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Business Challenges of Arts and Crafts Street Vendors at Key Tourist Attractions in Soweto, South Africa

Thato Joseph Moagi
University of Johannesburg, School of Tourism and Hospitality,
College of Business and Economics, Bunting Road Campus, Johannesburg, South Africa

Milena Ivanovic
University of Johannesburg, School of Tourism and Hospitality,
College of Business and Economics, Bunting Road Campus, Johannesburg, South Africa, e-mail, mivanovic@uj.ac.za

Maisa Correia Adinolfi*
University of Johannesburg, School of Tourism and Hospitality,
College of Business and Economics, Bunting Road Campus, Johannesburg, South Africa, e-mail, mcorreia@uj.ac.za

Corresponding Author

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Abstract

Soweto is South Africa's most iconic tourist destination, providing local street vendors with an opportunity to sell arts and crafts. This paper presents a detailed overview of business challenges faced by a population of 60 arts and crafts street vendors operating at two main tourist attractions in Soweto, the Mandela House/Museum and the Hector Pieterson Memorial. The study employs a mixed methodology based on a four-stage exploratory sequential research design. The profile characteristics of arts and craft street vendors lead to some interesting conclusions whereby the triangulation of qualitative and quantitative results reveals the main challenges in operating their businesses. They are grouped as: a) inadequate infrastructure, especially a lack of dedicated trading space and storage facilities; b) lack of safety due to high levels of congestion and crime affecting daily trade; and c) non-compliance with legislation, lack of government funding and reliance on the cash economy. The study presents a contribution to tourism literature on the little-known challenges of informal businesses trading as arts and crafts street vendors at main tourist attractions in Soweto.

Keywords: Arts and crafts street vendors, Mandela House Museum, Vilakazi street, Soweto, South Africa

Introduction

Street vending is prevalent globally and even more so in developing countries where it is an important source of income for the unemployed in many urban areas (Wongtada, 2014). It refers to "the retail or wholesale trading of goods and services in streets and other related public places such as alleyways, avenues and boulevards" (Bromley, 2000: 1). It encompasses the selling of physical products such as food, newspapers, clothes, arts and crafts and general merchandise, as well as offering services such as shoe-shining, car washes, haircutting, and others (Mjoka, Selepe & du Preez, 2016; Smith, 2017: 1; WIEGO, 2014: 2). According to literature, street vending is an attractive option for marginalised groups of society in the Global South because of ease of access, low entry costs and a small scale and easily moveable businesses (Bromley, 2000; Brown, Lyons & Dankoco, 2010: 672; Crush, Skinner & Chikanda, 2015: 43; Nkrumah-Abebrese & Schachtebeck, 2017: 130; Nyawo & Mubangizi, 2015: 4; Pavani, 2017: 198). Street vending forms part of a larger informal or second economy comprising of unregistered and non-taxpaying businesses, making it difficult to determine its size (Adegoke, 2019; Rogan & Skinner, 2019). The International Labour Organisation (ILO, 2018) estimates that over 60% of the world's employed population falls within the informal economy, while in Africa, that figure stands at 85.8%. Interestingly Medina, Jonelis and Cangul (2017) estimate that the informal sector in South Africa, known as the cash or second economy, features on the lower end, between 20-25% of the total economy.

The second economy is a legacy of apartheid, mostly prevalent in South African townships, which were created not as economic hubs, but as dormitories for cheap unskilled labourers unemployable in the formal economy in the nearby towns (Grant, 2013: 91; Naidoo, 2018; Mashaba, 2017). As such, the economy in the townships remained underdeveloped, with weak infrastructure, resulting in the growth of informal businesses, with street vending, as an important source of income for many townships (Charman, Petersen & Govender, 2020).

Charman, Petersen and Govender (2020: 65-66) provide valuable insight into the economies of several townships across South Africa. Their research reveals that street trade makes up the highest proportion of micro-enterprises on the high streets of the townships while arts and crafts, in particular, make up the highest proportion of micro-enterprises in the residential areas of the townships surveyed. Interestingly, Vilakazi Street in Soweto can be considered a 'high street' with its extensive foot and vehicle traffic. In Soweto, tourism activities have attracted specialised arts and crafts street vendors that have strategically placed their informal businesses outside main tourist attractions and along Vilakazi Street (De Run, 2012: 245). Despite arts and crafts street vendors playing a significant role in Soweto's tourism economy, an extensive review of the literature revealed that so far, they have not received any research attention. Thus, a look into the challenges of arts and crafts street vendors can provide a unique understanding of what they face on the ground. This paper aims to present the profile characteristics and business challenges of arts and crafts street vendors at two key tourist attractions in Soweto, South Africa. The literature overview that follows provides an insight into the characteristics of street vending in Africa, which proved common to many countries across the continent, followed by a discussion of specific characteristics of street vending in South Africa.

Street vending in Africa

With such a high proportion of the economy being related to informal businesses in Africa (ILO, 2018), it is regarded as a 'major force' on the continent (Graaff & Ha, 2015: 4; Little, 2002: 62; Rogerson, 2018: 381). Street vending accounts for between 2 and 24% of total urban informal employment in African, Asian and Latin American cities (Roever, 2014). Street vending in Africa is perceived as an occupation for those with a considerably low-income level and tend to be 'survivalist' in nature (Charman, Petersen & Govender, 2020; Forkuor, Akuoko & Yeboah, 2017). Other characteristics that typify street vending within the context of the informal economy include low levels of education and lack of employment opportunities in the formal economy (Grabrucker, Grimm & Roubaud, 2018). African street vendors face several challenges when operating their businesses, as opposed to their North American and European counterparts where governments closely administer and regulate street vending (Csapo, 2011; Graaff & Ha, 2015: 4; Hochberg, 2017; Liu, Burns & Flaming, 2015: 2). A summary of country-specific African street vendors' main business challenges is presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Business challenges of street vending in Africa

Factor	Indicators	Country and key references
Lack of infrastructure	• Temporary use of weak, unstable tents • Stalls cannot withstand the rough weather conditions • Lack of mobile toilets, sanitation, electricity, storage facilities, and transportation mechanisms for products • Stock/products get damaged because of bad weather • Bad working conditions have a negative effect on people's health	**Egypt & Tunisia:** Brown, Kafafy & Hayder (2017); Dreisbach & Smadhi (2014); **Ghana:** Acquah (2013); Ahenpon (2015); Crush, Skinner & Chikanda (2015); Samuel & Mintah (2013). **Zambia:** Foukuor *et al*, (2017); Muuka (2003).
Not being incorporated into government plans and/or not regulated	• Street vendors are marginalised or not included in government plans, and governments are not accommodating the street vendors' needs into their decision-making processes • The majority of street vendors in African cities operate at unofficial places which are not regulated and controlled • Laws that do not support street vending • Economic instability • Pressure groups, and NGO's that are all inclusive of the private sector do not support the street vendors • Political disputes	**Uganda:** Akharuzzaman & Deguchi (2010); Muyanja, Nayiga, Brenda & Nasinyama (2011). **Kenya:** Mitullah (2003); Muinde & Kuria (2005). **Zimbabwe:** Crush, Skinner & Chikanda (2015); King (2006).
Harassment by municipal authorities and the police	• Bribery, 'informal' daily taxes paid to municipal authorities and police officers • Street vendors harassed or often chased away from locations. • Street vendors considered a threat to image of an area.	**Kenya, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Zimbabwe, Uganda:** Mitullah (2003)
Low value products and lack of access to funding	• Street vendors selling relatively low value products such as sweets, snacks and small jewellery • Street vendors working more hours to generate more income, but still make very little money • Lack of funds as they cannot provide collateral security to get bank loans	**Lesotho:** Morley (2018). **Zimbabwe:** Ndiweni & Verhoeven (2013).

However, it is important to note that even though each country has its own challenges depending on the country's legislation, organisation of street vending, and overarching economic conditions, these challenges are common to most countries in Africa, including South Africa.

Street vending in South Africa

Although street vending has received some research attention in South Africa, little to no research is available on Soweto's street vendors and in particular, its arts and crafts street vendors. Thus, the literature available on street vending has mostly been focused on major cities such as Johannesburg (Bénit-Gbaffou, 2018a, 2018b; Rogerson, 2015), Durban (Roever, 2016; Sidzatane & Maharaj, 2013, Skinner, 2008) and Cape Town (Sassen, Galvaan & Duncan, 2018; van Heerden, 2011). Accurate information is lacking of the relative size and composition of street vending in South Africa (Roever & Skinner, 2016). According to Gamieldien & van Niekerk (2017: 25), street vending contributes 7% to the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in South Africa and generates 22% of total employment in the country. In the fourth quarter of 2019, StatsSA (2019) reported that the informal sector employed over 2.9 million people, of which just over 1.1 million were counted as informal traders, which includes street vendors. The South African street vendors face similar challenges as their African colleagues, the main being infrastructure (Dierwechter, 2004; Foukuor et al., 2017; Gamieldien & Van Niekerk, 2017; Soloman, Sylvana & Decardi, 2011; Timalsina, 2011; Willemse, 2011), safety (City of Johannesburg, 2009, 2010; Matjomane, 2013; WIEGO, 2014), and a weak legislative environment (Peberdy, 2000; Yatmo, 2009). Street vending in South Africa is regulated by the Business Act (71 of 1991), which grants municipal authorities the power to prescribe licenses as a requirement for street vending (Forkuor et al., 2017: 8; WIEGO, 2014). Governing and regulating the environments where street vendors operate proved to be a challenge for the relevant municipal authorities, due to a lack of proper recording systems to capture the activities that occur in the informal sector (Forkuor et al., 2017: 4; Timalsina, 2011: 8; Yatmo, 2009: 468).

There are, however, non-governmental organisations that assist street vendors to combat their challenges and 'voice' the problems they face to relevant authorities in the hope of getting assistance. The Pretoria Informal Business Association (PIBA), the Green Point Traders Association in Cape Town, the Cape Town Deck Traders Association, StreetNet, the South African National Traders Retail Alliance (SANTRA), Kliptown Hawkers Association and the South African Informal Traders' Alliance (SAITA) are examples of such, with some having offices in Soweto (Mitullah, 2003: 13; WIEGO, 2014). Although there is not much attention paid to the role of these organisations in academic literature, Bénit-Gbaffou (2014, 2016) investigates the role, perceptions of value, and politics surrounding these associations. The author describes how they are often ignored or not taken seriously but have played an important role in identifying and resolving injustices towards street vendors. Thus, street vendors face major challenges that affect their survival and day-to-day operations and are linked to several factors, including the political landscape and governance of informal economic activities. A greater understanding of these experiences in specific populations of street vendors can contribute to a wider comprehension of the importance of the informal sector. Thus, this paper seeks to present the characteristics and experiences of a specific population of arts and crafts street vendors that not only contribute to the economy of Soweto, Gauteng and South Africa but more importantly form part of a wider tourism economy that has proven to be crucial to the country's economic growth.

Methodology

The study made use of a mixed-method sequential research design (qualitative-quantitative) consisting of three phases, represented in Figure 1:

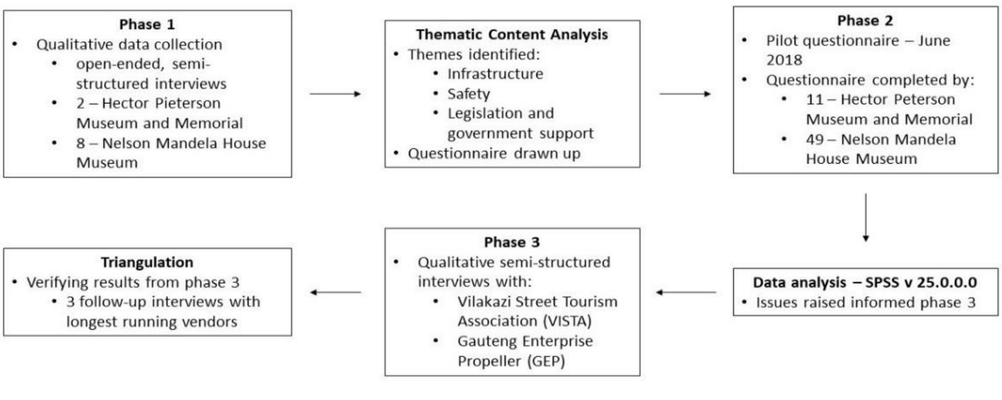

Figure 1: Three-phased mixed-method sequential research design

The first phase involved qualitative data collection by means of open-ended, semi-structured interviews with n=10 randomly selected arts and crafts street vendors, 2 that operate at the Hector Pieterson Museum and Memorial and 8 at The Mandela House Museum. The interviews were tape recorded and analysed by Thematic Content Analysis, and three themes were identified: (1) Infrastructure, (2) Safety, and (3) Legislation and government support. The results of the first phase informed the development of the questionnaire and are presented in Table 2 below:

Table 2: Results of thematic content analysis of 10 semi-structured interviews

Questions	Emerging themes
General demographics of interviewed arts and crafts street vendors	• Average age is 41 years old • 90% breadwinners in their households • Respondents have no education • Highly dependent on current occupation as that is the only income they receive • All respondents are self-employed
Q1. Who are the arts and crafts street vendors' customers?	• Customers and target market are mostly international tourists • Language barrier not an issue
Q2 and Q3. Types of products the arts and crafts street vendors sell	• They mostly make their own products like wooden crafts, beaded work, paintings and products made from sand. • Other products stocked included shirts, caps, scarves and stone art. • They charge international customers higher (double) than local customers • Sell what tourists want and are not influenced by other street vendors • Regular stock-taking conducted by all street vendors which helps them decide what to sell
Q4. Relationship between arts and crafts street vendors and surrounding attractions, organisations and tour guides.	• Tour guides do not refer tourists to arts and crafts street vendors • No relationships between street vendors and surrounding attractions
Q5. Location of the businesses	• Street vendors do not pay rent to municipal authorities • Some street vendors pay homeowners to operate on their pavement • Crime high at location. Safety an issue. • Street vendors would not move elsewhere, location too important to them • Most street vendors operate almost every day, operating times similar to surrounding attractions opening/closing times.
Q6. Relationship amongst employee/employers	• All street vendors work for themselves and work alone. • They receive no training whatsoever
Q7. Handling of money/cash for the business	• Only cash exchanges • No proper facilities-speed points • Acceptance of foreign currencies by all street vendors
Q8. General operation & business practice	• Street vendors want to open more stalls in same location • All street vendors suggest business not lucrative but for survival purposes only • Too many risks to become a street vendor at location (safety) • Do not advertise their products/business • Do not set any targets for sales • Storage of products a problem • Weather an issue • Transportation of products a challenge
Q9. Legislative environment	• License needed but street vendors do not have one/ do not know where to get it and costs involved • Street vendors lack information about legislative environment they operate in • Street vendors do not know of any laws to follow • Police and municipal authorities do not conduct checks/ do not hassle street vendors

The above findings from the semi-structured interviews informed the development of the comprehensive questionnaire, which measured the following variables: a) weather, b) safety, c) operational challenges faced by street vendors (storage; transportation; foreign currencies; foreign languages; tour guides), and d) the legislative environment. The first section (A) of the questionnaire consisted of 21 items, focusing on the profile characteristics of arts and crafts vendors (gender, age, nationality, education levels, where they reside at, if they are the main breadwinners in their households, the number of dependents they have, the amount of money they need monthly to sustain their dependents, and whether that is the only income they receive). The first section also contained the background information regarding their products and the way they operate their businesses (i.e. what they sell, which product they sell the most, who their customers are, and how they handle their stock). The second section (B) consisted of 12 items on a 1-5 Likert-scale (strongly disagree to strongly agree) exploring the main legislative environment, operational issues and ensuing challenges facing arts and crafts street vendors at main tourist attractions in Soweto. The questionnaire was piloted on 16th of June 2018. Traders were randomly approached one by one until a total of 5 agreed to answer the questions (8% of the population). After minor changes, the main questionnaire was handed out and completed between 20 June and 20 July 2018 by the entire permanent population of N=60 arts and crafts street vendors that operate at the Hector Pieterson Museum and Memorial, and Vilakazi Street. Following data analysis, the results informed the third phase where semi-structured interviews were conducted with two key organisations, namely: the Vilakazi Street Tourism Association (VISTA) and the Gauteng Enterprise Propeller (GEP). In addition, three follow-up interviews with the longest running vendors were conducted to confirm the information obtained from the three phases.

Area of study: Soweto

Soweto spans 200 square kilometres with a population of approximately 1.70 million people as of 2019 (Worldometer, 2019), thus having a population density of approximately 8 500 people per square kilometre. It is the largest township in South Africa in terms of size and population stemming from its servicing of the biggest gold mines in and around Johannesburg (Grant, 2013: 90; Joburg Archive, 2008). The 1976 Soweto uprising made Soweto the international symbol of the fight for liberation against oppression and racial segregation during apartheid. Thus, the Hector Pieterson Museum and Memorial, and the Mandela House Museum have elevated Soweto as a must-see South African destination especially for international tourists seeking to learn more about the country's political history (Ivanovic, 2008; Mkhize & Ivanovic, 2019: 998). The geographical position of Soweto as the study area is presented in Figure 2 below.

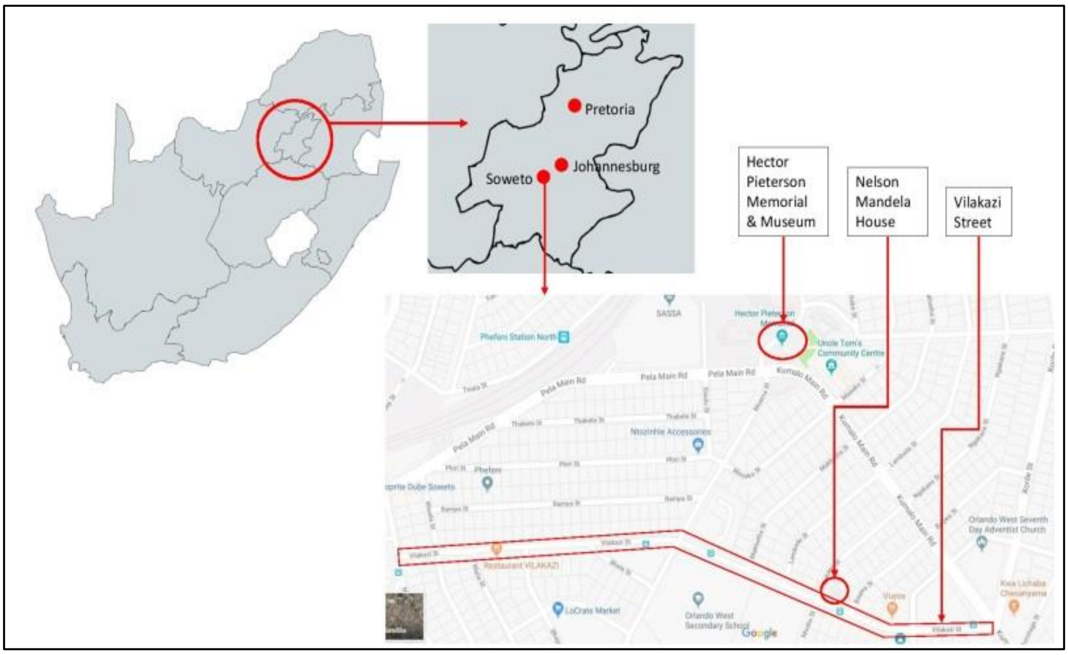

Figure 2: Map of Soweto with two selected sites (Source: AfriGis, 2019)

At the time the research was carried out 49 arts and crafts street vendors were operating at Vilakazi Street where the Nelson Mandela Museum is situated and 11 were outside the Hector Pieterson Museum and Memorial. They were selling beaded work (necklaces, wristbands, bracelets, belts, headbands, and sandals); wooden crafts (jewellery boxes, masks, and plates); paintworks; products created from clay, sand, stone and metal; books and Digital Video Discs (DVDs), as well as shirts, caps, beanies, and tablecloths. Most of these street vendors sell a combination of different arts and crafts, apart from a few specialized street vendors that sell only one product.

Results and discussion

Demographic characteristics of street vendors

The demographic results related to gender, age, nationality, education, and number of dependants of the whole population (N=60) are presented in Table 3 below. The demographic results of arts and crafts street vendors provide the most valuable insight into unique profile characteristics of specialised tourism orientated street vendors at main tourist attractions in Soweto.

Interestingly, the results indicate an equal distribution with regards to gender, and the majority (90%) of the street vendors surveyed, being South African. This contrasts with other studies where women dominate street vending (Roever, 2014; Roever & Skinner, 2016). The presence of foreign nationals in the street vending activities is common in South Africa especially in Johannesburg (Grant & Thompson, 2015). However, the two sites in Soweto do not seem to reflect these characteristics as only 6 vendors out of 60 are foreign nationals. This can largely be attributed to the political history that shaped the demographic composition of South African townships (Adinolfi & Ivanovic, 2015; Jürgens, Donaldson, Rule & Bähr, 2013; Rogerson, 2015), as well as the distance between home and work. Interestingly, 54 of the vendors (90%) reside in Soweto, of whom, 33 reside in Orlando West where the attractions are situated. The remaining 6 (10%) of whom 4 are foreigners reside over 15km from main attractions, in the eastern parts of Johannesburg. These results are in line with WIEGO's (2014: 6) study that street vendors operating in Soweto are South Africans that come from other provinces like Kwa-Zulu Natal, Mpumalanga and Limpopo (WIEGO, 2014: 6).

Table 3: Demographic characteristics of arts and crafts street vendors

		Total Frequency (%)	**Male** Frequency	**Female** Frequency
Age	21 – 29	7 (11.6)	3	4
	30 – 39	22 (36.5)	11	11
	40 – 49	23 (38)	12	11
	50 – 69	7 (11.6)	3	4
	60 >	1 (1.66)	1	0
Gender	Male	30 (50)		
	Female	30 (50)		
Highest education	Primary/Secondary	25 (44.6)	10	15
	High school matric	25 (44.6)	15	10
	Undergraduate diploma	1 (1.79)	1	0
	Undergraduate degree	3 (5.4)	1	2
	Postgraduate degree	1 (1.79)	0	1
	Other	1 (1.79)	0	1
Nationality	South Africa	54 (90)	29	25
	Zimbabwe	4 (6.6)	0	4
	Kenya	1 (1.66)	0	1
	Malawi	1 (1.66)	1	0

The average age for males is 41 and 39 for females. The majority of vendors or 75% are between 30-49 years old. This age range (30-49) typically experiences relatively high unemployment rates that are represented in the 25-35 years (45.2%), 35-44 years (30.4%) and 45-54 years age groups (25.2%) as reported in the fourth quarter of 2019 by StatsSA (2019). Thus, people falling into this age range are likely to use alternative economic options to the formal economy. In addition, the range is reflective of other studies on street vendors that indicated a significant proportion of their respondents falling within a similar age range (Mkhize, Dube & Skinner, 2013; Roever, 2014).

With regards to education levels, the female respondents tended to be slightly more educated than their male counterparts, indicative of the more recent improvements in the education levels of females in South Africa (StatsSA, 2020). When asked about the reasons for starting their businesses (multiple answers allowed), 80% of street vendors had to support their families as breadwinners; 25% have a passion for it; 20% wanted to make quick cash and 15% lost their previous job and could not find other employment. A choice of street vending to support their families as breadwinners, coincides with the results of other studies (Çelik, 2011; Nkrumah-Abebrese & Schachtebeck, 2017). Interestingly, in Nkrumah-Abebrese and Schachtebeck's (2017) study in Tshwane (formerly Pretoria), 63% of street vendors were female, 63% of street vendors were South African, and 43% were between 18-30 years of age. The Tshwane results are indicative of a more female, younger and less local street vending population than that of this study.

Breadwinners and number of dependents

A key finding of this study, presented in Table 4, is that from 60 respondents 57 (29 males and 28 females) confirmed that they are breadwinners within their households. A third of female street vendors have 4 dependants, while the majority of males (60%) have on average 2.5 dependants (refer to Table 4 below). The findings of the Legal Resource Centre (2016: 6) that women are the main breadwinners and the primary responsibility of childcare in South Africa falls on them is however, not the case in this study where there is an equal number of breadwinners (29) between the two genders.

Table 4: Number of dependants vs. required monthly income

Total number of dependants	**Number of dependents for male vendors**	**Number of dependents for female vendors**	**Required monthly income in ZAR (Rands)**	**Total** Frequency (%)
One (1)	1	4	10 600	5 (8.6)
Two (2)	8	5	10 708	13 (22.4)
Three (3)	9	5	7929	14 (24.1)
Four (4)	3	10	7077	13 (22.4)
Five (5)	5	1	11 333	6 (10.3)
Six (6)	2	2	10 500	4 (6.9)
Seven (7)	-	-	-	-
Eight (8)	1	1	15 000	2 (3.4)
Nine (9)	0	1	15 000	1 (1.7)
Total	**29**	**29**	**M=11 018 (537 Euros calculated on 11 August 2020)**	**58**

According to street vendors the average monthly amount they need to survive is R11 018, which is 3.5 times more than the prescribed minimum wage in South Africa. As expected, those with 8 and 9 dependents require higher monthly income. The woman with the most dependants (9), a 51-year-old Zimbabwean female breadwinner, requires R30 000 per month to sustain her family, which is the highest amount required of all the respondents. She agrees that this business makes her enough to support her family, works 10 hours a day, every day of the week, and sells beaded work, which she makes herself. The male with the most dependants (8) has been operating since 2001, requires R15 000 per month to sustain his family, operates 5 hours per day, which is the lowest out of all the respondents, and sells a combination of all arts and crafts on offer. The most interesting outcome of this study reveals that the majority of street vendors stated that they do not make enough money per month to support their families even though the M= R8 000 is more than twice than the prescribed minimum wage in South Africa in 2020 (R20.76 per hour, or R3 321.60 per month based on a typical 8-hour work week) (Republic of South Africa, 2020).

Financial support

All street vendors agree that government financial support is lacking.This might be due to a fact that the whole population of arts and crafts vendors in Soweto operate informally as they are not registered for either business or individual income tax (PWC, 2020). This further exacerbates the problem of access to funding from private funding institutions such as banks, as street vendors do not have formal registrations or certifications of their businesses, and lack resources to use as collateral.

> There has not been any assistance rendered by the government or any private organisation over the years until now (South African, female, 38, operating since 2005).

However, organisations such as the Gauteng Enterprise Propellers (GEP) have claimed to assist street vendors:

> Yes, we have a relationship with street vendors. We are working with street vendors, even in the past years we have introduced and implemented business grants which are more specific to street vendors (Gauteng Enterprise Propeller).

Evidently, there is a contradiction in the perceptions of the street vendors with regards to past and existing support structures and the efforts of both governmental and non-governmental organisations to bridge those gaps. Similarly, with regards to the role of and support from the NGOs, street vendors also feel they have not lived up to their promises.

Business challenges

The results of the descriptive statistical analysis from 60 questionnaires identify the following four main groups of business challenges experienced by the population of arts and crafts street vendors operating at the two main attractions in Soweto:

Lack of appropriate infrastructure, storage and the transportation of goods

In terms of a physical work environment, possibly the most frustrating challenge faced by street vendors is inadequate infrastructure. Almost all the street vendors (98.3%) strongly agree M=4.73 that due to inadequate infrastructure, they are exposed to weather elements that have a negative impact on their operations: “We must have shelters so that when it rains, we will be covered” (South African, 30, male, 4 dependants, operating since 2005),

The need for reliable infrastructure to shelter street vendors from bad weather and protect their goods is a common feature of academic literature (Dierwechter, 2004; Foukuor et al., 2017; Gamieldien & Van Niekerk, 2017; Soloman, Sylvana & Decardi, 2011; Timalsina, 2011; Willemse, 2011).

> My tent is weak and since I sell paintings my business is in danger everyday" (South African, 51, female, 4 dependants, operating since 2014).

In addition, their business hours are reduced in the instances of rain, for example, and their health is at risk with prolonged exposure to the sun and emissions from the high traffic volumes (Kongtip, Thongsuk, Yoosook & Chantanakul, 2006; Pick, Ross & Dada, 2002). The concern, however, would be who would be responsible for supplying such infrastructure. The use of public space for private profit is a concern raised in the literature (see Brown, 2015), while often the ambiguous nature of the legal environment related to street vending can justify the non-provision of such infrastructure by local government (Roever, 2016).

The transportation of goods seems to not be a challenge for street vendors as the most commonly used mode of transportation is a trolley (24 males and 21 females followed by a cart (3 males and 5 females). Given that most street vendors live within Soweto, travelling long distances with their goods is not an issue.

The Hector Pieterson Museum and Memorial provided free storage space for goods for its 11 street vendors:

> The Hector Pieterson Museum provides [a] free storage facility just outside the museum that is fully guarded and in exchange they know we provide security here and we always clean the place but we need more free storage places as that is not enough (South African, Male, 40, 3 dependents, operating since 2004).

The 11 street vendors operating opposite the Hector Pieterson Museum and Memorial are situated on a single pavement outside of a church, so they do not pay 'rent' for their trading spot:

> I am placed opposite the Museum, so I do not have to pay anyone anything. But the ones that operate on people's pavements and houses they have to negotiate with the homeowners and pay a certain fee which is negotiable I think (South African, 45, male, 1 dependent, operating since 2014).

Even though none of the surveyed traders paid the local municipality for an operating licence, the traders along Vilakazi Street complained that in addition to paying storage fees, they also have to pay 'rent' to homeowners (not municipality) to operate outside their houses:

> We do pay a certain fee for being on the pavement to [the] principal of the school of where the pavement is based at and the fee varies in terms of the space the used up by the street vendors, some pay R200 and others R350 per month. (South African, 38, female, operating since 2005).

These practices and the casual acceptance of such rental 'agreements' by the street vendors prove the attractiveness of their locations outside key tourist attractions as they provide a high sales potential given the tourist market that frequents the area (Rogerson, 2015).

Safety and congestion

Street vendors raised concerns about street robberies, hijackings and ATM scams, which are said to be common on Vilakazi Street:

> Crime is the only problem. This place is a hotspot for criminals. For example, there is a lot of ATM scams and muggings as well as hijackings. Those are the top 3 (South African, male, 45, 1 dependant, operating since 2014).

Table 5 below reveals the main concerns are that there is not enough security where the arts and crafts street vendors operate (M=1.81), agreed upon by 77.9% of street vendors. Furthermore, 69.5% do not feel safe (M=2.24), while 73.3% strongly agree that crime levels are high in the area (M=3.87), and 79.3% strongly agree (M=4.19) that crime negatively affects their business.

Table 5. Arts and crafts street vendors' views on safety

Safety	**Strongly Disagree (1)**	**Disagree (2)**	**Neutral (3)**	**Agree (4)**	**Strongly Agree (5)**	**Mean (M)**
The crime here affects my business negatively	2	7	3	12	34	4.19
Crime levels are high here	6	10	0	14	30	3.87
I feel safe here	27	14	4	5	9	2.24
There is enough security at this site	33	13	6	5	2	1.81

The streets and pavements they operate on are often congested, which poses a security threat to their businesses:

> The streets are forever congested, and traffic gets blocked at times if there are high numbers of people in the area and this blocks accessibility into the Vilakazi precinct. (Vilakazi Street Tourism Association- VISTA official, South African).

a) Legislation and government support

A significant (74.6%) proportion of street vendors strongly agree that they do not have any form of license to operate (M=1.69) as per Table 6 below. The results further reveal that 61.7% of the street vendors strongly agreed that they do not know of the laws that govern them (M=2.03) but they felt safe to admit it:

> I think we need the hawker's license to trade here. But honestly that has not been enforced yet because there have not been people to come and hassle us here asking for it. I have been here for 8 years but do not even know where to get it or how much… I don't have any documentation to operate here and I do not think anyone does." (South African, 39, male, 2 dependents, operating since 2010).

Table 6: Arts and crafts street vendors' views on legislation

Legislation	**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**	**Mean**
	(1)	**(2)**	**(3)**	**(4)**	**(5)**	**(M)**
The municipal authorities have never given me any problems	5	1	10	12	30	4.05
The police have never given me any problems	4	2	11	12	29	4.03

I make an effort to comply with the laws that govern us	3	2	30	9	15	3.53
I do not need any paperwork to work here	10	1	28	7	13	3.20
I know of the laws that govern us	31	6	16	4	3	2.03
I pay rent to municipal authorities to work here	38	7	9	3	3	1.77
I have a license to work here	39	5	11	2	2	1.69

In addition to the street vendors not knowing the procedures to obtain licenses and the documents and costs involved, they also indicated that they do not experience harassment by local authorities, the reason, they believe, is that they do not need the licence "No, there is no license needed" (Zimbabwean, 57, female, 7 dependents, operating since 2012).

This is in contrast to typical street vending scenarios where harassment by authorities is a common occurrence (Fourie, 2018; Mkhize, Dube & Skinner, 2013; Roever, 2014). It could also be linked to the fact that 90% of the street vendors were South African as opposed to the Central Business District of Johannesburg where many businesses are foreign-owned and where xenophobia is more prominent (Peberdy, 2016: 5; Rogerson, 2018: 389).

Conclusion

Street vending plays a significant role in many developing countries' economies, especially in the township informal economies in the South African context. Street vending provides economic opportunities to those that have little option for entering the formal employment market due to a variety of factors, including poor education and lack of access to capital. Despite arts and crafts being a relatively small component of the informal trading economy, in the context of tourism it plays a significant role in satisfying the needs of tourists (Charman, Petersen & Govender, 2020; Ivanovic, 2008).

The informal sector and street vending realities highlight several challenges that all vendors face in their daily business operations. The main challenges arts and crafts street vendors share with others are infrastructure (Dierwechter, 2004; Foukuor et al., 2017), safety (City of Johannesburg, 2009, 2010; Matjomane, 2013), and a weak legislative environment (Mitullah, 2003; Peberdy, 2000; Yatmo, 2009). Although the study echoes the many challenges featured in other South African studies (Brown, 2012; Mjoka, Selepe & du Preez, 2016; Mkhize, Dube & Skinner, 2013; Nkrumah-Abebrese & Schachtebeck, 2017; Nyawo & Mubangizi, 2015; Peberdy, 2016; Pick, Ross & Dada, 2002; Rogan & Skinner, 2019; Rogerson, 2015, 2018; Roever, 2014; WIEGO, 2014), the arts and crafts street vendors of Soweto are unique and different from majority of street vendors in South Africa in terms of gender distribution, nationality, no harassment by local authorities or police, and the lack of government enforcement of by-laws. The findings it also brings to light the challenges that people on the ground outside tourist attractions face when trying to benefit from the tourism value chain. Therefore the study adds to the existing body of literature while also highlighting the distinctive experiences of street vendors in the context of key attractions in Soweto.

Practically, the experiences of these street vendors presents the specific needs of arts and crafts street vendors including the provision of appropriate physical infrastructure, better storage facilities, amplified safety measures, and increased communication and training with regards to applicable legislation and regulation. It is therefore recommended that more studies are conducted on the experiences of arts and crafts street vendors at other major tourist attractions in South Africa, in order to provide further recommendations for the creation of a better support system for them at local government level. In addition, since this population of arts and crafts street vendors displayed key differences to other street vendor populations, more specific policy related to their needs is recommended to local government. It is also worthy to note the devastating impact of the national COVID-19 induced lockdown on street vendors' livelihoods and businesses. The impact of such can only be evaluated after opening South African borders for international tourists and could be a valuable investigation into the impacts they endured and the possible lessons in building future resilience for their businesses.

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