expressed by SVM:

You can't do something big from this business.

Except in the case of part-time flea market traders, all players saw themselves as operating going concerns however modest their scale. Their operations, however, did not seem designed to go beyond their own lifetimes. Thus, the idea of perpetual succession seemed rather foreign. For their offspring, these traders desired a life further up the social ladder; away from flea markets. Their children were therefore often only marginally involved. For themselves, it meant growth of self and family to something bigger and more productive.

The concept of entrepreneurial compass served to define these traders and their operations. An important aspect of the concept was its valence or potency which

was understood as the degree to which players in the sector possessed a sense of attachment to informality and to flea market trading and to dynamic change over time. In this respect, the entrepreneurial compass of a particular flea market trader were located on a scale which, in simplified fashion, may be represented by some operative gerunds (Birks & Mills, 2012) based on the intrinsic attractiveness of the sector to a particular trader. Commitment and participation evolve in phases. A similar approach was used to depict Bolivian vendors (Gordon, 2009) and also South African subsistence consumers (Ruth & Hsiung, 2007). Although all flea market traders have the dimensions of entrepreneurial compass, this manifests itself in different ways depending on the individuals and how they play their game. In this study, the following gerunds appeared to capture the business or entrepreneurial compass of flea market traders in Gweru aptly through various phases in their trading lives:

- Searching and exploring
- Camping and exploiting
- Growing and aspiring.



Figure 11: Three typologies Source: Primary data

The three phases or typologies together with the six gerunds that cover them are the epitome of entrepreneurship in the conduct of business in good or bad times (Anderson et al., 2013). For each phase or typology, flea market traders play critical roles as entrepreneurs who take keen interest in deciding on the location, form, and use of goods, resources or institutions (Nelson et al., 2016).

Richards (2013) has warned that in drawing up a classification or typology such as the one above, care needs to be taken to ensure that all cases are covered, i.e., that the typology is exhaustive of the cases, and does not represent a deceptive simplification of reality. Any classification must be instantly recognizable within a given context, with particular people or objects (Stern, 2011b). Representative case studies given further in this chapter attempted to capture this sense of reality and comprehensiveness for the typologies.

The three typologies may also be viewed from a life cycle approach in the sense that search and exploration at the inception stage would be expected to lead to encampment and exploitation which culminates in growth and aspiration for things higher and better. The typology was thus constructed to be progressive and somewhat unidirectional as envisaged by March (1989). However, instead of a sequential progression from exploration to exploitation, sometimes these two processes experience concurrency (Freel, 1999). This sense of sequential progression perhaps suggests that, at the practical policy level, players in the sector have the potential for growth and expansion if given an appropriate and enabling financial support environment.

The literature bears reference to five classic stages of business growth for small businesses labelled the Harvard model, namely existence, survival, success, take-off and resource maturity (Churchill & Lewis, 1983). Flea market trading is certainly not at the scale of the model of the small formal businesses contemplated by the Harvard framework. Nonetheless, flea market operations clearly meet the basic conditions of existence and exhibit some of the characteristics of the survival stage and, perhaps, proceed beyond the confinements of the flea market environment. Stage 4 and 5 of the Harvard framework are inapplicable to the kinds of informal operations typical of flea market trading as there is little or no scope for significant take-off within the margins of the sector. As explained earlier, it is for these reasons that an alternative framework was needed to characterize flea market operators.

4.6.2 Typologies of flea market traders

The first phase in the typology, searching and exploring, involves players battling with the uncertainties of entry and participation in the flea market sector.

Participants still had to secure a firm foothold and were engaged in a process of assessment of the attractions of a decision to stay and would be keen to deepen business activities or, alternatively, a decision to quit altogether (Clegg & Kornberger, 2008; Mathias, 2014). The search and exploration typology naturally involves risk-taking; it may also be random instead of rational. Many participants in this group were recent entrants with not more than five years of flea market trading. Search and exploration involved a level of experimentation with alternatives and thus helping individuals grow new knowledge. Their reasons for entry were varied in the first place: there were many competing “pull” and “push” factors. Those who were pushed into the sector were probably looking for alternative opportunities while those pulled or drawn into it had developed an appreciation of the attractiveness of the sector before entry. However, “pull” and “push” sometimes overlapped. Whereas most entrants were from the unemployed, some, especially part-time operators, were from better off segments of society, i.e., better educated and even professional groups. This dichotomy has been represented in the literature as the marginalization and reinforcement theses (Williams & Horodnic, 2015). Other authors have represented this dichotomy as either necessity or opportunity driven entrepreneurship initiatives (Kasseeah & Tandrayen-Ragoobur, 2014; Williams & Round, 2009).

A typical case was GD, a young female trader who had just left school. Pondering how to navigate the future, GD turned for advice from peers and members of the extended family for a viable niche in the flea market sector. In her search, GD even balanced that with her dreams for furthering her education by enrolling at a polytechnic college:

I sat down and thought of a business idea.

KEG (32 years old and father of two) was also exploring and searching:

For the future as long I can get a living I would keep at this. But things are getting very difficult and I might change strategy.

Candidates such as KEG or GD were to some extent adventurers driven by necessity rather than opportunity.

Participants in the searching and exploring group were all under 50 years of age. Except for banana sellers, they all had secondary education or better. This group had the largest proportion of trialists. Some of the participants in this group were part-time traders (opportunity seekers). One operator (MC) had served for just four years in this sector, and then graduated from it. It turned out that his success had the potential to serve as a worthy role model for others. This point was made by two brothers trading in fabrics (BSZ and TZ):

We have former colleagues who have grown up. Like Mr. MC. He was selling bicycles and bicycle parts. He is now a big man.

As it was, MC who I had interviewed earlier, had only partially graduated from flea market trading: he was transitioning to a more formal status in his operations. He still found it as a valuable prop to his new formal business setup.

A part-time trader, PC, had operated for about 5 years. She continued to trade on the side as a flea market trader even while running a small shop that she had opened in one of the high density suburbs. In addition, she still had a formal job

with a major mobile telephone company. In a way she had become 'tridextrous' as opposed to ambidextrous ("the ability to foster both explorative and exploitative behaviours" (Freel, 1999; Zacher & Rosing, 2015). She was a formal trader (running a small shop in the high density suburb of Mkoba), and an informal trader running flea market operations while still retaining her job in the formal sector. She enjoyed the fruits of all sectors.

Search and exploration phase in the typology is followed by a phase involving camping and exploiting. In this phase, the trader is more secure with their involvement and more certain of the terrain. A decision has been made to partake in the sector for the medium to long term and to maximize returns. Efforts and resources are dedicated to succeeding in this sector and alternatives have been forgone or shelved, at least, for the time being. In their more settled state, individuals in this group attempt to harvest and maximize benefits of their locations through active exploitation of the avenues open to them (March, 1989). In some instances, this may amount to the adoption of a laid-back posture. Participants have pitched camp and show little intention or initiative to move much further. They appeared to have capped their operations adopting the "Peter Pan syndrome" in which entities prefer to stay small than to grow (Dobbs & Hamilton, 2007; *The Economist*, 2014). It appears that sometimes small business people may lack further motivation having achieved their original goals or just shy away from fresh risk taking or the inconvenience and headache associated with continued growth (Dobbs & Hamilton, 2007). BDF (a mother of four and a grandparent) had worked for over 12 years. She had stayed put even enduring the challenges of Operation

Restore Order (Operation Murambatsvina) in 2005 (This was a campaign by the Zimbabwean government destroying illegal settlements in urban areas). With help from her husband, she had built two houses. With the air of resignation, she opined:

It's up to the Lord. We have many dreams for the future. But we have no control.

Not everyone, however, had resigned themselves to that condition.

I have labelled the third and final phase growing and aspiring. The trader has developed tentative notions for growth within the sector or outside it and has cultivated a forward looking mind set: entrepreneurial compass (Coca-Stefaniak et al., 2010). Goals have been set even though somewhat ill-defined (Mintzberg & Mchugh, 1979). Even in the face of challenges, players have cultivated a sense of some possibilities and can see a path towards things better and higher. Sometimes, it is a belief in oneself, other times there is a role model to emulate and to fortify the vision. Sentiments varied, for example, subdued aspiration as in the case of MD:

I would urge others to take up this business. If we are fortunate we might run a shop. God willing that day might arrive.

But there were also examples of considerable dedication and enthusiasm, as in the case of TJ:

I started on this and I have never looked back. Even when things were difficult. I have grown with this, even today things are tough. But we keep going.

Considering the confinements of the flea market environment, TJ appeared to have experienced something resembling Stage 3 of Churchill and Lewis (1983) by creating a growth platform, and spreading tentacles to a number of mining communities selling essentially the same commodities traded in Gweru CBD at Kudzanai.

4.7 Illustrative Cases

To conclude this chapter on data presentation, I highlight below three typologies that are constituent parts of the category entrepreneurial compass which emerged from the research evidence after sifting through it using grounded theory techniques. The three typologies are projected through the medium of some illustrative cases.

The cases described and analysed below are designed to give further substance to the three typologies set out above. They also serve to show diversity and variety among flea market traders. These players are not a homogenous group. They have individual personalities. The typologies given here are meant to aid conceptualization with an eye for policy formulation.

4.7.1 Searching and exploring

At the time of the interview, GD had just made a proud beginning to her flea market career selling imported gas stove and accessories mostly. At 22 years of age, GD had battled with funding like many in the sector:

I come from a poor family. So, I don't look for support. So, I have to do my things.

Deciding to defer diploma studies, she deployed her tuition money to the enterprise after considering and rejecting trading options she felt were oversubscribed. She

then teamed up with a partner who had prior experience in gas filling. While her partner held on to his gas filling job, she gave this venture her full time. She hoped she would succeed and then expand her existing operations before opening a second outlet elsewhere. Perhaps at a later stage, she would go back to college. She was searching and exploring and was full of optimism:

We wish to boost our business to own a big shop with many items including fridges. To also sell fridges, 4 plate stoves. Our dream is to grow bigger but in the gas sector. Perhaps next year; we need effort and power. All things are possible.

4.7.2 Camping and exploiting

BDF, a married woman of four children (and 3 grandchildren), had been in the business for over 13 years and had seen the business through the trials and tribulations of Operation Murambatsvina in 2005 as well as hyperinflation which continued for a further four years or so. She started flea market trading out of necessity. Her husband was then in formal employment. Nevertheless, making ends meet was not easy, even at a time when the family was smaller. She was satisfied with what she was getting from her engagement in flea market trading. As for her future plans, she had nothing in particular laid out:

It's up to the Lord. We have many dreams for the future. But we have no control.

She had pitched her camp in the sector and was not actively seeking a way out; her current rewards were acceptable for her. Not everyone is necessarily seeking to opt out: many were content to stay put.

Less laid back, but still in the camping and exploiting group was BKS, a flea market bookseller since the year 2000 when he was retrenched by his employer. His entry was a combination of necessity and opportunity. For him, entry into flea market trading was not entirely forced: he had been doing the business on the side for some while; and his wife had been on the street for longer. So, he entered the sector with full confidence of the prospects for success. In his words:

I have never looked back... Its good business.

This is reinforced in the words of a fellow bookseller (RP):

Stick to your principal business.

4.7.3 Growing and aspiring

Two brothers (BSZ and TZ) had teamed up to sell fabrics in 2010. For 15 years, BSZ had been employed to sell clothing and fabrics by one flea market trader. In the process, he had undergone grooming and mentorship. He appeared to have made a reasoned rational decision to leave his employment and join his master in the same trade. His challenge was capital. Apparently, as an employee he had been unable to amass adequate resources for investment as a trader in his own right. He turned instead to his younger brother (TZ) then employed as a general hand at Hippo Valley Sugar Estates, 300 kilometres to the south-east. BSZ persuaded the younger brother to bring in some capital and create a type of joint partnership venture based on the combined capitals and his business skills honed in the flea market sector by one of them. TZ:

Before this I used to work at Hippo Valley 1995-2000. I stopped when I noticed that the wages were not enough.

After just over five years of growing their joint flea market enterprise (selling fabrics) where they said they were earning more than when they were in formal employment, the brothers were ready to reassess their futures: they were aspiring for things better or bigger. They tried one funding project which, unfortunately, led to nowhere but they were determined to forge ahead nevertheless. BSZ:

My plans are to do an industry (sic). I want to have a shop. Even with rents and ZESA (the Zimbabwe electricity authority) you can sell more. If one has money, it's not difficult to have a shop.

As business persons (albeit at a modest scale), flea market traders map out plans and aspire to achieve their visions. In their case, the brothers were emboldened by the success of one of their number, MC who, by coincidence, I had interviewed earlier. For BSZ, this was the second time a role model had propelled him: the first time it was a mentor under whose employ he had worked for 15 years. Their new joint vision was for growth through horizontal expansion. This case also illustrated the role of mentorship and role models.

TJ had a different trajectory; but one which further illuminates the typology of growth and aspiration. Starting out in 1987, TJ said that selling bananas with his father in the rural areas (and later on in the 'locations') he had absorbed the ecology of flea market trading as his natural habitat.

I no longer consider taking on employment. It's out. I started on this and I have never looked back. Even when things were difficult. I have grown with this.

As he established himself as leader of an informal association of flea market traders at Kudzanai Bus Terminus market area, he expanded his operation there to embrace several stalls selling first earrings, then clothing and footwear to mobile telephones, eateries and boutiques. Geographically, he expanded his operations from his Gweru base to Filabusi, over 200 kilometres south, and to Empress Mine, a similar distance to the north. Here was another example of growth and aspiration: both vertically and horizontally. Growing and aspiring is an expression of self-confidence, alertness, and vision.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The motivation for this research was the realization that, with falling levels of employment in the formal job market, more Zimbabweans have drifted to informal business enterprises. Flea markets represent an important and highly visible part of that informal sector (Njaya, 2014a). In urban areas, such as Gweru, flea market traders operate along streets, at shop entrances and pavements as well as at designated marketplaces. Informality is so common it is far too easy to ignore as a subject for academic inquiry. This was one reason why this study was undertaken, that is, to bring to the surface an everyday experience that is sometimes taken for granted in the academic literature.

This chapter concludes this research by undertaking the following tasks: summarizing materials covered in the preceding chapters; reviewing major findings and identifying the ways these relate to the research questions that guided the conduct of the research; laying out the main conclusions derived from the findings; outlining the contribution this study makes towards knowledge of informality and the forms this assumes; proffering the principal limitations behind this research and presenting suggested lines of possible future research in this field.

5.1 Chapter Summaries

From its conception and design to its implementation, this research evolved as follows:

The opening chapter identified examples of flea market retailing across the world regardless of the levels of economic development. Although sometimes eclipsed

by modern retail formats due to the scale of activity and the share of consumer purchasing power of the latter, flea market traders remain active and visible players who fulfil the needs of consumers in niche markets in their neighbourhoods. They continue to grow and expand in both developing and developed countries. In developing countries such as Zimbabwe, the proportion of people deriving their livelihoods from informal trading activities has continued to grow (Biti, 2012). This makes flea markets an important business issue which has however remained under-researched. The flea market traders covered in this study are a mere microcosm of a wider theatre of the informal trading economy which operates side by side with the formal economy (Cross, 2000). The contribution of the informal sector is uncertain but substantial in an era when employment in the formal sector has shrunk (Kinyanjui, 2014). This study, based on a sample drawn from just under 2 000 flea market traders in the CBD of Gweru, enriches understanding of this trading experience by listening to the traders themselves.

The literature review in Chapter 2 was produced conscious of the injunction by some writers on grounded theory to avoid being overwhelmed by prior theory ahead of data analysis. One significant theme from the literature was that organisations resemble organisms: they are dynamic (D'Andrea et al., 2006; Mavondo & T., 2000; Mhango & Niehm, 2005). They are continually shaped by their surrounding operating circumstances. The study was therefore a snapshot in an ongoing evolving and dynamic sector. The literature review thus examined the conduct of flea market activities in a number of countries in different stages of development, for example, Poland (Tiemann, 2005); Bolivia (Yessenova, 2006); USA (Abrams, 2007); UK (Jones et al., 2007).

Flea market traders hold a range of perspectives on the roles these markets play or the depth of their own involvement in the trade or the drivers that brought them to that business enterprise. The literature review also touched on the multitudes of flexible meanings people have of the terms informality or of entrepreneurship which is frequently associated with this business form.

Chapter 3 gave an account of the methodology. A qualitative approach was adopted using grounded theory with data gathered from unstructured interviews. Limited prior research into flea market trading in the Gweru CBD suggested that a grounded theory approach would be the most appropriate route to opening insights through the lived experiences of flea market traders recounted through interviews. Analysis, conducted using NVivo qualitative data software, was detailed: starting from word to word analysis, to sentences and broader ideas arising from the coding procedures across transcripts and audio tapes which embodied the narratives of flea market traders themselves. Using the tools in the grounded theory armoury, analysis was conducted with the goal of discovering a framework around a core category to shape the substantive theory.

On the basis of coding done on interview data, Chapter 4 described the business enterprise activities of flea market traders: what business they conducted and how they conducted it, how they addressed challenges as they came up, how they had entered into these trades, and how they defined their roles in them. The coding process led to a core category at the terminal theoretical coding stage. This core category was labelled entrepreneurial compass anchored on the concept of entrepreneurial orientation which is discussed abundantly in the literature (Eijdenberg, 2016; Fellnhofer, Puumalainen, & Sjögrén, 2016; Hooi, Ahmad,

Amran, & Rahman, 2016; Lindgreen, Révész, & Glynn, 2009; Martens et al., 2016). The core category acted as a descriptor of possible future involvement in the flea market trade arena, ranging from searching and exploring through camping and exploiting into a state of growing and aspiring as entrepreneurs would be expected to do. The analytical procedures leading to the identification of entrepreneurial compass as a core category focused on the *first* key purpose of this research, namely the manner by which flea market traders conducted their business activities and the experiences they underwent to produce a characterization of flea market trading practices.

Arriving at this understanding and appreciation of flea market trading represented the attainment of a substantive theory of flea market trading arising from this Gweru study. This related to the *second* research purpose proposed for this study, namely discovering the meaning, worth and value that flea market traders themselves placed on their business operations: for themselves personally, their households, and the impacts of those economic activities on livelihoods.

I therefore felt secure in the knowledge that, through a grounded theory methodology, I had accomplished the principal concerns raised in the statement of research problem. This had been achieved via an initial descriptive presentation of the data and then subsequently building upon that to characterise a substantive theory of flea market trading in the context of Gweru.

5.3 Summary of Main Research Findings and Conclusions

Flea market retailing is one of many forms of informal activities occurring in African cities. The argument has also sometimes been put that poverty and informal economic activity walk hand in hand and therefore that addressing issues of

poverty and marginalisation requires that scholars and practitioners understand the nature of informal economic activities (Madsen et al., 2014). A key tenet of this research was that understanding how flea market activities are conducted is a critical pre-requisite for addressing that condition instead of shooting blindly in the dark (Kinyanjui, 2014). This research addressed this gap from the context of one Zimbabwean city. Through the lens of a grounded theory study in the one city, the research achieved the goal of describing and representing the inner workings and perspectives of flea market trading (Nelson et al., 2016).

The main findings and conclusions of this research can be fleshed out as follows consequent upon the data presentation and analysis in the preceding chapter:

- At the time the research was conducted, a recurring view among flea market traders was that returns were under pressure. However, flea market traders still saw a future for themselves in the trade: there was often a sense of commitment; a faith that business would turn up in the long run to its heyday levels, and they were determined that they would be around when that moment arrived. However, a few of them were preparing to opt out. Many had seen good times before so they were confident they would get over the trough in due course. This was so despite the constraints of their trading spaces or escalating competition from new entrants or the challenges of the wider economic environment.

- The majority of flea market practitioners were dedicated sole traders focussing on a small range of goods or services, undertaking all business functions themselves, employing no additional labour, and dependent substantially on

themselves with family members playing a very marginal role. They all worked long and irregular hours with few breaks. Thus few had generated employment beyond self-employment. Considerable scope therefore existed to contribute towards employment generation.

- The literature on informality and entrepreneurship is replete with notions of dualism concerning reasons and drivers for entry into the informal sector, namely voluntarism vs involuntarism (Williams et al., 2016); push vs pull (Kirkwood, 2009); and necessity vs opportunity; marginalization vs reinforcement (Colin & Horodnic, 2015). This dualism suggests that informal traders are primarily motivated by one of two entirely separate sets of drivers, that the existence of one set negates the other, and that the two ends of the spectrum are mutually exclusive. The evidence of this research into flea market trading in the Gweru CBD was a mixed bag: that necessity often begets opportunity; that involuntarism is also the mother of voluntarism; and that push and pull sometimes act in unison with all shades of grey in between. Whereas individual players at the inception of their trading journeys may be predominantly motivated by one and not the other, the scales sometimes tip to the opposite end in the course of long trading lives or that the two poles often become comingled and amalgamated (Adom, 2014). Indeed, it is possible to argue that opportunity itself is socially constructed (Anderson et al., 2013). This research revealed three typologies, namely searching and exploring, camping and exploiting, and growing and aspiring. But even these are sometimes convenient descriptors for essentially complex processes. On that dualism the research highlighted the following issues:

- *Necessity and opportunity:* In the light of the economic hardships in Zimbabwe in recent times especially declining levels in the formal job market, it is tempting to assume that people venturing into the flea market sector would much rather be doing something else and that their participation was involuntary and was driven by sheer necessity of circumstances. The evidence from this research is varied. Many of the traders had operated in the sector for at least a decade. At the time of entry, even where they were propelled by necessity at the inception of their trading careers, they had taken due diligence to examine sector prospects before entry. Others chose entry because they viewed the sector as more viable compared to formal employment. In one case, a trader abandoned employment in the informal sector to participate directly on his own terms recruiting a sibling in the process. Others still had a clearly mapped out path for entry, and carefully positioned themselves by capitalizing on prior skills, training or disposition. In general, necessity thrives in difficult circumstances; opportunity on the other hand focusses on identifying attractive settings (Fuentelsaz, González, Maícas, & Montero, 2015). Necessity cannot be divorced from opportunity: a point also argued by Tamukamoyo (2009) in a study of vendors in Harare. The infusion of doses of opportunity in the activities of flea markets has an important impact on economic growth prospects for the wider economy. Thus, flea market trading was substantially an activity of choice; not one imposed on them exclusively through difficult regrettable circumstances.

- *Marginalisation and reinforcement:* The marginalised consist of economic players with low incomes and those who just get by (Colin & Horodnic, 2015).

- The opposing reinforcement thesis argues that, in fact, more affluent and more educated individuals become active players in informal activities. In the case of flea market participants from the Gweru CBD, some 75% of participants had secondary education or higher: a level of education higher than the average in the general population (ZIMSTAT, 2013). Apparently then, not everyone engaging in informal self-employment in the flea market sector was poor or marginalised. Indeed, many entrants were leaving behind peers who were labouring under similarly difficult circumstances. In some cases, they indeed simply displayed more guts to venture out. They had higher doses of the entrepreneurial spirit. Some interviewees also had incomes from formal employment giving them a strategic advantage and a propensity for risk taking.
- In general, self-employment conferred desirable benefits at both intrinsic and extrinsic levels to a greater degree than alternatives available in the formal employment sector. Like any other sector of economic activity, fortunes are variable over time. There was, however, inherent attractiveness to flea market trading that drew people and grabbed them once they were in it. Exceptions exist but they were outnumbered by those who partook voluntarily and remained there through deliberate choice. A small number of participants regarded the informal sector as some temporary refuge or hobby which was beneficial and enjoyable in itself while it lasted. However, these participants held aspirations for upward mobility they hoped could be achieved through engaging in formal professional training and education over the passage of time. Thus, they wanted to opt out of this sector.

- To stay or to exit? The research data presented in the previous chapter demonstrated that the journey into flea market trading was very much in the manner of a one-way street. Once in, players tended to stay put. Even given that conditions in the economic environment restricted or compromised alternative options in the marketplace, there was no denying the broad desire of the majority of flea market traders to remain in the sector while harvesting its rewards and usually investing outside it.

In due course, traders developed strong bonding with the sector. Those who had been in it longer remembered good times in days gone by and held to a sense of nostalgia or expectations that the glory days might return. A key hallmark of self-employment was expressed through a sense of contentment realized through autonomy, flexibility, and freedom and a sense of control over one's destiny in this sector than in the formal one (Williams & Round, 2009).

So much enticing were the rewards in the flea market sector that the sector attracted the participation of part-time traders holding formal employment jobs. Their involvement demonstrated a clear predatory and mercenary motivation (Cross, 2000). For this group, unsatisfactory material rewards in their formal jobs created a desire to seek correction or adjustment through earnings in the informal sector. Their formal sector jobs offered long term security while flea market trading offered tangible windfall material returns especially in the short term. So, they harvested the fruits from the flea market sector when season and circumstance were right. These were not marginalized individuals in any way. Their relatively higher levels of education and professional orientations strengthened the sense of

not belonging to the sector for the long haul. Their case illustrates reinforcement as the alternative to marginalization (Colin & Horodnic, 2015).

5.4 Contribution to Knowledge and Practice

Along with flea market trading, the informal sector is vast across Africa. Even in South Africa, arguably the continent's economic leader, nearly one-third of economic activity happens in that sector (Madsen et al., 2014; Welter, Smallbone, & Pobol, 2015; Webb, Ireland, & Ketchen, 2014). This research contributed towards appreciation of the role of flea market trading as part of the informal sector and as part of the wider national economy. The informal sector as a whole has the capacity of contributing towards the elimination or alleviation of underdevelopment in Africa (Kinyanjui, 2014). The ingenuity and spirit of enterprise among flea market traders is embodied in the core category of this research namely entrepreneurial compass. This embodied both an attitude of mind as well as focus to a future condition as participants in economic development within and sometimes beyond the confines of the flea market sector.

An important contribution of this research is the view that flea market traders can be portrayed in terms of an overarching concept which in this work was labelled entrepreneurial compass. In terms of grounded methodology used for this research, this constituted the substantive theory applicable to flea market trading in Gweru CBD. Participation in and commitment to flea market trading is a state of mind (one's orientation) as well as futuristic focus (one's compass). This categorization of flea market trading stands apart from mere survivalism. Compass manifests itself as action oriented and was therefore described in terms of gerunds: searching and exploring; camping and exploiting and finally growing and aspiring.

This is the essence of the spirit of entrepreneurship and of alertness to market opportunities (Foss & Klein, 2009).

In crafting public policy concerning the informal sector in general or flea market trading in particular, nuanced or variegated approaches would seem appropriate with emphasis on unique or individual circumstances (Williams & Nadin, 2014). This was highlighted in the three typologies or phases of entrepreneurial compass. In addition, as Williams & Round (2009) asserted, it might be imprudent to write off informal traders who are driven into flea market trading through necessity or marginalization as future catalysts of economic development because, in due course, they morph into seedbeds out of which opportunity-driven entrepreneurs emerge. In addition, some players are merely part-time participants pulled into the informal sector on the attractions of some short-term gains. Their opportunistic forays mask a hidden entrepreneurial enterprise culture awaiting exploitation.

5.5 Limitations and Further Research

As a piece of qualitative research, this work is a situated study. It captures the practice of flea market retailing in only one Zimbabwean city location: namely the Central Business District of Gweru. Moreover, as King and Horrocks (2010) contend, “all knowledge is local, provisional and situation dependent”. Hence, no claim is made that results of this study would be representative of flea market activities and practices in Zimbabwe generally. On the contrary, the results refer to one moment in time in the fluid and dynamic lives and practices of hundreds of traders in one locality: the CBD of Gweru.

For this study, I was therefore fundamentally concerned with the particular not the general within the geographical context of Gweru at a certain time and at a certain place. However, in this paper, I provided detailed insights on how participants conducted their trading activities, what meanings they derived, and what worked and what did not work for them. The study therefore invites comparison with other players and places elsewhere similarly situated. In support of this detailed and focused qualitative study, Lyons and Coyle (2007) express a graphic assertion that, “delving deeper into the particular takes us closer to the universal”. This research was therefore worth undertaking.

For this research, I used interview and concurrent observation methods with participants drawn from flea market traders only, save for occasional encounters with some consumers and administrators. Thus, the unique perspectives of consumers, suppliers, formal retailers, and numerous other inhabitants of the supply chain or network have been excluded. As a result, even the rich data from this study remains, at best, a partial view of a large and substantial terrain much of which beckons for further academic inquiry.

Inevitably, this study covered a sample of operators who were in the sector at the time of data collection. The voices of people who had given up on flea market trading and migrated out of the sector or those who had outgrown it were therefore not reflected. It is possible that a more optimistic view emerges as a result of the population sampled through a process of self-justification. The flea market traders covered in this study are one segment of flea market trading even within the Gweru CBD. For a comprehensive appreciation of the multifaceted dynamics of informal

flea market, further studies would be needed in Gweru as well as other urban centres. Hence, the tentative key category (entrepreneurial compass) identified in this study for example, would require testing and teasing out.

One key limitation of this analysis is the cross-sectional nature of the data. Such an approach may fail to explain processes that result from factors that are idiosyncratic to each individual (Dobbs & Hamilton, 2007). Although data collection was spread over a period of six months, nevertheless, the procedures adopted limited the range of ambient environmental factors bearing down on operators and their businesses. As Welter and Xheneti (2015) highlighted, longitudinal designs might be better suited to capture perspectives created among informal sector operators over time. Similar sentiments were also expressed by Devicienti, Groisman and Poggi (2010). In particular, it is worth noting that from 2015, the Zimbabwe economy started to lose some of the buoyance it had enjoyed with the introduction of the multi-currency regime from 2009. Thus, 2015 and 2016 experienced significant upsurges in flea market trading, especially among perambulant traders/vendors. In Gweru, the council responded by opening new flea market sites; moving the weekend market to new sites and allowing these licenced traders to operate for all seven days in the week. Being sole traders, flea market traders have unrestrained capacity to flex their operations to best suit circumstances as they evolve. They have a penchant for adjustment (Kathrada & Venter, 2017).

This qualitative study of flea market retailing tapped into the experiences of just forty participants. City council officials provided data showing that there were just

under 2 000 licenced traders in the central business district of Gweru alone. Clearly, there is plenty of untapped territory even within the CBD alone. I was however convinced that I had achieved theoretical saturation of the issues involved. Nevertheless, the conclusions arrived at and the representations made offer a partial view in the mind of one researcher. Suffice to say also that the flea market traders dealt with in this study are competitors for space and patronage with numerous street vendors selling all manner of merchandise. These latter traders were not covered in this study. They form a significant and growing group of flea market trading. Being unlicensed, their modus operandi is likely to be different.

5.6 Recommendations

As set out earlier, the entrepreneurial compass of individual traders has been theorized through three typologies ranging from searching and exploring, through camping and exploiting into a state of growing and aspiring. Within each typology, an overriding theme was a desire by traders to succeed in their flea market business activities. Among policy options frequently mentioned in the literature for advancing entrepreneurs in the informal sector, the application of direct and indirect controls and inducements to support growth and expansion appear most appropriate (Williams, 2015; Williams & Martinez, 2014). The following recommendations are therefore put forward as possible guides in dealing with flea market trading in urban environments such as the Gweru CBD which was the focus of this study.

- a) To foster growth among informal flea market traders, it is important to put in place a cocktail of training, skills building and other support services funded by multiple providers in government, business and voluntary organisations. Regrettably, for the flea market players covered in this study, no formal training opportunities existed either for their lines of business or for business management skills in general. Nearly 60% of those interviewed had secondary education in line with the high levels of literacy in Zimbabwe as a whole. This perhaps, gave players broad awareness and appreciation of the rudiments of enterprise management and operation. However, traders lacked more focused business and operational skills. A participant who had been in the business for over 20 years and was also the president of an association of vendors and hawkers at the Kudzanai bus terminus recalled a time when a non-governmental organization sponsored training programmes. However, this participant reported that this initiative had long lapsed. As Njaya (2014c) argued for capacities and skills through training, credit, information and infrastructure in order to enhance business competitiveness and productivity.

Flea market players would therefore be well served through setting up close associations among themselves to create a platform for proactive cooperation outwards with the formal business sector to enhance training opportunities and the acquisition of business skills. There is a need to create synergistic relationship as opposed to antagonistic and confrontational ones. This would call for refocusing the existing flea market traders' association, for example, away from a mere vigilante confrontational group in opposition to council into a

vibrant vanguard for informal businesses. Similarly Njaya (2014) also bemoaned the lack of formal associations that can coordinate strategies across different groups to achieve sectoral governance. Warwick Junction in Durban South Africa exemplifies some of the benefits when stakeholders cooperate (Conley, 2015). As Nelson Mandela expressed it, education is a most potent weapon for change (Mandela, 2003).

Many universities and other tertiary institutions in Zimbabwe have set up business schools, departments and faculties with the explicit aim of advancing entrepreneurship. So far, the programmes offered have been restricted to a select and perhaps elitist group of students and intellectuals. The informal sector offers an opportunity for wider community engagement with universities and other tertiary institutions offering the prospect of translating theory into practice using a willing and eager audience among informal traders.

b) The lack of basic business skills or knowledge among flea market traders was matched by the dearth of capital for day to day operations and for start-up capital. All players battled with funding problems which continued to limit growth opportunities. They relied on their own resources: sometimes making difficult personal sacrifices. Part-time traders at least could rely on their formal sector wages or salaries for capital. Thus, many traders felt that lack of capital in particular constituted a significant handicap and that mobilization of such resources would impact positively on their business fortunes and allow them to expand and grow. This handicap was also highlighted by

Mhonde et al. (2011) in their study of flea market pricing strategies, and by Nyahunzvi (2015) in his study of curio traders in the Chivi District of Zimbabwe. Other voices are however more hopeful (Njaya, 2014b). Funding constraints have a deleterious impact on all entrepreneurs making them more vulnerable to failure (Fuentelsaz et al., 2015). The flea market traders in Gweru were no exception. Greater support for such traders is necessary especially in hard times; a point highlighted for Nordic informal entrepreneurs (Dvoulety, 2017). Flea market traders themselves have the zeal to advance in their trade. However, enthusiasm alone is not enough. Specific, targeted funding would go a long way in uplifting the level of operation for all flea market traders. Such expansion would result in the emergence of employment opportunities which, so far, the flea market sector has failed to generate.

- c) Some flea market participants appreciated the advantages and benefits of cooperation and collaboration among themselves. However, apart from trivial instances of joint action, there was little evidence for coordinated teamwork to cover issues of joint procurement for example. Many traders deal in similar goods especially in city council vending areas where bays are organized along product lines. So competition is inevitable. Nevertheless, a judicious and beneficial blend of collaboration and competition among traders themselves could be crafted for the benefit all participants.
- d) Central and local government could do more to enable informal traders to operate freely and more profitably. Many traders felt that the regulatory environment was loaded against them. They cited taxes, duties and levies as

impediments in their operations. They also mentioned an unpredictable environment over import controls. Clearly, ease of doing business needs to be uplifted to enable flea market traders to access capital and enhance operations.

- e) An additional factor militating against business improvement among flea market traders in Gweru was the generally run down condition of their trading infrastructure. Perhaps council could do more to improve their existing provision in terms of general cleanliness and ambience. However, it is clear that the private sector could do more to provide trading stalls as evidenced by the opening up of such facilities in the recent past. This would raise the attractiveness of flea market trading and draw new customers.

With rising levels of unemployment in the formal job market, younger and more educated individuals either fail to land their first job or lose currently held jobs in the formal sector. The potential for growth among these new entrants raises opportunities for more energetic entrepreneurship (Jiménez, Palmero-Cámara, González-Santos, González-Bernal, & Jiménez-Eguizábal, 2015). If all stakeholders join hands, considerable scope exists for more profitable operations among flea markets traders as well as enhanced opportunities for generating jobs.

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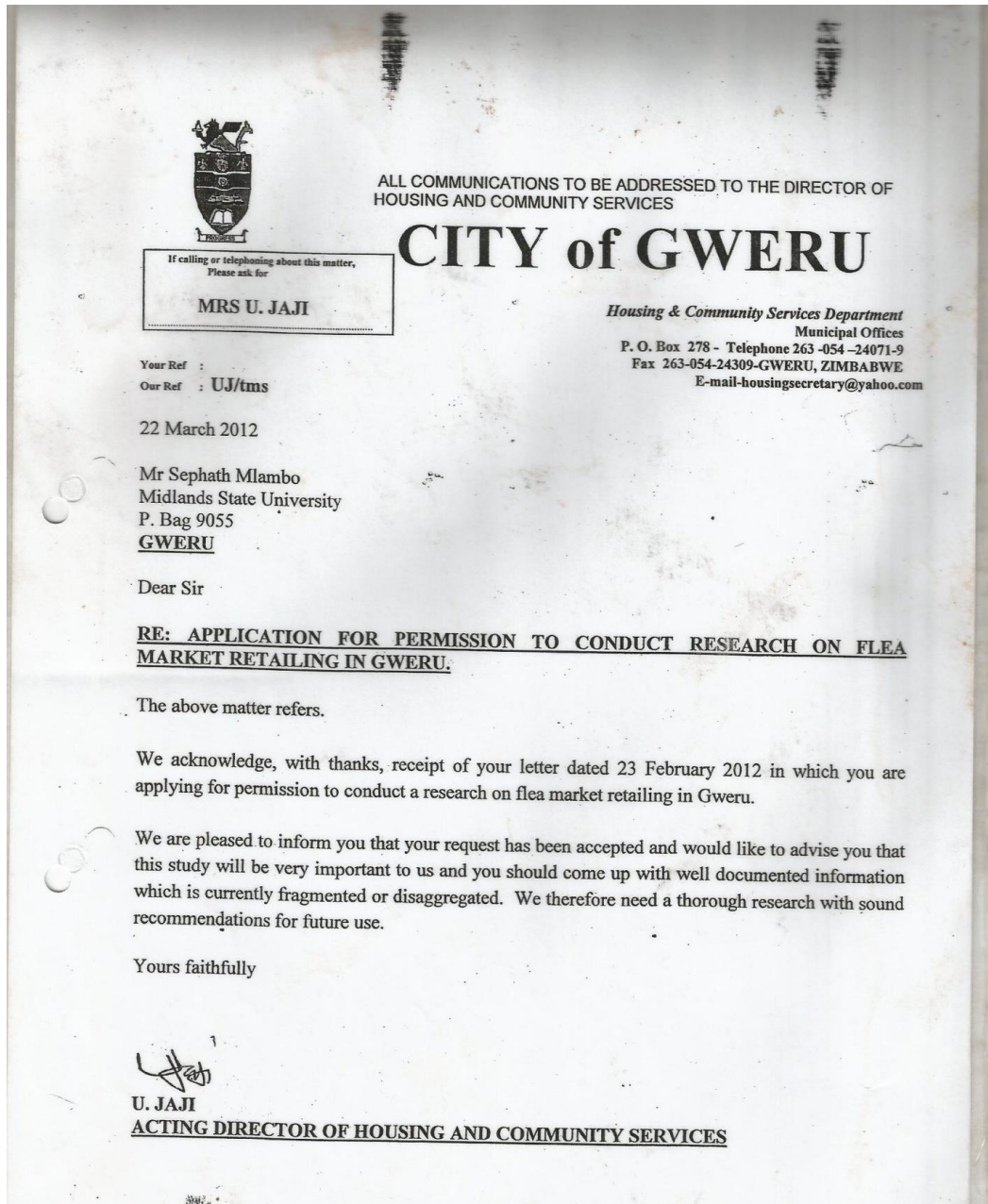
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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: City of Gweru Authorisation



Appendix 2: Faculty of Commerce Authorisation 2014

MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF COMMERCE
DEPARTMENT OF RETAIL AND LOGISTICS
TEL: 054- 2227411



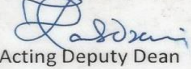
26 September 2014

To Whom It May Concern

Data Collection: Flea Market Retailing in the Central Business District of Gweru.

Mr S. Mlambo is a lecturer in the Department of Retail and Logistics at the Midlands State University. He is engaged in a study of flea market retailing in the Central Business District of Gweru. At this stage of his research, Mr Mlambo is required to gather data from flea market traders and others through interviews and observation of flea market activity. Kindly assist him in any way possible as he carries out this study.

Thank you for your assistance.

Z. Tambudzai [Dr]

Acting Deputy Dean

Appendix 3: Coding - Tree Nodes

CODING: TREE NODES

Name	Sources	References
Trading Practice	22	145
Goods traded in	23	86
The Spirit, the Passion	15	74
Business Challenges	17	72
Returns on Investment	19	69
Players. Who they are	16	65
Flea Market sites	17	64
Procurement Strategies	17	62
History Issues in Flea Markets	19	62
Family Roles	19	56
In and Out	9	46
Record Keeping	19	40
Employment	14	34
Importing from	12	31
Diversity of operations	11	31
Customer Issues	12	30
Pricing Practices	9	28
Reasons for Entry	9	25
Managing Stocks	9	24
Relations with other traders	8	24
Business Cycles	9	19
Future Plans & Planning	5	14
Zimra, Duty, Import regulation	7	13
Business idea origination	7	13
Work and Leisure Time	9	12
Council as Regulator	4	12
Procurement Risks	3	11
Source of start-up & running capital	5	11
Competition & Competitors	7	11
Training, Source of skill or interest	5	10
Promotion & Publicity	5	8
Mabhero	3	7
Source of Capital	4	5
Murambasvina	4	4
Teamwork	1	2
Consent	1	1

Code	Sources	References
Trading Practice	22	145
Goods traded in	23	86
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Promotion & Publicity	5	8
Mabhero	3	7
Source of Capital	4	5
Murambasvina	4	4
Teamwork	1	2
Consent	1	1

	Name	Description	Sources	References	
1	Goods traded in	Goods/Services currently traded in for the flea market enterprise	23	86	
2	Trading Practice	Activities for conducting business. Any kind.	22	145	
3	Returns on Investment	Profit determination, investment in tangible/intangible assets	19	69	
4	History Issues in Flea Markets	Participant's own history in the sector or reference to the flea market sector in past periods	19	62	
5	Family Roles	How family members participate in the enterprise	19	56	
6	Record Keeping	How trading activity is recorded relating to sales, stocks or determination of profit/returns	19	40	
7	Business Challenges	Problems faced in conducting business	17	72	
8	Flea Market sites	Impressions or descriptions of the sites from which business is conducted	17	64	
9	Procurement Strategies	Processes or tactics adopted to bring goods/services to the marketplace	17	62	
10	Players. Who they are	Identifying the traders or their character/characteristics. Images of.	16	65	
11	The Spirit, the Passion	Evidence of emotional attachment to the enterprise. Bonding. Enthusiasm	15	74	
12	Employment	Employing assistants or being in formal employment (full-time or part-time) elsewhere besides flea market trading	14	34	This code appears to have 2 separate issues.
13	Importing from	Foreign countries from which goods are sourced	12	31	
14	Customer Service Issues	Identifying customers; specifying special behaviour towards them	12	30	
15	Diversity of operations	Statements concerning the range/varieties of business operations e.g. to spread business risk	11	31	
16	In and Out		9	46	Content needs to be re-examined for this code.
17	Pricing Practices	How prices are determined/set; or trends established in the marketplace	9	28	
18	Reasons for Entry	Factors that propelled entry. Issues that sparked interest.	9	25	

19	Managing Stocks	Stock keeping and issues related to tracking movement or storage of goods, tools and equipment	9	24	
20	Business Cycles	The changes in business tempo over time e.g. seasonal or other time span	9	19	
21	Work and Leisure Time	Balance between work, leisure, family and other social pursuits	9	12	
22	Relations with other traders	Evidence of interaction with fellow traders or business persons.	8	24	
23	Business idea origination	How the flea market operations in question started. This may include the history of the particular operation	7	13	
24	Zimra, Duty, Import regulation	Experiences and perceptions of border controls and issues concerning import duty and its payment	7	13	
25	Competition & Competitors	Statements about competition/competitors faced and how that is addressed.	7	11	
26	Future Plans & Planning	Plans to grow the business and how those are formulated	5	14	
27	Source of start-up & running capital		5	11	Content needs to be re-examined for this code. See Source of Capital
28	Training, Source of skill or interest	How business skills and capabilities were acquired and honed. Including interest in the long term.	5	10	
29	Promotion & Publicity	Identifying steps adopted to encourage consumers to buy commodities	5	8	
30	Council as Regulator	Any issues relating to how Council regulates flea market or business in general	4	12	
31	Source of Capital	Source of start-up and running capital. Where this came from or how it was acquired	4	5	
32	Murambatsvina	Any reference to the 2005 Government operations and its effects/aftermath	4	4	
33	Procurement Risks	Dangers or hurdles encountered in sourcing products from different markets.	3	11	How about other types of risks?
34	Mabhero	References to trading in bales of second hand clothing and to the site reserved for such trade	3	7	
35	Teamwork	Evidence of collaborative engagement with others for achieving business goals.	1	2	
36	Consent	Any special issues about how consent was obtained or feelings and reactions experienced.	1	1	
37	Values				
38	Time spent at site				

Name	Description
Goods traded in	Goods/Services currently traded in for the flea market enterprise
Trading Practice	Activities for conducting business. Any kind.
Returns on Investment	Profit determination, investment in tangible/intangible assets
History Issues in Flea Markets	Participant's own history in the sector or reference to the flea market sector in past periods
Family Roles	How family members participate in the enterprise
Record Keeping	How trading activity is recorded relating to sales, stocks or determination of profit/returns
Business Challenges	Problems faced in conducting business
Flea Market sites	Impressions or descriptions of the sites from which business is conducted
Procurement Strategies	Processes or tactics adopted to bring goods/services to the marketplace
Players. Who they are	Identifying the traders or their character/characteristics. Images of.
The Spirit, the Passion	Evidence of emotional attachment to the enterprise. Bonding. Enthusiasm
Employment	Employing assistants or being in formal employment (full-time or part-time) elsewhere besides flea market trading
Importing from	Foreign countries from which goods are sourced
Customer Service Issues	Identifying customers; specifying special behaviour towards them
Diversity of operations	Statements concerning the range/varieties of business operations e.g. to spread business risk
In and Out	
Pricing Practices	How prices are determined/set; or trends established in the marketplace
Reasons for Entry	Factors that propelled entry. Issues that sparked interest.
Managing Stocks	Stock keeping and issues related to tracking movement or storage of goods, tools and equipment
Business Cycles	The changes in business tempo over time e.g. seasonal or other time span
Work and Leisure Time	Balance between work, leisure, family and other social pursuits
Relations with other traders	Evidence of interaction with fellow traders or business persons.

Business idea origination	How the flea market operations in question started. This may include the history of the particular operation
Zimra, Duty, Import regulation	Experiences and perceptions of border controls and issues concerning import duty and its payment
Competition & Competitors	Statements about competition/competitors faced and how that is addressed.
Future Plans & Planning	Plans to grow the business and how those are formulated
Source of start-up & running capital	
Training, Source of skill or interest	How business skills and capabilities were acquired and honed. Including interest in the long term.
Promotion & Publicity	Identifying steps adopted to encourage consumers to buy commodities
Council as Regulator	Any issues relating to how Council regulates flea market or business in general
Source of Capital	Source of start-up and running capital. Where this came from or how it was acquired
Murambatsvina	Any reference to the 2005 Government operations and its effects/aftermath
Procurement Risks	Dangers or hurdles encountered in sourcing products from different markets.
Mabhero	References to trading in bales of second hand clothing and to the site reserved for such trade
Teamwork	Evidence of collaborative engagement with others for achieving business goals.
Consent	Any special issues about how consent was obtained or feelings and reactions experienced.

Appendix 4: Participant Consent Form

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM: INTERVIEWS

*Researcher: Sephath Mlambo. Retail & Logistics Management Department.
Contact Details: 0712 867 258 or 0775 889 375.*

*Faculty of Commerce. Midlands State University. Faculty Office: 054-227
411.*

- The researcher (Mr S. Mlambo) explained to me the nature and purpose of the research project and I agree to take part in it.
- I understand that the researcher (Mr S. Mlambo) will himself conduct interviews and carry out observations.
- I understand that interviews will be audio-recorded and that photographs may be taken. I understand that I have the right to terminate the interview or recording of it or photographing at any point.
- I understand that although I may withdraw from any part of the project at any stage, this will not affect my status either now or in the future.
- I understand that while information gathered during the study may be published, I will not be identified and my personal data will remain confidential.
- I understand that there is no payment for participation.
- I understand that data will be held confidentially, in a secure place and in a password protected computer in the form of hard and electronic copies of transcripts and audio-tapes. These data will be accessible to the researcher and his supervisors only.

Participant's Name..... Date.....

Signature:..... Stand.....
Time.....

Appendix 5: Flea Markets Interview Protocol for Participants

FLEA MARKETS INTERVIEW PROTOCOL: PARTICIPANTS

Name: Date Time

Stand No Section

Participants will be encouraged to cover the following matters:

BACKGROUND

- **Profiling** the business person: Background/demographic questions: age, gender, occupation, family background.
- What are the **personal** and **family values** behind the business?
- The **roles family members play** in the enterprise.

THE BUSINESS

- How/when it all **started**?
 - Who was in it then? And now?
 - Where did the capital come from? Or the energy?
 - What were/are your motives/driving forces in starting and growing the business?
 - What guided you in the choice of locations (the sites chosen)? What other business, operation or jobs are held? How are these roles balanced?
 - What were the principal challenges/barriers in those early days? Or now?
 - What were the risks then and now?

THE BUSINESS (*Continued*)

- Why this business enterprise? How many trading sites?
- How has the business **developed/changed over time**?
 - What is the **future** like: expansion or stability? Strategies/Plans for the future?
- The **most enjoyable/satisfying/memorable/frustrating/least likeable** moments/activities/things about the business.

HR

- **How many** people work for the business? When? How often? What roles do they play?
- Examine **different time periods**: days of the week; mornings/afternoons; weekdays/weekends; mid-month/month end; season etc.
- Depth of interviewee's involvement in the business e.g. daily or for special tasks/assignments.

MERCHANDISE

- **Goods traded in:**
 - Merchandise decisions (what products to sell, assortment, display, procurement/sourcing etc.).
 - Changes in merchandise dealt with e.g. seasonal or due to demand patterns or trading sites.
 - **Sources.** Dealing with suppliers. Transportation.

MERCHANDISE (*Continued*)

- Long/Short term contractual relationships with **suppliers**?
- Payment arrangements.
- Sourcing: Relationships with clients, suppliers, with other vendors etc. Credit from suppliers?
- Dealing with **competition**, competitors, neighbours, trade associations
- What is the **working day/week** like? What activities do you engage in?
- What are the **dominant issues** in the operating environment?
- **Security of merchandise** or property.

FINANCIAL

- **Record Keeping**& accounts (Bank Accounts? Or EcoCash?): How they reckon for profit?
- **Investment** decisions e.g. on surplus/savings
- Dealings with **regulatory authorities** or regulation? Or association.
- **Quality. Price.** Pricing decisions? Promotions? Discounts?
- Pricing, mark-ups.

CUSTOMERS

- **Store format**& environment (visual merchandising, atmosphere)
- Customers served (their attributes & needs).

CUSTOMERS (*Continued*)

- **Levels of service** to consumers e.g. granting credit facilities, assistance to customers etc., discounts, delivery
- Building/maintaining **customer relationships**. Regular customers? Any credit to customers? Trust. Attracting customers. Use of credit for customers.

DECISION MAKING ABOUT THE BUSINESS.

- Decision making about business enterprise. **Who is involved? What types of decisions? (Strategic? Operational?)**

- What issues drive decisions?
- Role of **family**.
- **Factors** that influence your purchase decision making.

Questions on the areas above will also seek to obtain clarification of the following:

- 1) **Opinion/value questions** – what participants think about a matter; how it relates to their values, goals and intentions.
 - 2) **Feeling questions** – focussing on their emotional experiences; feelings evoked by a situation e.g. “How do you feel when...?”
 - 3) **Sensory questions**- what participants see, hear, experience, touch, and smell etc. in their daily work. Participants may be asked to recollect specific impressions in a specific setting.
-