



**Understanding gender dynamics among informal sector shop-owners: A case study of
spaza shops in Lindelani, Durban.**

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Abstract

Spaza shops contribute significantly to informal economic activity in South Africa. The spaza shop industry is known to generate enormous revenue while providing employment at the family and community level. However, spaza shop owners face a number of challenges ranging from lack of education, business knowledge and skills, financial assistance, transport challenges, facilities such as trading and storage space and security and safety threats. Furthermore, the magnitude of these challenges is compounded by gender dynamics. The aim of this study was to consider gender dynamics among spaza shop-owners through a case study of spaza shops in Lindelani, Durban. To uncover relevant information of gender and spaza shop industry, the study used qualitative methodology. The study found that female spaza shop owners face gender discrimination and gender stereotypes compared to male counterparts.

The findings of this study are consistent with the literature and feminist perspectives arguing that female spaza shop owners are disadvantaged as compared to their male counterparts. The study found that female spaza shop owners lose considerable time performing household chores. Thus performing dual roles forces females to spend more time at home looking after their business and performing household chores, thus working long hours. Feminist literature argues that existing gender inequality stems from limited opportunities for females to participate in various aspects of the public sphere, such as education, political activity, and employment. Moreover, the study further found that crime stand to be the main concern for majority of spaza shop owners. Financial assistance, education, business knowledge and skills, transport challenges, facilities such as trading and storage space are among other challenges that spaza shop owners face in their day to day business. However, the severity of these challenges varies greatly with the gender of the spaza shop owner.

Chapter 1

Introduction

This study provides the important understanding of spaza shop existence in the informal economy, while looking at the challenges faced by spaza shop owners. The study argues that challenges facing spaza shop owners impact spaza shop owner differently due to their gender differences. This chapter outline the structure of the dissertation by providing the rational of the study.

The spaza shop industry in South Africa

This research considers gender dynamics among spaza shop owners in the area of Lindelani Township, Durban. It further seeks to understand the relationship between spaza shop owners, their families and the community that they serve. In South Africa there are at least 100,000 spaza shops operating across the country (Bhorat et al, 2013). Gauteng alone is estimated to have 40 000 spaza shops, while Cape Peninsula had an estimate of 14,200 spaza shops (Bear et al, 2005). The small consensus conducted in KwaMashu north of Durban, KwaZulu-Natal in 2013 suggests that there are at least 146 spaza shops operating. To date there are no updated national statistics detailing spaza shops.

The spaza shop industry in South Africa has an estimated turnover of more than 7 billion per annum (Liedeman et al, 2013). Males are the predominant spaza shop owners and the majority of them are younger and low-skilled (Bhorat et al, 2013). According to van Scheers (n.d) spaza shops operate under the informal economy which is a complex and dynamic business environment. According to Chebelyon-Dalizu et al (2010) and Charman (2012) the term spaza means hidden in Zulu and it arose in the apartheid era. Spaza shops in the apartheid days were not allowed. Thus spaza shops emerged under apartheid as a result of business opportunities being restricted for black entrepreneurs (Charman, 2012). Spaza shops under apartheid were largely run by black people, thus a number of them “were established within people’s homes in order to elude the authorities” (Chebelyon-Dalizu et al, 2010: 9).

The importance of spaza shops

During the apartheid era, spaza shops were popular because of limited business opportunities for many people residing in informal areas who were not employed (Charman, 2012). In the post-apartheid era, spaza shops are popular to people who cannot find employment or to matriculants who are unable to further their studies and to people who see spaza shops as a business opportunity (Ligthelm, 2005). The majority of spaza shops are run as family endeavours, while a few are run as joint relationships.

Spaza shops are not only important to their owners, but also to consumers as they play a vital role of enabling access to affordable consumption to low-income consumers in developing countries (Charman et al, 2012). Thus, in the South African context, for a number of low-income households who lack proper transportation and access to urban shopping centres, spaza shops play a crucial role in providing access to affordable consumer services.

Moreover, residents often seek a nearby spaza shop for easy accessibility and for safety reasons especially given transport costs and perceptions regarding crime (Sustainable Livelihood Foundation, n.d).

According to Perks (2010) spaza shop owners are motivated by different reasons to run spaza shops. Zondi (2011) articulated that a number of spaza shop owners started spaza shops with the motivation to fight poverty caused by either unemployment or a shortage of income to support their family. The majority of spaza shop owners either work as part-time or full-time employees somewhere else and the spaza business income is used to supplement household incomes (Zondi, 2011). In addition, Ismail (n.d) and Rolfe et al (2010) argue that most spaza shop owners started their business as a result of the failure of the formal economy to absorb the growing labor force, and spaza shops were established as a temporary business to keep the family or individual functioning until formal employment became available. Ismail (n.d) argues that the lack of business skills and access to financial support are important reasons for why the spaza industry prevails as a critical component of the informal economy.

Gender dynamics among spaza shops owners

Feminist perspectives argue that male and female do not have equal autonomy within their environments; family, work, and society (Webley, 2002). The literature states that female spaza shop owners face different challenges than male spaza shop owners (Perks, 2010). To understand why female spaza shop owners face different challenges this dissertation utilizes the feminist perspective. This perspective states that women have limited access to resources such as education, business training, and financial support in comparison with their male counterparts (Manolova et al, 2007 and Ekar, 2005). According to this perspective patriarchal tradition, culture, and socialization systems place women in subordination within their families and society, making it harder for them to fulfil their entrepreneurial aspirations (Mill, 2008).

A review of the literature further shows that there have been fewer studies focused on the gender characteristics of spaza shop owners. The early studies on spaza shop owners mainly looked at the benefits and challenges of spaza shop owners (Bhorat et al, 2013 and Chebelyon-Dalizu et al, 2010). Thus, they have paid less attention to the impact of gender among spaza shop owners. Spaza shops in South Africa present an economic activity that can minimize poverty in the family and community levels. The critical issue for this research is to understand gender dynamics at the family, community, and institutional levels for spaza shop owners. Recent studies highlight that a number of spaza shops owned by women face unique challenges. Chebelyon-Dalizu et al (2010) articulated that female-owned spaza shops face issues of gender stereotyping and discrimination.

Moreover, many female spaza shop owners are mothers and they are forced to split their time between raising their children and maintaining their spaza shops (Chebelyon-Dalizu et al, 2010). As female spaza shop owners have to maintain both their families and spaza shops they ending-up working 14-16 hours a day, while their male counterparts work less hours and are able to dedicate most of their time on business (Mill, 2008). Thus, this research study seeks to understand these differences using Lindelani spaza shop owners as a case study.

Rational/justification for the study

Spaza shops are beneficial to both owners and customers. They provide customers with easy access to goods and owners with a source of income and a sense of livelihood. Moreover, spaza shops offer business opportunities and employment to those who have been excluded from the formal sector and to those who seek entrepreneurship while eliminating poverty at the family and community level. Studies have revealed that female spaza shop owners experience different challenges to male spaza shop owners (DeMartino and Barbato, 2002). The critical issue for this research is to add to these studies by considering gender dynamics at the family, community, and institutional levels and considering issues of gender stereotyping and discrimination (Chebelyon-Dalizu et al, 2010).

Moreover, Chebelyon-Dalizu et al (2010: 16) argue that young female owners face more challenges because “younger women are subject to sexual harassment and targeted more often in theft” than older women in the community. Although Chebelyon-Dalizu et al (2010) recognize that men and women who are self-employed are likely to experience different challenges in this survivalist business, they do not probe how gender dynamics at the family, community and institutional levels affect men and women differently which is the focus of this study.

Objectives

The broad objective of the study is to investigate whether male and female spaza shop-owners face different constraints or challenges in running their businesses.

- To understand whether male and female spaza shop owners face different challenges including how to manage work and family life.
- To understand how male and female spaza shop-owners perceive sources of support.
- To understand how male and female spaza shop owners perceive challenges of conducting spaza shop business.

Main research question

- Do female shop owners experience different constraints in the running of the business? For example, are they more likely to experience credit constraints as a problem than male shop-owners? Are there differences in the way they relate to their employees? Are women more likely than men to feel that they lack the necessary knowledge to run a business?

Subsidiary questions

- Do female shop owners also have to take responsibility for the running of their household, while male shop owners rely on a spouse or daughter for example?
- What are shop-owners' perceptions around the attitudes of family members towards their business? Do female and male shop owners receive different business support from their household members (through unpaid labor for example)?
- Do female shop owners receive less (or more) support from the community around them? Are they more likely to experience crime and safety issues than male shop owners? Do female shop-owners feel they are discriminated against by suppliers/customers?

Dissertation structure/outline

The first chapter has introduced the topic to be investigated and outlined the central research questions for this dissertation. The relevant literature on the spaza shop industry is reviewed in chapter two. Chapter three presents the study research methodology. The study findings are presented in chapter four with chapter five synthesizing and discussing the results from the fourth chapter. Chapter five relates this study to other studies on spaza shops and gender issues relating to spaza shops.

Chapter 2

Literature review

Introduction

The literature suggests that majority of spaza shop owners are male participants, this chapter aim to provide the profile of spaza shop in South Africa and the gender distribution of spaza shop owners in South Africa. Moreover, this chapter provides an in-depth discussion of challenges facing spaza shop owners that include among other challenges lack of education and business knowledge and skills, financial challenges, transport challenges, and crime. In addition, it further zoom at strategies used by spaza shop owners to survive in the informal economy. It further uses the feminist theory to explain the existence of gender dynamics among spaza shop owner.

A spaza shop profile

In South Africa there are at least 100,000 spaza shops operating across the country (Bhorat et al, 2013). Chairman (2012: 48) argued that even though “there is no accurate data on the current size of South Africa’s spaza market, rather a detailed investigation in 2002 estimated that the spaza market accounts for 2.7 per cent of total retail trade, equivalent to approximately R8 billion in value”. Bear et al (2005) argued that the high number of spaza shops operating in the informal economy is the result of easy entry into the spaza market and the rising unemployment rate in South Africa.

Spaza shops in South Africa present an example of a small entrepreneurial activity that offers an entry point to a large number of individuals excluded from mainstream economic activities (Basardien et al, 2014). A spaza shop can be defined as a “business operating in a section of an occupied residential home or in any other structure on a stand in a formal or informal township which is zoned for residential purposes and where people live permanently” (Ligthelm, 2005: 202). Moreover, van Scheers (n.d) articulated that spaza shops are also defined as small informal outlets with limited operational resemblance to supermarkets and grocery stores. Thus, the term spaza shop is used interchangeably with tuck shop. A number of spaza shops operate in the unregulated sphere and by and large are located in townships

due to their survivalist nature (Ligthelm, 2005). The majority of spaza shops are run as family endeavors, while some may be run as a joint relationship that includes friends.

Most spaza shops are male owned and male run. A study conducted in Mamelodi, near Pretoria, found that spaza shop owners were dominated by males, constituting 64 per cent, while women accounted for 36 per cent (Ligthelm, 2005). This may be in line with the argument set forward by the feminist perspective stating that females have limited access to resources such as financial support, business skills and education when compared with their male counterparts (Perks, 2010, Webley, 2012, McAdam, 2013, and England, 1993). By limited access to services and goods females' opportunities to be entrepreneurs are narrow. The study further finds that 78, 5 per cent fall into the age group of 25 to 49 years, with 36, 9 per cent having completed 12 or more years of schooling, while 4, 2 per cent have no formal education. In addition, the study conducted by Ligthelm and Masuku (2003) revealed that only 8.9 per cent had business training while 91.1 per cent had no business training. Thus, the large percentage of young spaza shop owners may partially validate that a number of spaza shop owners are people who have matriculated but not furthered their studies.

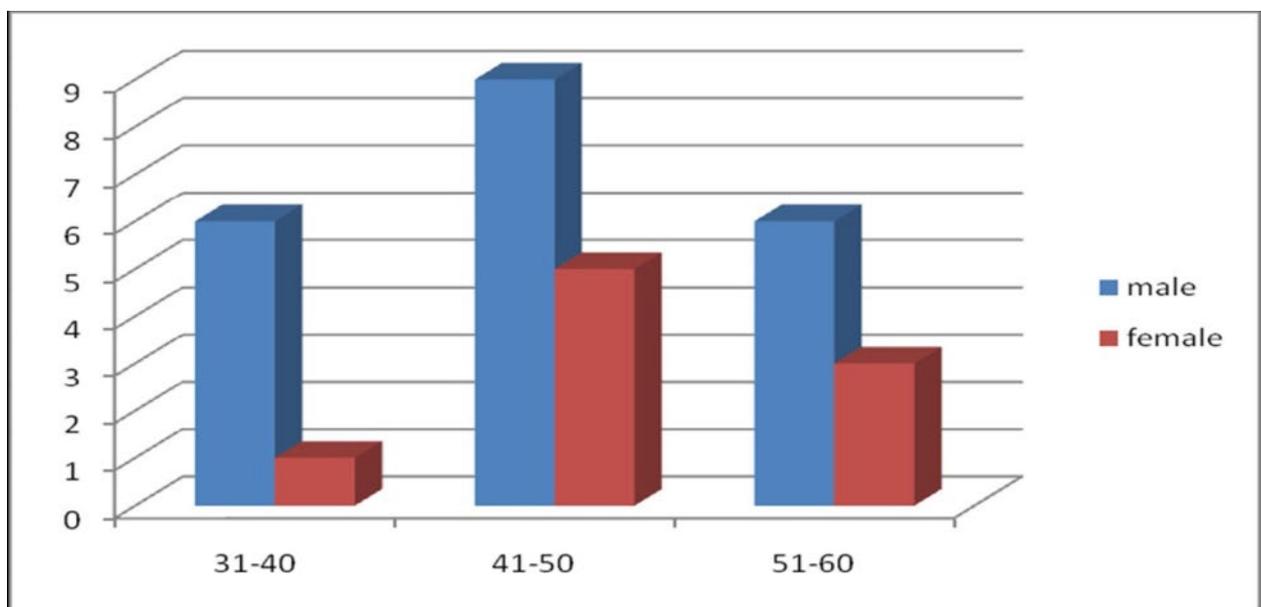


Figure: Gender and Age Distribution (adapted from van Scheers, n.d).

The above graph is consistent with the findings of the study conducted in Delft, Cape Town by (Charman et al, 2011). It represents the findings of a study conducted by van Scheers (n.d) in Soweto which found that males who own spaza shops accounted for 70 per cent while female owners constituted 30 per cent. The low percentage of women participating in the spaza shop business may be the result of scarce resources. Feminist perspectives state that women have limited access to resources such as education, business training, and financial support compared with their male counterparts (England, 1993, Fischer et al, 1993 and DeMartino and Barbato, 2002). Patriarchal tradition, culture, and socialization systems place women in subordination within their families and society. Moreover, the abovementioned study further shows that 23 per cent of spaza shop owners were in the 31-40 age range, while, 46 per cent fall in the age range of 41-50 years and 31 per cent fall within the 51-60 years range. None of the participants were below 30 or over 60 years of age (Van Scheers n.d: 8).

The study further found that 20 per cent of male spaza shop owners fall in the 31-40 age range; 60 per cent fall within 41-50 age range and 20 per cent in the 51-60 age range (van Scheers, n.d: 8). Whilst female spaza shop owners in the 31-40 age group constituted 16 per cent; with 74 per cent in the 41-50 age range and 10 per cent in the 51-60 age range (van Scheers, n.d: 8). According to van Scheers (n.d) the mis-match of skills and lack of skills has resulted in an unemployment increase. Van Scheers (n.d) further stated that middle and older age groups are mainly affected by job losses and they find it challenging to re-skill themselves to compete in the ever changing economy. Likewise, they have chosen to make a living through running spaza shops. The low percentage of female spaza shop owners may be the result of, and in line with the social feminism perspectives, males being socialized as the breadwinner, and females to perform household chores (DeMartino and Barbato, 2002). In general, it may be possible that females who are spaza shop owners are breadwinners.

As aforementioned, spaza shops operate either in informal or formal middle class settlements serving the low-income market (Chebelyon-Dalizu et al, 2010). This study focuses on the spaza shop owners operating in the informal settlements of Lindelani, Durban operating under the informal economy. However, the term informal economy is used interchangeably with informal sector and informal activities. The informal economy is defined as economic activities that operate outside the governmental regulation, taxation and observation (Loayza, 1996). A number of people have been attracted to the informal economy due to its financial

gains, because the informal economy allows self-employed, paid employees and employers to increase their take home earnings. Moreover, they are attracted by the reduced cost of doing business through tax evasion. According to Loayze (1996), the informal economy contributes to income generation, production, and employment creation even though it may lack sustainability. According to Ndabeni (2013) the informal economy in South Africa is viewed as a key service delivery function. Furthermore, the informal economy provides a source of livelihood to a number of South Africans who are excluded from the formal economy.

In the informal economy spaza shops are touted to be job creators in developing countries, employing one to three workers from the community (Bhorat et al. 2013 and Chebelyon-Dalizu et al. 2010). However, the literature does not highlight which gender (male or female) is likely to be employed. Consistent with the latter findings, further analysis by Chebelyon-Dalizu et al (2010) revealed that of the 113 spaza shop owners surveyed in Monwabisi Park, Cape Town, 54 per cent of respondents reported having one employee, almost 32 per cent indicated having two employees and the remaining 11 per cent had three or more employees helping in the management of the spaza shop.

In addition, Basardien et al (2014: 48) stated that the spaza shop industry creates job opportunities at the family and community level, and it has the “ability to provide a livelihood for poor people”. Perks (2010) articulated that a spaza shop employee’s main duties include packing shelves, cleaning, and serving customers, to some their duties extend to bookkeeping and counting daily float/money. Moreover, Ligthelm (2005) articulated that spaza shops as home-based enterprises are an important income-generating activity for less affluent households and play a key role in poverty alleviation at the household and community level.

According to Bhorat et al (2013: 16), spaza shops play a vital “role in facilitating access to affordable consumption to low-income consumers in developing countries”. Thus, in the South African context, for a number of low-income households who lack proper transportation and access to urban shopping centres, spaza shops play a crucial role in providing access to affordable consumer service. Moreover, spaza shops are local residences

favourite due to their easy accessibility and local customers eliminate transport costs for travel for shopping (Sustainable Livelihood Foundation, n.d).

In addition, Chebelyon-Dalizu et al, 2010) stated that spaza shops are also beneficial to local customers as they are able to buy some of the goods on credit. Chebelyon-Dalizu et al (2010) further stated that 47 per cent of customers buy on credit at their local spaza shop. In addition, “this cultural phenomenon can be explained by the social bond between the customer and spaza shop owner” Chebelyon-Dalizu et al (2010: 12). However, because spaza shop owners operate in isolation, as a result, they often lack support from government, business support programs and trade associations.

According to van Scheers (n.d) spaza shops rarely grow, thus they have a short lifespan. However, Ligthelm (2005) argues in a different direction stating that in South Africa spaza shops have proven themselves as providers of long term employment to those who can’t find employment in the formal economic sector. The study undertaken by Ligthelm (2005) in Mamelodi, near Pretoria evidenced that 39, 7 per cent of people have been running spaza shops for five years and more. Following the feminist perspective, one may expect female owned spaza shops to have a shorter lifespan given that female entrepreneurs have limited access to resources needed to withstand business pressures or to advance their business (Fischer et al, 1993 and DeMartino and Barbato, 2002).

Spaza markets

The term spaza market is used to define the value chain that connects the spaza shop owner “with low-income township consumers of the basic grocery items with spaza shop retailers and their trading partners”; distributors, wholesalers and suppliers of products and services (Bear et al, 2005: 7). Almost all township residences use nearby spaza shops because they are convenient outlets. Nonetheless, a number of these customers indicated that they were dissatisfied with the service provided by spaza shop owners specifically with regards attitudes, limited stock, and high prices.

Bear et al (2005) stated that spaza shop customers demand is larger than spaza shops growth. They are therefore not matching customer demands. The study conducted in Peninsula, Cape Town evidenced that customers were willing to spend more money on groceries and other household items sold by nearby spaza shops (Bear et al, 2005). Customers stated that they could spend more at spaza shops because there are no long queues, they would not pay for transport costs, and shopping near their homes will make them less of a target for thieves (Bear et al, 2005). To achieve this spaza shops must be able to provide the right brands, product mix, prices and improved customer service. Spaza shop owners will however continue to experience a decline in sales unless they can shift consumer spending away from supermarkets to spaza shops.

Survivalist vs. entrepreneurial ideas of spaza shops

According to Perks (2010) spaza shop owners are motivated by different reasons. Zondi (2011) articulated that a number of spaza shop owners started spaza shops with the motivation to fight poverty either caused by unemployment or shortage of income. Their aim was to support their families. The majority of spaza shop owners either work as a part-time or full-time employees somewhere else and the spaza shop income is used to supplement household income (Zondi, 2011). In addition, Ismail (n.d) and Rolfe et al (2010) argue that most spaza shop owners started a spaza business as a result of the failure of the formal economy to absorb the growing labor force, and spaza shops were established as a temporary business to keep the family or individual functioning until formal employment was available. Ismail (n.d) argues that the lack of business skills and access to financial support are important reasons for why spaza shops remain on the survivalist level. More than 50 per cent of spaza shops fail to develop due to a lack of business skills and financial support (Ismail, n.d).

According to the study conducted in the Nelson Mandela metropolitan municipality by Perks (2010) 15 per cent of spaza shop owners stated that they opened spaza shops because there were no shops in their surroundings. While 19 per cent stated retirement, business closure, retrenchment, and being medically unfit for work as the main reason they opened spaza shops (Ligthelm, 2005, Liedeman, 2013, and Bear et al, 2005). The Perks (2010) study found that 24 per cent of spaza shop owners stated unemployment as the main reason for starting their

business while 14 per cent started spaza shops as the means to generate income and make a living, 8 per cent inherited spaza shops from their family members and they had money and experience to further the business.

Moreover, Perks (2010) articulated that personal reasons accounted for 4 per cent, which included divorce and lack of job satisfaction. Although most were pushed either by socio-economic or personal reasons to start spaza shops, 12 per cent saw it as a business opportunity. In addition, 57 per cent of spaza shop owners grew up in a family business environment and learnt various skills and knowledge about the business (Perks, 2010). Perks (2010) findings support the idea that spaza shop owners are motivated by different reasons and it is not accurate to assume and generalize all spaza shop owners as survivalist motivated. Rolfe et al (2010) contended that spaza shops have a survivalist character but cannot be easily categorised as survivalist as some are able to generate income and employment to support more than just their family.

Other spaza shop owners are opportunity driven as they pursue the business to generate a sustainable livelihood. Rolfe et al (2010) further postulated that spaza shops can be delineated into two categories namely survivalist and entrepreneurial. Rolfe et al (2010) argue that, whether survivalist or entrepreneurial both have the ability to generate income and employment to improve the standard of living. Likewise, Bear et al (2005) discourage the notion that spaza shops are only survivalist in nature, by arguing that many spaza shop owners view themselves as active business people and oppose the idea that spaza shops are a temporary income generating activity. They have confidence about the future of their businesses. The motivation to start a spaza shop has an effect on how the spaza shop owner carries out the business. Starting a spaza shop as a survivalist business tends to generate minimal income returns while owners wait for formal sector job opportunities. In contrast, “a select group builds lasting businesses, making capital improvements for example, and has the potential to flourish” (Rolfe et al, 2010: 6). The literature does not differentiate between male or female spaza shop owners, with respect to survivalist and entrepreneurial motivations.

Male and female entrepreneurs have many similarities, nonetheless, a number of differences exist because women and men possess different motivations for becoming entrepreneurs (DeMartino and Barbato, 2002 and Fischer et al, 1993). A number of females choose to become entrepreneurs because they can balance work and family, while a number of males choose to become entrepreneurs because they seek to create wealth. This can be partially explained in that males are socialized to be the main financial providers (DeMartino and Barbato, 2002).

Challenges faced by spaza shop owners: education and business training

According to Mill (2008), societies are organized through social norms that privilege some gender behavior while oppressing others. Lack of education and business training present a crucial constraint for spaza shop owners to survive, be profitable and grow (Bhorat et al, 2013). According to Charman, et al (2012) a number of spaza shop owners pursue the spaza business as a result of being excluded from the formal economy due to shortage of market related education and skills. In a similar vein, van Scheers (n.d: 8) argues that a “higher level of education is normally associated with a better understanding of engagements and practices” in the business.

According to van Scheers (n.d: 8) study conducted in Soweto, 17 per cent of respondents had primary education, with the majority having a secondary level of education, i.e. 83 per cent. Focusing on the level of education by age distribution; 7 per cent of respondents had only up to primary level; 56 per cent fall into the age bracket of 41-50, with 44 per cent in the age bracket 51-60 years. On one hand, 10 per cent of female respondents had primary education; with 34 per cent falling into 41-50 age bracket, and 66 per cent into 51-60 years (van Scheers, n.d: 10). However, according to van Scheers (n.d: 8-9) the high number of spaza shop owners with primary education was because “elderly respondents were young at the height of the apartheid days where schooling in townships was not a priority, and meaningful economic participation in these areas was unheard of”.

Van Scheers (n.d) also showed that spaza shop owners from Soweto and surrounding areas stated that a lack of spaza market knowledge, business training and access to information

remained a major constraint to their spaza business. 80 per cent of the total respondents identified a lack of market knowledge as the foremost constraint. 66 per cent of the total respondents acknowledged that lack of business training and business related skills pose a challenge to their ability to maintain their spaza shops well (van Scheers, n.d: 11). However, all spaza shop owners who participated in the study acknowledged that lack of access to support and information was the major challenge. Likewise, Chebelyon-Dalizu et al (2010) stated that education and business training enables spaza shop owners to learn how to stock their shops and market their goods, provide good customer services and maintain business relations needed to drive the spaza business into success.

Although modern day access to schooling has increased among females, “females still adhere to patriarchal systems and household norms that limit their education and business training” in favour of their male counterparts (Webley, 2012: 28). According to the feminist perspective, social and cultural attitudes create gender inequality as they exclude women from resources (Webley, 2012). Moreover, the low percentage of education of female spaza shop owners may be explained by the argument set forward by the feminist literature stating that females receive limited access to education because their role is more defined within the family level.

Bookkeeping

Bookkeeping is defined as the day to day recorded financial transactions of all money flowing into and out of the business. (Meijerink, 1994). The spaza shop owner can benefit from bookkeeping by recording price lists from different suppliers and comparing those prices to cheaper suppliers to maximize profit. Bookkeeping can also be beneficial in building networks. In addition, Perks (2010) articulated that bookkeeping can help spaza shop owners to make adjustments to better save their profit to give them opportunities to expand their business. Moreover, bookkeeping systems can assist spaza shop owners to separate household expenses from business expenses (Perks, 2010). Furthermore, bookkeeping can “limit customer credits to avoid cash flow problems” (Perks, 2010: 461) and can help keep control of the stock and plan monthly expenses. A lack of bookkeeping skills may therefore impact negatively on a spaza business.

Communication technology

Van Scheers (n.d) stated that information can be accessible both in electronic and physical formats. Spaza shop owners should be able to access information and translate it into knowledge regardless of the format (paper, electronic, video, audio, etc.) through multiple channels that may include the web and cell phones (van Scheers, n.d) to better their business management skills. Matlala et al (2014) argue that communication technology is important for business, whether a large or small entrepreneur. According to Matlala et al (2014: 181) larger businesses enjoy benefits of economies of scale, while small entrepreneurs such as spaza shops “experience difficulties in controlling overheads including broadband internet, Wi-Fi routers and airtime”. Matlala et al (2014) argue that in South Africa the majority of spaza shop owners own mobile phones, smartphones, or tablets and utilize them as a means of communication to either place an order or communicate with their customers.

According to Matlala et al (2014) there has been an increase in usage of communication technology among small-enterprises like spaza shops which has put them on the competitive advantage and strengthened their survival on the market. The use of communication technology in small business is seen as helping to improve the communication process between spaza shop owners and the suppliers and customers. Some spaza shop owners order stock through these devices and they are able to reduce the cost of day to day travelling to buy stock. Furthermore, communication technology provides entrepreneurs with the opportunity to “reduce costs of doing business, reduce use of intermediaries, and increase price transparency and negotiation, thus increasing the profitability of the business” (Matlala et al, 2014: 4).

According to Matlala et al (2014) spaza shop owners use mobile phones to manage their spaza shops. Thus mobile phones are the most popular technology used by spaza shop owners. The study further finds that 85.8 per cent use mobile phones, 22.1 per cent use smartphones, 12.4 per cent use laptops, with 7.1 using tablets, and 2.7 per cent using iPads to find information about their business and to manage their spaza shop (Matlala, 2014: 190). Communication technology also allows spaza shop owners to find information that may be difficult or costly to access. For instance, Spaza News is an online newsletter that provides

spaza shop owners with information and knowledge about opportunities such as micro-finance, advice, tips and regulations that may be only available online (Spaza News, 2010).

In addition, spaza shop owners could utilize mobile devices to transact with their customers and increase their existing customer networks (Donner, 2006). Spaza shop owners should also use mobile devices to determine the level of satisfaction and complaints from customers, thus improving customer service (Matlala, 2014).

Financial challenges faced by spaza shop owners

Although spaza shops provide employment and other benefits in the community and to their owners, spaza shops are often presented with various challenges. According to Bhorat et al (2013) spaza shop owners face different financial challenges both in starting-up the business and in maintaining it. For example, they have difficulties in accessing financial support either from government or private financial lenders. Literature reveals that for a number of spaza shop owners, start-up capital is acquired through personal savings, retrenchment payments, stokvels, and loans from family and friends (Ligthelm, 2005; Bear et al, 2005; Bhorat et al, 2013; Tladi, 2003 and Chebelyon-Dalizu et al, 2010). In a similar vein, Charman et al (2012) argue that spaza shop owners often rely on the extended family to assist them with start-up capital and labor to maintain the business. This is due to the lack of government subsidies, banks and other formal money lenders who are often sceptical of providing loans to people with no or less than the required collateral (Ligthelm and Masuku, 2003; Ligthelm, 2005).

Chebelyon-Dalizu et al (2010: 15) articulated that “South African banks have been over cautious in lending money to micro-enterprises” like spaza shops. Nonetheless, where spaza shop owners manage to secure a loan they are often overwhelmed by the high interest payable. Moreover, Chebelyon-Dalizu et al (2010) further argue that lack of government regulations around lending practices subject spaza shop owners to unfair loan practices such as exorbitantly high interest rates charged by private financial services. Thus, some spaza shop owners rely on unregistered money lenders who have high interest rates.

In addition, some spaza shop owners are overwhelmed by the necessary paperwork and processes and the jargon related to loan paperwork, and end up not being interested in securing financial loans. In contrast, Rolfe et al (2010) argue that spaza shop owners should be congratulated for their ability to start up and continue to maintain their spaza shops without loans or subsidies and being able to generate a better living standard not only for themselves but for their families. Rolfe et al (2010) articulated that males are more likely than females to secure viable start-up capital needed to open spaza shop business.

Feminist perspectives argue that female oppression and exploitation that result in exclusion of resources needed by females to advance their livelihood, is mainly driven by the patriarchal system (Webley, 2012). In a similar vein, Kabeer (1991) stated that there are four institutions that construct gender relations; the market, state, community and the sphere of family. Thus, gender relations, according to Kabeer (1991) are the result of each institution's construction and reconstruction. Gender, as a socially constructed phenomenon is not confined purely to households and family relationships; rather it is reproduced across a range of institutions that shape gender resources (Ekar, 2005 and Mill, 2008). Based on the argument set forward by the feminist perspective, one can expect female owned spaza shops to experience financial issues, be small in size, and less profitable as they lack financial support.

Transport challenges

Another challenge that spaza shop owners face is issues in transportation of goods from wholesalers to the spaza shops. Moreover, insufficient means of transportation of merchandise from wholesalers to spaza shops poses a constraint in procuring merchandise (Ligthelm, 2005). Spaza shops often lack bargaining power, wholesalers and manufacturers do not offer spaza shop owners discounts, thus forcing them to raise the prices of goods, resulting in less profit (Chebelyon-Dalizu et al, 2010). Spaza shop owners need to work together in approaching wholesalers, suppliers, and manufacturers to gain discounts, marketing material and delivery services at a lower fee. This would benefit them as they would maximize profit and cut time and money lost on the process of stock taking it would also benefit customers who would enjoy lower competitive prices (Chebelyon-Dalizu et al, 2010). In addition, this can also benefit wholesalers, supplies and manufacturers, through selling larger stock to spaza shops.

Crime challenges facing spaza shop owners

Largely spaza shops are located in informal settlements. There is often a high concentration of spaza shops operating in the same location (Ligthelm and Masuku, 2003). Because they operate in highly concentrated residential areas like informal settlements where the crime rate is very high, robbery is a legitimate concern for them (Cape Town Project Centre, 2014). In Monwabisi Park, 40 per cent of spaza shop owners stated that they have experienced home break-ins (Cape Town Project Centre, 2010). Spaza shops are vulnerable to various kinds of crime because “they are largely cash-based businesses” (Chebelyon-Dalizu: 57). Cape Town Project Centre (2010) argues that spaza shops are appealing targets because customers and spaza shopkeepers use the window space to exchange goods and cash making it easy for robbers to identify that the spaza shop has cash.

The South African Police Service 2013/2014 national crime statistics revealed a 5.2 per cent increase in business robberies across the country and 6.2 per cent aggravated robbery (Nhleko, 2015). Thus spaza shops were quoted as the major affected business, with 35 per cent of spaza shops and tuck shops being targeted followed by supermarkets and general dealers (14.4 per cent). Moreover, Khumalo (2012) and Ligthelm (2005) argue that spaza shops often are targeted because they operate in areas where there is insufficient infrastructure, a lack of proper security measures and poor policing. Ligthelm (2005) stated that spaza shops are often located in easy break-in spaces. Ligthelm (2005) pointed out that 28, 8 per cent operate from a backyard building, while 20, 5 per cent use a garage which is attached to the main house, and 19, 9 per cent are located inside a main house.

However, robbery and theft, is not the only form of crime that affects the merchandise of the spaza shop. Spaza shop owners sometimes experience a loss of profit due to bad credit from customers and this has often leads to a shortage of money needed for stock. Because spaza shop owners lack appropriate measures to obtain debits/credit from customers, some customers default on payments (van Scheers, n.d). The literature does not differentiate between male or female spaza shop owners, with respect to vulnerability of various kinds of criminal activities with respect to gender. Furthermore, spaza shop owners often work long

hours (sometimes they work 15 hours since they open from 06:30am and close at 21:30pm) (Spaza New, 2011). Long working hours place pressure on the owner's relationship with family and friends due to the dual roles that spaza shop owners have to play as both a "diligent income provider and caring for spouses" (Brink and Cant, 2003: 14). This especially affects females who often perform domestic work and paid work. Feminist perspectives argue that in this way females are oppressed and remain in exploitation.

Female spaza shop owners are often vulnerable to crime because of gender stereotypes. According to Mill (2008: 3) a devastating factor from negative gender stereotyping is that it often leads to sexism which entails "the belief that the status of female is inferior to the status of male." As a result, women are often likely to occupy statuses inside and outside their homes that are associated with less power, prestige and opportunity compared to males (Mill, 2008). Sexism can also lead to physical violence and sexual harassment in its extreme form. Moreover, feminist perspectives consider social and cultural attitudes as the drivers of gender inequality. These attitudes are fused with the idea of masculinity which views females as feminine who occupy an inferior status to males either in public or in a private sphere through cultural dynamics (Webley, 2012). Thus, female spaza shop owners may be more vulnerable to criminal activities compared to their male counterparts, due to traits that are associated with females.

Health challenging spaza shop owners

Spaza shop owners oversee all operations in the spaza shop with the support of family members and / or a limited number of employees. Thus the success of the spaza shop depends on the owner and should they fall sick, the business is likely to be negatively affected and become unstable. For spaza shop owners living in the informal settlements where there is limited if any basic health services can lead to a shutdown because some family members who help in running the spaza shop may be required to look after the sick spaza shop owner. This is usually because they lack money to put a sick person in a private health facility, the burden falls on the family.

If the spaza shop cannot run because the owner is sick the customer that depends on the spaza shop is forced to use other spaza shops further away (Chebelyon-Dalizu et al, 2010). Of course this affects customers, the shop owner and the people who were dependent on the income generated by the spaza shop. Where a spaza shop owner is a female the situation may be worse because women generally provide care in the family including household chores and nurturing children. One may expect, as the feminist perspective argues, that females either by their culture or the patriarchal system are cast as having a primary responsibility to provide child rearing, domestic work, and look after the health and well-being of family members (Webley, 2012). While a male's primary responsibility is to provide the wage earnings and other material essentials to the family. In addition, the feminist perspective argues that due to household duties and self-employment that females perform at home, they may experience specific health issues (Webley, 2012).

Marketing strategies of spaza shops

Perks (2010) stated that spaza shops have very limited ways of marketing their business. Likewise, Chiliya et al (2009) argue that spaza shop owners lack marketing strategies that can help them to be profitable and thus there is a need for quality marketing models to boost the spaza shop turnover. Chiliya et al (2009) define marketing as a strategy used to reach the targeted market. Marketing requires spaza shop owners to assess the existing competition, customer's attitudes, and required products. This will help the spaza shop owner's decision-making to be orientated towards delivering high value customer service at a lower cost (Chiliya et al, 2009). Further to that, it will require the spaza shop owner to "provide a wide range of goods at competitive prices and at convenient times" (Chiliya et al, 2009: 73).

A study conducted by Perks (2010) in the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Municipality indicated that word-of-mouth advertising is popular among spaza shops with more than 32 per cent of spaza shop owners preferring it. While, 29 per cent use the notice boards from major companies likely Coca-Cola, MTN, CELL-C and Vodacom, only 6 per cent use free public newspapers and magazines to advertise their business (Perks, 2010). Nonetheless, Coca-Cola has been an exceptional company that does not only support spaza shops with advertising material; they even deliver to some spaza shops that pay cash on delivery (Bear et al, 2005).

Perks (2010) argued that the personality of the spaza shop owner plays a crucial role in attracting the customers. Moreover, the location of the spaza shop plays a meaningful role on the success of attracting customers. Charman (2012) stated that a good spaza shop location is a pre-condition for success. To a number of spaza shop owners it is impossible to choose their location, because a number of them operate within their homes because they can easily bypass the municipal policies that will require fees and force them to register their businesses. According to Manolova et al (2007), in support of feminist perspectives, females lack professional experience or the diverse social networking needed to utilize access to information, social support, and resources. This is due to different socialization that men and women hold (Manolova et al, 2007). Thus, one may expect female spaza shop owners to have a low marketing technology because they often lack the resources and education needed to advertise their business because of the subordination that they face compared to their male counterparts.

Emergence of foreign spaza shops and township shopping malls

There is a growing body of literature suggesting that the introduction of foreign owned spaza shops and nearby malls are negatively affecting locally owned spaza shops (Rolfe et al 2010, Charman 2012, and Liedeman et al, 2013). A study conducted by Charman (2013) in Delft South, Cape Town, finds that a number of customers favored foreign owned spaza shops over South African owned spaza shops. Foreign owned spaza shops were favored because of better stock and appearance, cheaper prices and discounts. Also, people favored malls because they house the well-established retailers who are able to use economies of scale to offer lower prices to their customers (Liedeman, 2013).

According to Liedeman (2013) South African owned spaza shops have been driven out of business by foreign owned spaza shops, resulting in some South African spaza shops closing down or diversifying to alternative informal activities such as Shebeens (unregistered alcohol outlets), game shops and takeaway food outlets. Charman (2012) argues that a number of South African spaza shop owners who have failed to compete with the changing market environment have chosen to rent their shop spaces to foreign spaza shop owners. Foreigners

who rent South African shop spaces pay rent of up to R3, 500 a month. The key success of foreign spaza shop owners is marked by strong relationships with the supply-chain, access to financial resources and, strong networks. Charman (2012) argues that foreign spaza shop owners collaborate and negotiate for premium terms for bulk buying discounts and reduced transport costs. In contrast, South African spaza shop owners operate on individual terms and they lack bargaining power that can help them to attain discounts and reduced transport costs. Recently, South African spaza shop owners have been accused of attacking foreign owned spaza shops. According to SABC News (13/04/2015) local spaza shop owners in the area of KwaMashu, KwaZulu-Natal have seriously injured two foreign spaza shop owners who have been accused of endangering their livelihoods. The eThekweni Municipality has called a meeting to condemn such violent attacks orientated toward foreign spaza shop owners (SABC News, 13/04/2015). However, the future of the local and foreign spaza shops remains unclear.

Gender and feminist theory

This study adopts the socialist feminist perspective to assess the gender differences among spaza shop owners in the area of Lindelani, Durban. Socialist feminism was born in the late 1960s, under the community of feminism that produced a synthesis of the debate about the roots of female oppression (Graf, 2012). Socialist feminism is unique in that it argues that female oppression does not emerge from one system, rather “it is a combination of systems related to race, social class, gender, sexuality, and nationality” (Graf, 2012:1). Socialist feminism suggests that capitalism and patriarchy are combined into one system that further oppresses females (Graf, 2012). Thus, this study considers the well-being of female and male spaza shop owners under a capitalist and patriarchal society.

According to Mill (2008) linking gender dynamics with entrepreneurship, one needs to establish a clear distinction between sex and gender. Sex refers to the biological characteristics (anatomy, hormones, reproductive systems, and other physiological components) distinguishing males and females. Gender refers to those social, cultural, and psychological traits linked to males and females through particular social contexts (Mill, 2008 and McAdam, 2013). As result of socialization practices that determine among other

things; family roles, educational experiences, access to resources and networking further leave females discriminated under patriarchal society (DeMartino and Barbato, 2002).

This study applies the socialist feminist perspective to explore how gender constructs affect the day to day life of male and female spaza shop owners. Gender as a socially constructed phenomenon is not confined purely to households and family relationships; rather it is reproduced across a range of institutions (Ekar, 2005). This suggests that spaza shop owners may be subjected to discrimination from their family, society, and in range of institutional services.

Mill (2008) argues that in the twentieth century a number of societies have experienced a trend where there has been an increase in the number of female participating in the labor force, which for many has collided with family roles. Nonetheless, women acting in the role of mother, employee, or self-employed person are still expected to satisfy the needs of family together with the workplace. Chebelyon-Dalizu et al (2010) argue that female spaza shop owners face distinct challenges compared to male counterparts because of gender differences. Many female spaza shop owners are mothers and they are forced to split their time between raising their children and maintaining their spaza shops (Chebelyon-Dalizu et al, 2010).

Rolfe et al (2010) articulated that female spaza shop owners are restricted in access to financial support systems and other competitive advantages. The Cape Town Project Centre (2010) argues that female spaza shop owners experience unique challenges. They may find it difficult to develop professional relationships with suppliers, wholesalers, and big companies. This may be due to women having less experience in networking and educational experiences as stated by the feminist perspective (DeMartino and Barbato, 2002). Feminist perspectives argue that men and women do not have equal autonomy within their environments; family, work, and society. According to England (1993) women often have less power and prestige than men, thus this negatively affects their entrepreneurship abilities because they have limited access to resources. Thus, socialist feminism advocates for the dismantling of patriarchal structures, rigid gender roles, and institutional power dynamics that oppress women while privileging men (Socialist Party USA, 18/10/2014).

Burden of being married and having children as a spaza shop owner

According to DeMartino and Barbato (2002) marriage and dependent children has a noticeable effect on the spaza shop owner's abilities. DeMartino and Barbato (2002) stated that in the twentieth century females are still receiving unequal treatment compared to their male counterparts, within their households and societies. Most marriages that take place in societies are heterosexual unions and a number of women believe that the institution of heterosexual marriage is conclusively connected with their subordinate position in society (DeMartino and Barbato, 2002). In the patriarchal society, for females to gain respect from their family members they are expected to perform household duties while male counterparts are less expected to do so (DeMartino and Barbato, 2002).

For many females, "the presence of young children in the household significantly increase the likelihood of a women being self-employed" (DeMartino and Barbato, 2002: 819). Male spaza shop owners are less affected by marriage and children. DeMartino and Barbato (2002) articulated that the motivation and performance of married and unmarried male entrepreneurs remain the same, meaning the presence of dependent children and marriage have less impact on a male entrepreneur. While, married female spaza shop owners with dependent children have less flexibility compared to non-married female spaza shop owners (Fischer et al, 1993).

DeMartino and Barbato (2002: 818) combining existing literature of gender and entrepreneurship into the feminist perspective argue that there is a "greater motivational desire among women for family-related flexibility and a lower desire for economic wealth creation". Fischer et al (1993) articulated that males are economically motive driven, while female entrepreneurs are motivated by family needs. Moreover, widowed and divorced females engage in small home-business as a form of primary or additional income generators. According to the feminist perspective gender differences in entrepreneur motivation and performance may be due to different socialization experiences that limit and disadvantage female entrepreneurship (DeMartino and Barbato, 2002). Such discrimination includes overt discrimination where females have less access to education, financial resources and space to do business.

MacDonald et al (2005) concluded that gender differences advantages males in terms of health and economic benefits. MacDonald et al (2005) stated that the combination of childcare, eldercare, and household responsibility had insignificant impact on the hours worked by females and health of females. Moreover, MacDonald et al (2005) argue that household responsibilities that women perform in their household reduces their ability to compete equally with their male counterparts, this can result in male spaza shop owners making more profit.

Shortfall of literature

The literature has touched on a number of gender similarities and differences among spaza shop owners. It states that the low percentage of female spaza shop owners may be due to the fact that females are less educated and possess fewer business skills than their male counterparts (DeMartino and Barbato, 2002). However, the literature does not touch on some important gender differences among spaza shop owners. It does not explore differences on bookkeeping among spaza shop owners to substantiate or discard the argument set forward by the feminist perspective, stating that females are less educated and possess less business skills than their male counterparts.

Furthermore, the literature shows that there is an increase in the use of mobile phones among small entrepreneurs especially spaza shop owners (Matlala et al, 2014). However, it would be interesting to know the percentage of female spaza shop owners who have and utilize mobile phones to better their spaza shop business. This will help to substantiate the argument made by the feminist perspective which argues that female subordination leads to lower power, limited access to resources and inferior status of females.

The literature also highlights the impact of foreign spaza shops and malls on local spaza shops. However, it is silent about which gender among local spaza shop owners is more likely to be negatively impacted by the introduction of foreign owned spaza shops and malls. It would be interesting to consider the impact on gender, because it will either substantiate or discard the argument made by the feminist perspective. According to DeMartino and Barbato (2002) feminist perspectives state that female subordination prevents them from accessing

services and goods that are needed to withstand external business pressures or to advance themselves and their businesses.

In addition, the literature indicates a number of marketing methods used by spaza shop owners such as notice boards or word of mouth. But, the literature does not specify which gender is more likely to use which methods of advertising their spaza shop business. Thus, some aspects of gender difference among spaza shop owners are still left uncovered.

Conclusion

In conclusion, spaza shops in South Africa present a number of benefits to their customers and owners, however spaza shop owners continue to operate under unfavourable business conditions. The graph below presents a prioritized summary of spaza shop challenges on a hierarchy formula; listed on top as the severe challenge and listed on the bottom as the least severe challenge.

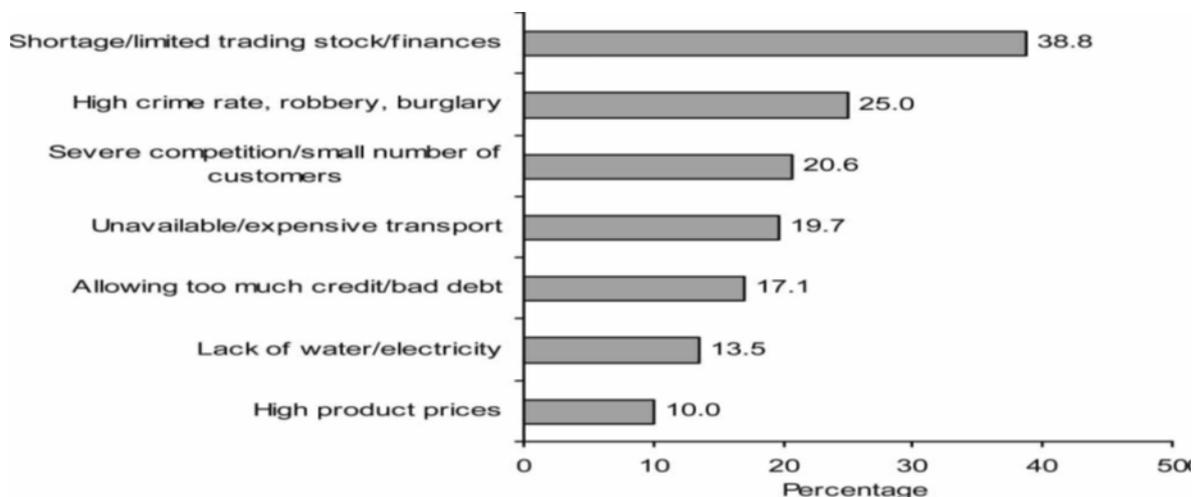


Figure: Problems experienced by spaza owners (Adapted from Ligthelm, 2005)

However, when gender is introduced to these challenges, spaza shop owners seem to be unequally affected by these challenges. The literature shows that female spaza shop owners are more likely to be affected by aforementioned business challenges, than their male counterparts. DeMartino and Barbato (2002) articulated that male entrepreneurs are more

effective in networking and in taking financial risks to advance their business than women. According to the feminist perspective this is due to unequal gender roles and traits. Feminist perspectives argue that men and women do not have equal autonomy within their environments; family, work, and society. Moreover, feminist perspectives assert that females are disenfranchised from economic opportunities (Mill, 2008). Thus, feminist perspectives work on the elimination of institutional barriers to women's participation in society, particularly in education and employment (McAdam, 2013).

Chapter 3

Methodology

Introduction

To discover relevant information and knowledge the study used qualitative methodology to find relevant participant to inform the study. To provide robust and reliable data for analysis this study employed purposive sampling technique to select relevant participants to inform the study. This chapter aim at explaining the methodology used to find relevant participants to inform the study. Thus, this chapter further explain the use of semi-structured interviews, open-ended questions, and in-depth interviews. Research methods explained in this chapter were used due to their ability to provide reliable and comparable qualitative data.

Research methodology

The nature of this study is exploratory; exploratory research is conducted to discover new ideas, gain new insights, and to increase phenomenal knowledge (Burns and Grove, 2003:313). An exploratory research method has been selected by the researcher to discover new ideas and gain new insight about gender perspectives among spaza shop owners in Lindelani. However, this study also follows the descriptive research method to investigate the experiential meanings of being involved in operating a spaza shop and how the gender of a spaza shop owner influences their day-to-day activities and their relationships with their family and the community they serve. A descriptive research method will allow the researcher to study the experiences of spaza shop owners and listen to their views as they unfold without unnecessary hindrances (Streubert Speziale and Carpenter, 2003: 22).

According to Polit and Hungler (2004) methodology is the set of tools used for obtaining, organizing and analysing the data. Collecting data includes a number of tools such as sample, settings, design, methodological limitations, and analysing techniques in a study (Burns and Grove (2003). Henning (2004) defines methodology as set of methods that complement each other, these methods carry an ability to deliver data and findings that will reflect the researcher's question and ensure that the research purpose is maintained. Methodology helps the researcher to discover the participant's world, during the interaction with the participant

the researcher is able to discover participant's views and behaviour and interpret them by means of qualitative research methods (De Vos, 2002). This chapter explains which techniques were used to select participants and techniques used to gather, organize and analyse the data.

This study employed a qualitative approach to understand gender dynamics among spaza shop owners in Lindelani. By using qualitative methodology, the researcher seeks to obtain qualitative knowledge expressed in a normal language of the respondent, and by no means, does the researcher aim to quantify participant's responses (Marsiglio, n.d). To obtain knowledge from the participants as experts of their own world the researcher employed a descriptive approach. By doing so, the researcher endeavoured to obtain open and rich descriptions of different aspects of the participant's world (Kvale, 1996). In this way, gender perspectives among spaza shop owners were studied in-depth.

This study employed purposive sampling to select relevant participants to inform the study. The study recruited a total number of 18 spaza shop owners from Lindelani. 18 spaza shop owners were made-up of 9 females and 9 male's spaza shop owners. This study used in-depth interviews to collect data. In-depth interviews are well-known and often used in qualitative studies (Mack et al, 2005). The advantage of this method is that it allows the researcher to ask probing and follow up questions to acquire relevant information and avoid leading questions (Mack et al, 2005). Moreover, in-depth interviews also allow the participants to talk about their feelings, opinions and experiences. In addition, the study used semi-structured interviews; with a mix of open-ended and more structured questions. All interviews were administered in the language of the respondent's choice (i.e., English or isiZulu).

All information gathered in the interviews/field information were documented using a tape recorder and written notes. All field material was labelled and stored in a locked cabinet. According to Mack et al (2005), collected data should be labelled and kept on the safe place. Moreover, all recorded interviews were transcribed onto computer files for data analysis. The data analysis stage was paramount as data was organized, broken into manageable units, and

then coded according to particular categories to make comparisons (Thomas, 2010). The researcher used the NVIVO programme for data analysis.

Study site

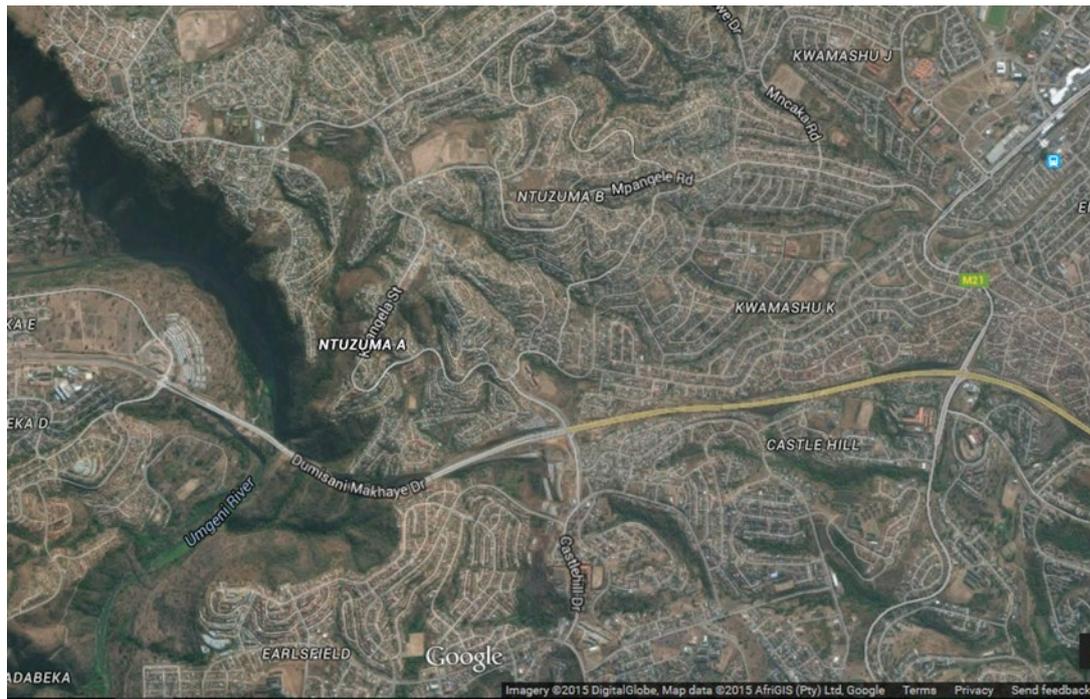
The study was conducted in Lindelani, which is located at the northern fringe of eThekweni municipality (Magasela, 2011 and South African History online, 2014/10/09). Lindelani Township is adjacent to KwaMashu, located in the north of Durban. According to Braathen and Khandlhela (2005) Lindelani emerged in the 1970s as a squatter settlement to cater for residents from the traditionalist Zululand north of Durban. Today Lindelani caters for more than 120 000 residents. Lindelani has long been affected by “leadership struggles, the gross violations of human rights, destruction of family life, criminal elements” (Braathen and Khandlhela, 2005: 2). According to (Xaba, 1994) political violence has been replaced by a high crime rate.

The democratic government of 1994 brought changes through the local municipality with regard township boundaries. These changes were associated with a redistribution of political power and resources (Braathen and Khandlhela, 2005). Through these boundary changes Lindelani was re-demarcated and classified under Ntuzuma. In 2000 Lindelani township was incorporated into the eThekweni Municipality’s Urban Renewal Project which grouped three townships; Inanda, Ntuzuma, KwaMashu (INK) (Braathen and Khandlhela, 2005). These townships are targeted for development by the municipality due to their high unemployment rates, lack of basic services and lack of economic development. Thus, the name Lindelani in this paper is used interchangeably with Ntuzuma.

According to the Magasela (2011: 38) Lindelani has been recognized by eThekweni Municipality as an area made up by large “informal settlements with limited basic service infrastructure, inadequate recreational facilities, and shortage of social facilities”. Moreover, Magasela (2011) stated that residents of Lindelani depend largely on spaza shops, due to the lack of formal retail facilities. Although a lot has changed in Lindelani, however, according to Xaba (1994) women have remained chief victims of crime, especially females who run small business like spaza shops. Historically females in Lindelani have faced property

ceasing due to both political violence and systems of patriarchy. The historical experience of Lindelani presents an opportunity to study gender dynamics among spaza shop owners. The prevailing existence of spaza shops as one of the major economic activities in the area also make Lindelani a good case study.

Study map



Source: <https://www.google.co.za/maps/place/Ntuzuma+A,+Ntuzuma,+4360/@-29.7572284,30.9441518,3870m/data=!3m1!1e3!4m2!3m1!1s0x1ef704a95f4854d:0xd781320cf52c22ae>

Research instrument

To collect data, the researcher developed a semi-structured questionnaire. According to Cohen and Crabtree (2006) semi-structured interviews are helpful in allowing participants to express their views and experiences in their own language. Moreover, semi-structured interviews contain the ability to provide reliable and comparable qualitative data (Cohen and Crabtree, 2006). Semi-structured interviews included a number of open-ended questions. Open-ended questions allow both the interviewer and interviewee to discuss the character of the topic in detail (Creswell, 2002). Semi-structured interviews are useful where the

interviewee is providing limited responses, because semi-structured interviews allow the researcher to probe the interview to elaborate more from the original response (Cohen and Crabtree, 2006). Thus, Creswell (2002) suggests that the researcher should be flexible with research questions and that follow-up questions are used to ensure that optimal responses are obtained.

Qualitative research features in-depth interviews as a technique that can be used in a study that has a small number of respondents to conduct intensive individual interviews with an aim to explore respondent's perspectives of their world experience (Boyce and Neale, 2006). Thus, in-depth interviews are useful in detailing information about a person's thoughts and behaviours, while exploring new issues in depth (Boyce and Neale, 2006).

Boyce and Neale (2006) stated that in-depth interviews provide a relaxed environment where participants feel more comfortable to have a conversation with the researcher as opposed to filling out surveys. The interview questions were split into three sections; the first section covered demographic information about the respondent (age, gender, level of education and marital status). The second section covered aspects of the spaza shop and the owner and finally, the third section covered household and community relationships related to the spaza shop owner. To assure confidentiality participants signed an informed consent prior to the interview.

This study uses both semi-structured and in-depth interviews to encourage participants to deliver and maintain high quality information during data collection. Moreover, semi-structured and in-depth interviews are both used in this study because they complement each other in discovering relevant knowledge from the participants of the study. According to Boyce and Neale (2006) in-depth interviews provide a relaxed and conducive environment where participants feel more comfortable to tell stories, express feeling, and experiences of their lives. While, semi-structured interviews are helpful in allowing participants to express their views and experiences in their own language (Cohen and Crabtree: 2006). Thus these stories contain rich knowledge that can be used by the researcher. Moreover, semi-structured interviews are useful where the interviewee is providing limited responses, because semi-

structured interviews allow the researcher to probe the interview to elaborate more from the original response (Cohen and Crabtree, 2006). Thus, semi-structure and in-depth interview set a conducive environment for the participant to explore their world.

Selection of sample

This study was informed by non-probability sampling technique to select relevant respondents to participate. Thus, this study employed a purposive sampling technique; the researcher used purposive sampling to recruit 9 females and 9 males' eligible spaza shop owners in the area of Lindelani. According to Tongco (2007) a purposive technique as a sampling strategy that can provide robust and reliable data for analysis. To ensure validity, triangulation has been used in this study; this type of approach included the use of various methods, especially observation and individual interviews (Shenton, 2004). Triangulation is important to explain attitudes and behaviours and to verify particular details that participants have supplied (Shenton, 2004).

To ensure that the study produces reliable and robust data the researcher only selected participants that best inform the study question. Eligible participants were those who are over 18 years of age and own a spaza shop. This study by no means aims to generalize to the total population of South Africa.

The researcher dedicated few days on the site (area of Lindelani) locating potential spaza shop owners to participate in the study. The researcher used the purposive sampling to select relevant participants. The researcher asked the first three spaza shop owners to locate other spaza shops around their location, to acquire relevant participants. According to Tongco (2007: 151) researchers applying purposive sampling need to prepare and know about the culture of desired sample before sampling the population "in order to find knowledgeable and reliable informants most efficiently" for the study. To ensure that the researcher got appropriate participants, the researcher asked community members that were randomly selected to identify popular and unpopular spaza shops around the area of Lindelani.

To encourage respondents to participate, during the initial recruitment phase the researcher explained the aim of the study and that it was for academic purposes. Participants benefited from this study through knowledge sharing. Moreover, participants were informed that a final copy of the research report would be made available to them if they wished to read it. Keeping in mind that spaza shop owners have busy schedules, the researcher set up interview dates and times that best suited each participant. The researcher has chosen this study design to develop a rich and dense description of experiences regarding spaza shop owners in the area of Lindelani.

Ethical considerations

This study has obtained an ethical approval from the University of KwaZulu-Natal's, Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC). Ethical clearance has guided the researcher to maintain high respect and confidentiality. Ethical principles help to regulate the researcher's behavioural conduct throughout the research study (Fritz, 2008). The ethical clearance has helped the researcher to produce credible, valid, and vigorous proceedings of the study. The informed consent has assisted the researcher to emphasize that participation was completely voluntary to encourage freedom of response. Moreover, the consent form has been used to outline vital principles of the research process such as the participant's right to withdraw from the study anytime he / she wishes, without any consequences as stipulated by Holloway (2005). In addition, the researcher informed and assured anonymity of the participants. The informed consent further stipulated that all data collected from this study would be kept confidential.

The researcher ensured that the participants were well-informed about the study purpose, by reading out the informed consent to the participant in their own language that they understood better. The informed consent stipulated some of the benefits that the participant may gain as a result of participating in this study. Fritz (2008: 5) argues that by making participants aware of the risk and benefits they "feel free to make an independent decision without fear of negative consequences". This process of informing the participants can increase the probability of participants giving valid and reliable responses (Fritz, 2008).

The researcher also explained to the selected participants, why they were selected for the study. Thus, all participants were people who run spaza shops and have expert knowledge about their business. As Polit and Hungler (2004) explained participants who partake on the study should be people who are well-informed about the research questions. Moreover, the researcher explained to participants that all data collected in this study would be used to produce a Master's dissertation as part of educational development. Because the purpose of this study is to produce a dissertation, all information and the identity of participants were only reviewed by the researcher and the supervisor. All data records (written notes and voice notes) gathered in this study were handled according to standardized university procedures. All original copies were handed to the supervisor and after 5 years they will be destroyed. The student retained the soft copy as required on a password-protected computer which will be deleted in 5 years.

To maintain confidentiality and anonymity the researcher used pseudonyms. By using pseudonyms, the participants were protected and identities were also protected. Furthermore, participant's physical addresses were not recorded. The research will be made available to any participant who requested feedback.

According to LoBiondo-Wood and Harber (2002) confidentiality and anonymity should be guaranteed by the researcher through ensuring that all sources of data gathered are only known by the researcher. Moreover, Polit and Hungler (1999) stated that when researchers maintain confidentiality they should ensure that participant's information should not be revealed in public or made available to others. The researcher entered into an agreement with each participant to ensure that limited access to private information is maintained, as stipulated by De Vos (2002).

The researcher acquired the agreement of the participant to participate and worked on developing a rapport with the participants that served as a conducive environment to encourage participants to disclose trustworthy information. Aurelius, n.d and Mathers et al (1998) argue that researcher must create a rapport with their participants to create environment that allows participants to provide trustworthy information.

Data analysis

According to Burns and Grove (1998: 744) data analysis is a set of tools aiming at “reducing and organising data to produce findings that require interpretation by the researcher”. The researcher at this phase (data analysis) used active listening to compare and contrast descriptions set forward by the respondents about the phenomenon under study. By active listening the researcher was able to identify recurring themes and their interrelationships as stipulated by Brink and Wood (1998). As the researcher listens to the descriptions of the experiences of running spaza shop and deals with the data, common themes began to emerge and make sense in relation to the study purpose.

To make sense of the qualitative data collected from spaza shop owners in the area of Lindelani, the researcher used Nvivo software to analyse the data. Nvivo further assisted the researcher to organise all information gathered from the in-depth interviews into themes.

Limitations

Limitation of qualitative studies lies in the small sample that limits the study’s ability to be generalised to the whole population (Griffin, 2004). This study was informed by qualitative methodology and has a relatively small sample, which cannot be generalised to the whole population of South Africa. Thus, there is a need for a further countrywide study that will aim to represent the whole population. The nature of this study deals with gender differences, some participants may have questioned the researcher’s intentions and that may have limited the willingness of participants to respond freely. The gender identity of the researcher may have presented a challenge to some participants of a different gender identity. Moreover, gender differences are closely linked with cultural dynamics, some participants may have felt it was culturally inappropriate to be interviewed by a young person, therefore, and that may have shaped responses by some participants.

Griffin (2004) stated that limitations of qualitative methodology include the fact that it is time consuming and it may be expensive. The researcher has to spend more time on transcribing the responses, even though the voice recorder will be used (Boyce and Neale, 2006). Due to the busy schedules of spaza shop owners, interviews took longer than normal qualitative interviews. Boyce and Neale (2006) stated that in-depth interviews could be time-intensive,

because the researcher should transcribe responses and should listen to participants' responses carefully, while probing where necessary. Moreover, Boyce and Neale (2006) stated that the limitation of an in-depth study is that the study may include bias in responses.

Researchers Observations

The researcher used observation as the research tool used to probe relevant information from the participant world. Thus, observation was use in two ways in this study, (i) during the interview the researcher used observations to read the body language of the participants to make that the questions were delivered properly and if the participants received it well to maintain high quality information. Moreover, the researcher observed the prominent themes that were delivered by the participants and the expression of feelings around certain themes. Thus, such observation helped the researcher to probe more on interesting topics.

In addition, the researcher also used observation to understand the physical make-up and spaces of spaza shops. Pictures portrayed in Chapter 4 show that the majority of spaza shops rely on well established companies for advertising, such as Coca-Cola, Cellular network companies etc. Furthermore, the pictures reaffirm that crime is the biggest challenge faced by spaza shop owners. The majority of spaza shops as depicted by the pictures (Chapter 4) have installed tailor made steel gates, razor wire, and burglary guides to prevent criminals from looting their shops.

Chapter 4

Results

Introduction

The aim of this study is to provide a deeper understanding about gender differences among spaza shop owners. It uses qualitative data from 18 in-depth interviews. To enable an understanding of gender dynamics among informal sector shop-owners, the study used a case study of spaza shops in the area of Lindelani, Durban. The study also aimed to highlight the significance of a lack of resources and business related skills experienced by spaza shop owners. This chapter outlines the main study findings and hopes to add to understandings of gender dynamics among informal sector shop-owners.

Demographic profile of participants

It is important to have an understanding of the demographic characteristics of the sample of spaza shop owners as the study sample. Thus, Tables 1 and 2 present a demographic profile of spaza shop owners interviewed for the study. In total, 18 spaza shop owners were interviewed. Some participants of the study indicated that they were born in Lindelani, while others stated that they have lived in Lindelani for more than 15 years. Thus, all participants' spaza shop businesses operated in Lindelani. The average age of the sample of the study was 23 years at the time of the interview. The age of participants of the study ranged from 23 to 63 years. Some of the participants had high school education, while two participants had tertiary education. Furthermore, only two participants of the study had no schooling while three participants refused to disclose their educational status. Comparing both Table 1(male) and Table 2 (female) below reveals that female spaza shop owners have less schooling compared to their male counterparts.

Most of the participants were either retrenched or unemployed when they started their spaza business. Furthermore, most participants of the study were not employed rather were working in their spaza shops at the time of the interview. All participants of the study conducted their spaza shop business at home, the majority work with their family members, while some had employed help.

Table 1: Age, years of schooling, marital status and occupation distribution of participants

Male spaza shop owners

Interview	Pseudonym	Age at interview	Years of schooling	Marital status of spaza shop owner	Occupation
1	Shinga	63 years	Grade 8	Married	Taxi owner
2	Nathi.V. Masuku	23 years	Grade 12	Single	Unemployed
3	Sotesti Shange	48 years	Grade 10	Single	Bricklayer
4	Ziqubu Musa	39 years	Degree in Anthropology	Married	Taxi owner
5	Jabulani Ngcobo (Mafashini)	27 years	Grade 11	Single	Unemployed
6	Makhathini Sicelo (Whitehouse)	32 years	Diploma	Living with the partner.	Retrenched from Rainbow Chicken
7	Ntando Nhlangothi	23 years	No schooling	Single	Unemployed
8	Thami Ntini	38 years	Grade 9	Single	Retrenched from local development project
9	Themba Nyawo	29 years	Grade 12	Single	Operating tavern

* Please note that all names are pseudonyms.

Table: 2 Female spaza shop owners

Interview	Pseudonym	Age at interview	Years of school	Marital status of spaza shop owner	Occupation
1	Gasela Shezi	56 years	Standard 9	Married	Domestic worker
2	MaMkhize	59 years	Grade 4	Divorced	Unemployed
3	MamaZuma (thisha uzuma)	43 years	Grade 3	Widowed	School garden farmer
4	Dimba Nomathemba (Policeman)	50 years	No schooling	Widowed	Unemployed
5	KwaMagubane	61 years	-	Married	Retired
6	Khanyile Tuck Shop (Epholani)	48 years	-	Married	Unemployed
7	Nokubonga Ngcobo	32 years	Grade 12	Engaged to be married	Unemployed
8	Ntombi Buthelezi	41 years	-	Living together with her partner.	Unemployed
9	Nobuhle Hadebe	27 years	Grade 11	Single	Retrenched from Pick n Pay store

* Please note that all names are pseudonyms.

The majority of participants were single at the time of the interviews with a few living with their sexual partner. The majority of female participants were married, with two widowed and one divorced. In contrast, the majority of male participants were single with only two married at the time of the interviews.

Education and business training

Most participants had primary and secondary school education, with two participants having completed tertiary education. Most participants with secondary school education and tertiary education felt that education has partially contributed to their business; however, a number of participants felt that they still need more business training to advance their spaza shop business. Studies suggest that spaza shop owners who have education are more likely to have a successful business and are more likely to withstand business challenges (Ligthelm, 2005). Thus, most participants expressed a need for training in business management, bookkeeping, and marketing as most of them had started their business with limited business management experience.

My second constraint is I cannot do other personal things that may also benefit this business such as doing business courses that might help me better manage my business (Sotesti Shange, 48 years).

Mulder (n.d) and Agupusi (2007) stated that spaza shop owners generally have low levels of education and they lack the means of acquiring business training. Consequently, a number of spaza shop owners lack business management skills leading to making poor business decisions and resulting in a needless loss of income (Mulder, n.d). A number of participants indicated that lack of business training also leads to the failure to properly manage spaza business and creditors which affect their business. For example, extending credit resulted in a shortage of merchandise and a reduction of profit. However, females seemed more likely to encounter customers who are bad creditors compared to their male counterparts.

My second constraint is bad creditors because they affect me very bad, when I have to restock I'm short of money and thus my profit is reduced because I cannot get more merchandise. Sometimes I have to add my own money from my own pocket when I restock, so that I can get a meaningful stock, and all this is due to people who does not pay back (Zodwa Magubane, 61 years).

She added:

I hate bad creditors because they negatively affect the relationship that you have already built with them and further to that, they make you sceptical of helping the next person because you will never know if they would do the same. In addition, bad creditors sometimes lead to the shortage of merchandise (Zodwa Magubane, 61 years).

Some spaza shop owners are discouraged from attending business management training because they do not have anyone to watch over their business while they are away. This, means that in order for a spaza shop owner to attend business training they have to close their business and lose profit. Although, some participants have someone to watch their business while they are away, there is still a sense of uncertainty. It is worth noting that female spaza shop owners often mentioned that; they have to perform domestic chores while watching over their children and the spaza shop. Thus, time to attend business training becomes limited due to the dual roles that they already perform.

I have to cook and clean the house. If Nonjabulo is around, she also helps me with the house chores and looking after my two grandchild. However, she is attending school so; I have to perform these tasks every day except on weekends because Nonjabulo is not attending school. Thus, I cannot add another burden of attending business classes because I need to look over children, so school for me is out (Dimba Nomathemba, 50 years).

Ligthelm (2005) articulated that educational levels correlate with the level of sophistication of business in the spaza industry. All participants were asked if their education has benefited their business - most did not think so. Jabulani Ngcobo for example left school in grade seven and credits his success in his spaza shop to learning from other people's businesses.

Yes, I have a Diploma. Yes, my education has benefitted me, I know how to market my business and I'm able to connect myself with things that would benefit my business so I can go forward. Using internet has also been helpful to me because I can search for cheaper stock around the internet and check sales from big retailers to maximize my profit (Makhathini Sicelo, 32 years).

Even though, some male participants articulated that education has benefited them, rather, some male participants stated that they still need business knowledge. However, female participants were more in need of business management training to manage their spaza business successfully. This study revealed that a number of female participants had low levels of education, compared to their male counterparts. Moreover, the majority of female

participants from the study felt that their level of education had impacted on their spaza shop business.

I stopped schooling at standard six and I do not think my education has benefited me from this kind of business I'm running. Yes, I will appreciate information that can educate me more about operating spaza shops because the number of people running spaza shops is increasing from this neighbourhood, even foreigners are running spaza shops from this neighbourhood. If you do not have knowledge on how to run this business soon you will close down but the challenge is who will look over my business and do the cleaning while I attend those classes? (Ntombi Buthelezi, 41 years).

Financial challenges among spaza shop owners

Most participants of the study highlighted that they borrowed money from their families and friends to start their businesses. Terblance (1991) articulated that capital from friends and family appeared to be the most important source of start-up capital for many spaza shop owners. Most female participants received money from their spouse and family members to start their spaza shop business.

The first time I ran this spaza shop I used my personal savings that I accumulated from my last employment. After failing to run the spaza shop I closed down for a year or two then my husband loaned me the money to reopen it (Gasela Shezi, 56 years).

She adds:

Most of the money I got it from my husband and I also contributed some of it from my personal savings (Nokukhanya, 32 years).

The majority of male participants of the study claimed to have used their personal savings, and this was prevalent among spaza shop owners who were retrenched from their previous employment.

I had some personal savings from my last employment (Rainbow Chicken). Some of the money came from the Unemployed Insurance Fund (UIF) (Makhathini Sicelo, 32 years).

According to Terblance (1991) a number of spaza shop owners when starting their business do not seek financial support from formal money lenders because they fear incurring debt. The majority of female participants indicated that they have never acquired financial assistance from moneylenders, banks and other financial institutions. Rather, they received money to either start or maintain their business from their spouse and family members and some from their personal savings. A few of the male participants had however accessed banks and moneylenders even though males also mostly used their personal savings. It is worth mentioning that no male participant received financial assistance from their spouse to fund their spaza shop business. The literature revealed that the majority of spaza shop owners are more likely to approach their family or their friends for financial assistance than banks and other authorized moneylenders (Chebelyon-Dalizu, 2010, Perks, 2010, van Scheers, no date).

No, I have never applied for money from a moneylender, a bank, or any other formal moneylending institution for financial support because I know I will incur charges that I may never be able to pay back (Gasela Shezi, 56 years).

From this study one male participant had tried approaching the banks, he felt that banks have high interest rates which he would not be able to pay back.

Yes, I have lent money from the bank but it was not to start this business, and I learnt that bank charges are high and it took me long time to repay the bank. From that, I do not wish to get any loan either from the bank or any financial institution (Makhathini Sicelo, 32 years).

Napier and Mothwa (2001) argue that there are a number of organizations in South Africa that provide micro-finance tailored to the needs of small scale entrepreneurs. However, most of the participants of the study had not heard about these micro-finance schemes.

In South Africa, a lack of financial assistance from private and government structures is often viewed as the main challenge among entrepreneurs (Terblanche, 1991). As indicated above a number of interviewed spaza shop owners indicated that they set up their shops using personal savings from their previous employment or borrowed money from their family and friends. As a result of lack of funds, the majority of participants indicated that if they had more capital they would expand their businesses and would be able to buy stock in bulk. Thus, by buying in bulk they would earn free delivery and other benefits from their supplies, leading to maximization of profit.

...if I have enough money, I will buy a stock that would last me a month if possible. In that way I will be able to save more because I would not be paying transport cost often. Moreover, I will get free delivery and discounts in that manner I will be able to compete with other spaza shops in the neighbourhood (Dimba Nomathemba, 50 years).

Thus, the majority of spaza shop owners feels that a lack of financial assistance inhibits their ability to advance their spaza shop business and competitive advantage against foreign spaza shops.

The impact of crime on spaza shop owners

Spaza shops are cash businesses that operate during the day and after hours in their communities. Those who operate after hours are vulnerable to crime as they are targeted by criminals as the result of the amount of cash they handle. Urban Trends (1990) indicated that spaza shops normally operate seven days a week, approximately from 06:00am to 22:00pm. According to Urban Trends (1990), Bear (2005) and Mulder (n.d), Coetzer and Pascarel (2014) spaza shops become vulnerable to crime particularly during the early hours of the morning and late at night because it is quieter and therefore more conducive to the carrying out of robbery or burglary. Most participants of this study indicated that they work 14-16 hours a day. However, some female participants stated that they close their business early because they felt more vulnerable to crime.

I work around 14 hours a day. I open early around 05:30am or 06:00am to provide services to people that are going to work and to school children. However, we close early, say around 19:30pm and the latest is 20:30pm because of crime issues around this neighbourhood (Gasela Shezi, 56 years).

I work approximately 14 hours a day, because I open around 7:00am and close say around 20:00pm. I do not want to open till late because my son sometimes works night shift (and so he is not here) and that time we do not have any kind of protection against criminals and otherwise my grandchildren are still young I do not need to put them in danger (Nomusa Mkhize, 59 years).

The study shows that female participants felt vulnerable to burglary and theft because of the amount of cash and merchandise associated with the business. Moreover, they also mentioned lack of safety measures such as guards, CCTV, and crime prevention policies such as a community policing forum. However, this study does not suggest that male participants are free from criminal activities. A number of male participants mentioned being vulnerable to crime as well.

A number of female participants argued that the fact that they were women made them more of a target for criminals as they were perceived as being physically weaker and so more easily overpowered or more likely to hand over their money if confronted. This was compounded if the perpetrators knew there was a “woman alone”. Male participants to this study raised fewer concerns around this issue however.

For the fact that I have experienced burglary already, I am vulnerable to it. People who do these terrible things are people who know you very well and your family because the first time I experienced burglary my husband was away for the funeral on a weekend. The second and third time my husband was working night shift. Thus, now we have someone who is an extended family member who provides security to our business (Nokukhanya, 32 years).

...I have never experienced burglary or theft, but a number of customers have reported some incidents of robbery near my tuck shop (Ntando, 23 years).

It is very likely that this is a result of women in South Africa and in other countries being vulnerable to crime and sexual harassment as a result of a patriarchal system that frames females as feminine and people who cannot protect themselves due to their biological makeup. While males are seen as masculine and fearless thus they experience fewer criminal attacks.

Spaza shop employees were also seen as a potential threat to business by participants. Terblanche (1991) states that theft by employees was mentioned by spaza shop owners as the fourth category of potential risk in terms of theft. Some participants stated that it is not only criminals that steal their stock and cash. Sometimes people who are employed as shopkeepers and family members with access to the shop sometimes take products or cash without the permission of the spaza shop owner.

Yes, at first I employed one person but things did not end well between me and her. So, now I do not have any one that helps me, other than my family. I wish to highlight that I have also minimized the number of family members that have access to the spaza shop. Because you find that children easily give their friends free merchandise and money and they even take things for themselves to show off to their friends (Gasela Shezi, 56 years).

A number of male participants noted that crime does not just affect them but also affects business in general as potential customers might be afraid to shop at their businesses but rather go where it might be safer.

This incidence (crime) is bad for my business because I keep losing customers, as they are afraid to shop from my business because they fear to be mugged or robbed especially at night, especially around 18:30pm till late (Ntando, 23 years).

A high crime rate does not only affect a spaza shop business directly, rather it also indirectly affects spaza shop business, in the sense where customers fear being attacked or mugged while shopping. Customers who have experienced robbery around the particular spaza shop are more likely to avoid that spaza shop (Themba Midran, 2015, Perks, 2010, and van

Scheers, no date). Thus spaza shop owners loses customers and profit due to crime around their business area.

Another crucial issue articulated by female participants was sexual harassment from criminals. While their male counterparts didnot raise concerns of sexual harassment from their customers or from criminals. Female participants clearly articulated that they are not only vulnerable to robbery and theft but also to sexual harassment.

...another thing that I do not also like about my business is that I have to deal with people who force you to be their girlfriend or date with them, while others just grab you with the hand and try to kiss you without your concern (Nobuhle, 27 years).

She adds:

I hate people who ask me out for a date because they think that they will have money or receive free products from my shop. I am engaged to be married, I hate those people because they are trying to ruin my life and my business (Nokukhanya, 32 years).

According to Themba Midran (2015) females working in the informal economy often complain about being sexually harassed by their customers. Female spaza shop owners often have to depend on male figures for protection in the form of family members or friends. This compounds notions of females requiring “protection from males” re enforcing patriarchy. Thus, many female participants argued they were vulnerable to crime because of their gender. A challenge which their male counterparts do not have to deal with.

Spaza shops: survival vs. entrepreneurial

The high unemployment rate in South Africa has driven a large number of people into the informal sector (Urban Trends, 1990). Many have chosen to start spaza shops, while others have resorted to other informal economy activities. According to the Urban Trends (1990) a large number of unemployed people have opened spaza shops as the last resort. The high unemployment rate among participants of the study correlates with the 26.6 per cent recorded from the South African national unemployment statics, as indicated from the graph below.



Source: <http://cdn.tradingeconomics.com/charts/south-africa-unemployment-rate-forecast.png?s=ehupza&v=201610011533r&forecast=2>

Most of the participants started their business while they were unemployed, thus, they engage in this business on a full-time basis. This is particularly the case with female spaza shop owners. Urban Trends (1990) revealed that the majority of female spaza shop owners started their business because they were unemployed, have faced retrenchment, unreasonable working conditions or insufficient income in the formal sector, while some are pensioners.

No, all the money that I used to open the spaza shop I got it from my dad, my boyfriend and I used some of child support grant. Because I did not know a place where they can loan a person who is not working. And also the money that I got from my dad and my boyfriend does not have terms and conditions (Nobuhle Hadebe, 27 years).

Urban Trends (1990) argue that customers that shop at spaza shops have become more sophisticated with their choices of products and stores. Thus, some customers are starting to prefer self-service stores over spaza shops that are still serviced by a spaza shop assistant over a window. This, calls for innovation from spaza shop owners to meet customer demands. Thus, innovation should include risk taking and the provision of new goods and

services, while at the same time spaza owners should develop initiatives to improve existing business ideas and introduce new ideas (Coetzee, 2003). Of all participants of the study, male participants showed more of a sense of innovation than their female counterparts.

I would like to point out that local spaza shop owners are closing down because they failed to transform their business. Rather, when competition escalated they resorted to violence. As a spaza shop owner to survive in this industry I have copied the method of other business and of foreign spaza shops and I have tried teaming up with them, however, our relationship did not last that longer. But I got most of the information and skills before it ended (Shinga, 63 years).

Coetzer and Pascarel (2014: 3) argue that regardless of age and gender the majority of spaza shop owners “are entrepreneurs by necessity rather than opportunity”. In contrast, Terblance (1991) articulated that female spaza shop owners are less entrepreneurial about their businesses than male spaza shop owners. This seems to be the case with female participants interviewed in this study:

I do not have much of customers because I sell a margin of merchandise and I have limited range of products. Compared to people like Ngcobo, Shinga and Sotesti and foreign spaza shops who sell a wide range of products (Nomusa Mkhize, 59 years).

Although some female spaza shop owners of the study showed a sense of innovation, the majority seemed to avoid risk taking and preferred to run their businesses using existing methods. From the total study population very few female participants showed sense of risk taking.

I have some connections that provides me with cheaper merchandise, not illegal. I have people who buy as the staff and get some discounts then I buy from them (Nobuhle Hadebe, 27 years).

While a number of male participants showed more entrepreneurial instincts. Some male spaza shop owners had instituted self-service, while most female participants served their customers over the window. Moreover, male participants were able to create a contact list of suppliers.

These contacts help them to compare prices and negotiate for better merchandise, delivery, and price.

Yes, I do get lot of customers judging from the money that I make from the spaza shop. And also judging from the upgrades that I have already did to stay competitive. I have expanded the building and bought new shelves and re-fenced the area and installed security cameras. My customers are happy because they can pick and choose from the wide range of products that I sell because my shop is a walk-in spaza shop. Most importantly, I am able to feed my family from the money that I make from this business (Sotesti Shange, 48 years).

She adds:

I believe that the reason I get a number of customers is that I have good understanding of people and I communicate well with customers, furthermore, my business area is appealing to most people and my business is always clean as I always emphasize the point of cleanness to my staff. In addition, I always make sure that my business always has stock needed on shelf. I wish to mention that some prices I was forced to drop it due to high competition from foreign spaza shop owners (Nokukhanya, 32 years).

As the spaza shop grows in numbers of years, the owners also gain new skills, advance their existing skills and are more likely able to conduct their spaza shop business with success. Thus, the length of time of existence of the spaza shop reveals its owner's ability and level of skills. Most participants of this study who indicated success running their business had been in business for a while.

I have 4 years and 2 months now, running this business (Thami Ntini, 38 years).

He adds:

Yes, judging from the number of customers that I serve each day and the profit that I make. Also, I use to have more space to run this shop but now I feel like I have no space because I have extended the length of this spaza shop I think two times now, judging from that; I will say my business is growing and it is successful (Thami Ntini, 38 years).

Working hours already referred to above, also plays a role here. Men being able / willing to work longer hours seemed to contribute to the spaza shop successes. While women faced

working hours' constraints owing to fears about crime and owing to family obligations such as child care.

This tuck shop is opened from 05:30am and closes 21:30pm. I think that is 16 hours a day. The reason I work these hours it is because I have lot of customers that requires my services like people who rushes to work or school early in the morning and people who come late from work. My other reason why I work these hours is because people wants someone that they can rely on every day. However, I am in the business so I have to stay competitive in this industry (Thami Ntini, 38 years).

Male participants in this study had been spaza shop owners for longer periods than the women interviewed. This may suggest that female spaza shop owners do not last as long in the spaza shop industry compared to their male counterparts. This may be the result of limited skills such as business management education and proper infrastructure to conduct business. Moreover, limited resources such funding, trading and storage space and lack of transport may be other contributing factors to shorter lifespan of female spaza shops, compared to the lifespan of male spaza shops. On average female spaza shops, have been operational for 2 years, the oldest had been running for 3 years and 8 months. Whilst, on average male spaza shops have been running for 3 years and 6 months on average with the oldest having been operational for 5 years and 2 months.

Female participant: "I have been running this spaza shop for 2 years now. However, in overall I have been doing this business for 6 years, in between this 6 year I took the break. At first, I ran the spaza shop for two years and I stopped because I had financial issues"
(Ntombitombi Khanyile, 48 years).

Male participant: I have been running this spaza shop for 4 years; however, the spaza shop itself has been operating for 7 years it was under the hands of my late dad. Thus, I took over after he passed away (Musa Ziqubu, 39 years).

Spaza shop arrangements, location and infrastructure

The location of a spaza shop can significantly contribute to the margin of its customer base (Perks, 2010 and Chebelyon-Dalizu, 2010). If the spaza shop is located in a position that can attract foot and motor traffic, that spaza shop has the opportunity to attract a number of customers and make considerable profit. In a similar manner, if the spaza shop is located in a position that does not attract customers that spaza shop is more likely to have a lower customer base compared to spaza shops located in high traffic areas.

I would like to my spaza shop in a location that attracts both foot and vehicle travellers, for an example near taxi rank. But my other fear is that whilst my business is run from home I'm able to perform house chores and look after my children while conducting my business (Nomusa Mkhize, 59 years).

As indicated by the quote above, female spaza shop owners interviewed for this study acknowledged that location of the spaza shop plays an important role in attracting customers. However, they were challenged by the fact that they have to perform household chores while looking after their children while at the same time running a business to bring in an income.

Even though few female shop owners had their business located near bus stops or high traffic areas, a number of male spaza shops are positioned in high traffic areas, such as near a tavern, near schools, and taxi and bus ranks. This is largely because male shop owners were able to rent or build infrastructure to be used as spaza shops while a number of female shop owners converted either their garage or a room in their house to conduct spaza shop business.

My other constraint will be my business location is not appealing or able to capture a good share of customers that will obviously give me high profit returns. Secondly, the high competition amongst us as spaza shop owners (Ntombi Buthelezi, 41years).

She added:

My other challenge is how my business is location; my location is not in the spot where I can attract customers at a distance, you can see that there is another container spaza shop that is faces the Mandlenkosi High School and my business is behind it. Thus, the container is the favourite to people coming from the taxi rank and school children's (Nomusa Mkhize, 59 years)

Dual role performed by spaza shop owners

Terblanche (1991) states that spaza shop employees are often family members or part of spaza shop owners' households. The majority of female participants indicated that they do not employ anyone in their business but enlist the help of family members.

No, I do not have any person employed to help around the spaza shop. Everything in the spaza shop is my responsibility. Sometimes S'bonelo help me with stock buying since he has the car. Nokukhanya sometimes looks over the spaza shop if we are gone for stock buying. Thus, I only receive help from my family (Dimba Nomathemba, 50 years).

While only three female participants employ people from outside their households. Most female spaza shop owners rely on family member support and reciprocate in kind rather than in the form of a salary. Moreover, Ligthelm (2005) stated that the success and profitability of the spaza shop depends on the household well-being. Socialist feminism patriarchy states that females are expected to conduct household duties and child rearing, thus some of their time is reduced to household duties (England, 1993). Thus, this shows that the majority of male participants have a competitive advantage over their female counterparts.

The study shows that it is more challenging to operate a spaza shop without any help from family members, especially for female spaza shop owners because they need to perform household chores. If there are no children or family members helping on household chores the burden of performing household chores, while performing spaza shop duties does increase.

This tuck shop does not employ anyone outside from this family. We work as a family, thus the welfare of this business depends on the welfare of this family. Because, my husband is important from this business in the sense that he provide the transport and fix any structure that need to fixed or installed. And me and my children we are the shopkeepers and we also perform most of the household chores. Me and my little girl change one another from cooking and performing household chores, while Abongile most of the time he helps me by watching the spaza shop when they come from school. But I can imagine if I do not have family support, it would be very hard, maybe by now I would have closed down because I cannot afford to perform two roles and m old now (Zodwa Magubane, 61 years).

The study found that female spaza shop owners lose considerable time performing household chores. A number of female participants articulated that they woke up early for the sake of performing household chores and they also closed their business early so they can spend their time with children and complete household chores.

I work 14-15 hours a day. Because I open the spaza from 06:00am and closes around 20:00pm. I close early than other spaza shops because of two reasons; one is I need to prepare for children and pack their lunchbox and do the ironing, cooking and have some time to spend with my children (Nobuhle Hadebe, 27 years).

Female shop owners are required to perform household chores and so it becomes hard to fulfil entrepreneurial aspirations. Thus performing dual roles forces females to spend more time at home looking after their business and performing household chores, thus working long hours.

Media: Pictures from the study site







Conclusion

This chapter has presented results from the in-depth interviews conducted with spaza shop owners in the area of Lindelani township, Durban. It discussed a number of challenges faced by spaza shop owners to uncover a deeper understanding about gender differences among them. Results from this study show that the majority of female spaza shop owners are more likely to have limited education, be more vulnerable to crime and sexual harassment and have limited capital and limited access to financial assistance. Furthermore, dual roles that female participants perform within their households limit their ability and time to better manage their spaza shop business. According to Themba Midran (2015) crime, lack of resources and limited access to finance for female entrepreneurs present a critical factor that limits females the opportunity to grow their business. Findings from the study are consistent with the literature, female spaza shop owners face more challenges in managing their spaza shop business as the result of their gender, compared to their male counterparts.

Chapter 5

Discussion and Conclusion

Introduction

As already noted, spaza shops in South Africa present an example of small scale entrepreneurial activity that offers an economic entry point to those excluded from mainstream economic activities (Basardien et al, 2014). Spaza shops in South Africa are integral to low-income communities. The literature shows that spaza shop owners face a number of challenges that range from a lack of education, business training and skills, lack of infrastructure, crime and other business related challenges. This study confirms this and reveals that female spaza shop owners face more challenges than their male counterparts do.

The previous chapter has dealt with an analysis and interpretation of data collected from spaza shop owners through means of in-depth interviews. This chapter will discuss the findings with reference to gender differences among spaza shop owners through the lens of feminist perspectives. By using the feminist perspective, the study aims to answer the question whether existing gender differences between female and male spaza owners impact on spaza businesses.

Most studies have driven their focus mainly on challenges faced by spaza shops, with little or no interest in gender dynamics. However, this study has explored the sources of gender differences among spaza shop owners and aims to explain the effects of gender differences on spaza shop owners. The findings from the literature review and field responses will be discussed to understand gender dynamics among informal sector shop-owners with respect to the socialist feminism perspective. This chapter places a special focus on differing gender experiences according to four themes highlighted in the discussion chapter; namely education, financial aspects, dual roles, and crime.

Social feminists provide an understanding of “underrepresented, marginalized voices and lived experiences as valuable knowledge, discourses and constructs of power” (Vossenber,

2014: 5). However, in this chapter the feminist perspective is not only used to understand gender differences, rather, it is also used to highlight gender structures that exist in households and societies (Klocke, 2013).

Lack of education, business knowledge and skills among spaza shop owners

Education is decisive for spaza shop owners in prioritizing their spaza shop business (Bisaria and Wajih, 2014). Likewise, Chebelyon-Dalizu et al (2010) articulated that education and business training enables spaza shop owners to learn how to do stock taking, market their merchandise, provide good customer services and maintain business relations in order to drive the spaza business into success. The study shows that male participants had higher educational levels, with 2 having had tertiary level training. Thus, they felt that their education has substantially benefited their spaza shop business. Interestingly, the study further found that male participants felt that they still need further education to better their spaza shop business. The researcher had expected that female participants would opt for education more than male participants.

The study revealed that most female participants have lower levels of education compared to their male counterparts. Feminist studies suggest that most female participants face culture and traditional discrimination within their families and societies that further inhibit their ability to be educated (Bisaria and Wajih, 2014). van Scheers (n.d) articulated that female spaza shop owners lack market knowledge, business training and access to information which remain a major constraint to their spaza shop businesses. Lack of education and business training present a crucial constraint for female spaza shop owners to survive, be profitable and grow in the spaza industry (Bhorat et al, 2013). Thus, female participants emphasized the point that if given the opportunity to attend business training or educational courses that would benefit their business they would attend it. However, the study found that even if they wish to attend business training, they would need to have someone to look over their business, children and assist with house chores, while attending training.

The social feminist literature argues that existing gender inequality stems from limited opportunities for females to participate in various aspects of the public sphere, such as

education, political activity, and employment (Rabenhorst, 2011). Enabling female spaza shop owner's access to business training will mean they can benefit from bookkeeping by e.g. recording price lists from different suppliers and comparing those prices to cheaper suppliers to maximize their profit. Bookkeeping can also be beneficial in building networks. In addition, Perks (2010) articulated that bookkeeping can help spaza shop owners to make adjustments to better save their profit and give them opportunities to expand their business. Furthermore, bookkeeping can "limit customer credits to avoid cash flow problems" (Perks, 2010: 461) and can help keep control of the stock and plan monthly expenses. The study suggests that lower levels of education correlate with poor functioning of spaza shops. Whilst, higher levels of education correlate with better functioning of the spaza shop.

Financial aspects that challenges spaza shop owners

Business requires good start-up capital and financial stability to further grow in the market and stay competitive (Upton and Petty, 2010). The study indicated a much broader concern for lack of financial assistance from authorized moneylenders, especially, for female participants. The study found that female participants had low start-up capital compared to their male counterparts. Male participants were able to utilize funds earned from employment or funds that had been saved in the form of retrenchment packages while female participants relied on support from friends and family members or social grants.

Lack of access to formal financial institutions or authorized credit providers limits the ability of female entrepreneurs to become successful (Tambunan, 2009). A number of female participants stated that they did not access loans from authorized moneylenders, banks, or other institutions for financial assistance to start-up their spaza business. This could well be due to the lack of collateral, especially, for female participants. According to the feminist perspective often female entrepreneurs are limited in their access to credit because they lack ownership of property and social mobility. Mathapo (2011) argues that there are customs, traditions as well as religious and cultural constraints that limit female's opportunities to open their own businesses. Out of all the female participants, none indicated that they had inherited resources from a family member. This was not the case with male participants – even though they were limited in number.

A study conducted by Chant and Pedwell (2008:16) in India and Uganda respectively looking at gendered implications on informal finance revealed that females “are more likely to depend on friends and family for loans” than seeking loans from commercial banks and thus females invest less to start their business. Whilst males are more likely to seek loans from commercial banks (Chant and Pedwell, 2008). The study revealed that only one male participant used authorized moneylenders, while there were no female participants who mentioned that they requested financial assistance from authorized moneylender.

The literature indicates that a number of spaza shop owners have been closing down their spaza shop business due to the failure of managing creditors (Von Broembsen, 2005 and Tladi and Isaacs, 2003). The majority of female participants reported that their customers who are creditors frequently do not pay back their debts. Male participants, on the other hand, had dealt with creditors better and experienced this much less. Female participants cited creditors who do not pay back their debts as people who are disrespecting them. In this sense, females were not taken seriously by their creditors in a way that a male spaza shop owner would be. So, bad creditors posed more of a threat to business for female than male owners. According to the feminist perspective, masculinity advantages males in different means in patriarchal society (Mathapo, 2011).

Female participants in this study reported being feminine as negatively affecting their business and made them vulnerable to creditors. Although there were no reported cases of physical assaults a female participant stated that she has faced verbal attacks from people who owe her money. Thus, female participants have indicated fear of physical attacks when demanding money owed. Males on the other hand were not averse to using verbal or physical force on customers owing money. This further indicates that gender differences advantage men over women in the spaza business context. According to Rabenhorst (2011) the patriarchal system advantages male participants, while leaving female participants with limited resources.

Dual roles performed by female spaza shop owners

The literature revealed that dual roles played by women inhibits their ability to acquire business skills and knowledge needed to compete with other spaza shop businesses (Ekar, 2005). This study confirms this somewhat in that it indicates that female participants dedicated part of their time to performing house chores while also looking over their spaza shop business. Even though few male participants mentioned that they partly perform household chores, however, household chores were not mentioned as posing a challenge to them or to their business. In patriarchal societies, household chores are seen as the domain of women (Mill, 2008).

The willingness of female participants to attend business training indicates that female participants are still deprived the educational opportunity. This deprivation of female participants is due to gender expectation that reduces female roles into the household worker. This further puts males at an advantage, as they are spared the performing of day-to-day household chores allowing them more time and space to focus on growing their business. The study suggests that male participants see household chores as important house duties to be conducted by females. Moreover, the study revealed that female participants who could not perform household duties transferred those duties to their children's. According to Mill (2008) patriarchy places females in subordination within their family and society as they are required to perform a dual role, thus, this makes it harder for them to fulfil their entrepreneurial aspirations. Furthermore, (Stoner et al, 1990) argues that females acting in the role of being self-employed are still expected to perform and to be available to satisfy the needs of family and workplace.

The findings from this study suggest that female participants spend more time on household duties than their male counterparts. Almost all female participants mentioned that they perform household duties. Some female participants indicated that the time they spent on the household chores and child rearing could allow them to seek business training and education to improve their performance in their spaza shop business. This has affected their ability to secure business skills and knowledge to better advance their business. According to Stoner et al (1990) female dual responsibilities in managing business and maintaining their family is the main obstacle for female business owners to better manage their business.

Dual roles force women to spend more time at home looking after their business and performing household chores, thus working long hours. For example, female participants woke up earlier than male participants to prepare breakfast and lunchboxes for their children and their spouse. Long hours places pressure on the relationship between the spaza owner and their family and friends due to the dual role that they have to play as both a “diligent income provider and caring for spouses” (Brink and Cant, 2003: 14). Furthermore, feminist perspectives argue that in this way females are oppressed and remain in exploitation (Rabenhorst, 2011).

The study found that few female participants employ people to assist in their spaza shop business whilst male participants employed a number of people. Confirming the literature most female participants rely on their family members for assistance to maintain their spaza shop business (Perks, 2010, Chebelyon-Dalizu, 2010, van Scheers, n. d). Spaza shop businesses require human labor as most business do, when doing stock taking and packing for example. Some older female participants found it hard to perform these tasks and could have done with help loading and off-loading the stock and packing the stock on shelves.

Crime against spaza shop owners

Spaza shops often operate with insufficient infrastructure, a lack of proper security measures and poor policing (Khumalo, N. 2012 and Ligthelm, 2005). Because spaza shops operate in highly concentrated informal residential areas where the crime rate is very high, robbery is a legitimate concern for them (Cape Town Project Centre, 2014). According to the study conducted in Monwabisi Park, 40 per cent of spaza shop owners mentioned that they have experienced home break-ins (Cape Town Project Centre, 2010). The study suggests that spaza shop owners operating in Lindelani are likewise at high risk of experiencing criminal activities such as robbery or burglary. The study also shows that female spaza shop owners are more vulnerable to crime compared to their male counterparts.

Female spaza shop owners are often vulnerable to crime because of gender stereotypes. According to Mill (2008) a devastating factor from negative gender stereotyping is that it often leads to sexism which entails the belief that the status of female is inferior to the status of male. Some female participants from the study reported that they open late and close their business early as they fear being mugged.

Male participants however opened early and closed their spaza business later than female participants. The majority of male participants had less fear of being mugged. Female participants reported that they were afraid of sexual harassment as well as being mugged due to their gender. According to the feminist perspective, sexism can also lead to physical violence and sexual harassment (Martha et al, 2005 and McAdam, 2013). Moreover, feminists' perspectives consider social and cultural attitudes as the drivers of gender inequality (Mills, 2008). These attitudes perpetuate the view of females as feminine and occupying inferior status to males (Webley, 2012).

Wood and Eagly (2002) argue that even though females are emancipated in the modern world they are still regarded as sexual beings whose place is in the home in terms of the gender hierarchy. Hence, according to Wood and Eagly (2002) females are treated as sex objects in prevailing patriarchal cultures; this has contributed to sexual violence. This is confirmed by female participants in this study who fear sexual harassment in the workplace. An experience male participants are spared.

Feminist studies suggest that male entrepreneurs have an advantage as they are perceived as superior to females (Mills, 2008, Park, 1972). Often, male participants felt that their masculinity is a means to protect themselves and their business. While the majority of female participants felt that a lack of masculinity made them vulnerable to crime and sexual harassment. The study found that a number of female participants rely on their male partners or other male figures either family or community members for physical protection in the business space. Male participants did not require this. The findings of this study are consistent with the literature which argued that women are more vulnerable to crime and sexual harassment around their businesses (Perks, 2010).

While, most male participants argued that crime was detrimental to business they did not perceive it as a risk to their person. Female participants however did. As a result, a number of female participants felt the need to close their spaza shop business early because they felt vulnerable to crime. Thus, this study finds that crime, gender discrimination, and sexual harassment further inhibit the entrepreneurial ability of females, compared to males (Themba Midran, 2015).

This study suggests that gender differences have an impact on spaza shop owners. It is clear that female participants face more challenges than male participants do. As aforementioned in this chapter and previous chapters, female participants are highly affected by crime and sexual harassment, lack of education, financial support, and lack of infrastructure, transport, and the dual roles they play. This is not to say that male participants are not affected by these challenges, however, the magnitude for females is greater than their male counterparts.

Conclusion

Studies suggest that there are a number of contributing factors to the lack of female entrepreneurial skills compared to males (Basardien et al, 2014, Barrett, 1986 and Perks, 2010). Education, crime and sexual harassment, financial support, storage and transportation, and dual role that women perform in their family and spaza shop businesses are contributing factors that affect women more than men. Rather, the origin of these factors comes from the patriarchal norms that discriminate females in their societies. These factors suggest a need for new solutions that will put female spaza shop owners at a competitive level, thus boosting their entrepreneurial ability. The dual role, family and work played by female participants inhibits their level of entrepreneurial activity compared to male participants who are free to focus on their single role: work. The feminist perspective argues that we need to do away with the mind-set that views the female entrepreneur as less likely to perform because of a lack of resources. Rather there is a need to deconstruct gender structures that exist within family and societal systems that enable gender inequality (Vossenbergh, 2014).

The United Nations argues that gender equality is not only a fundamental human right and important for human dignity, rather, it is a crucial factor for poverty reduction, economic

growth and development (Mathapo, 2011). Furthermore, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) further stipulate that realization of gender equality will lead to every woman and girl's enjoyment of social and economic empowerment (United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 2016). The SDGs, set gender equity as the fifth goal to be achieved by 2030. Moreover, gender equity is prioritized not as the only means to promote economic development, but also, to promote female well-being in households and communities (UNDP, 2016).

Further research

This chapter has discussed complexities faced by spaza shop owners ranging from education, crime and sexual harassment, lack of financial assistance; each of the above complexities were discussed with the focus of gender differences among spaza shop owners. According to Chant and Brickell (2013: 89), most policy development geared to uplift female entrepreneurs “do not challenge patriarchy or norms that support it”. Current development policies lack the ability to challenge patriarchy to change the norms that support patriarchy to devalue gender discrimination. Thus this study suggests that further research need to be conducted to find techniques to deconstruct gender differences among spaza shop owner by focusing patriarchy, family and societal gender structures.

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