

**CHALLENGES AND LIVED EXPERIENCES OF DAY
LABOURERS IN EAST LONDON**

By

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DECLARATION

I **Mzukisi Xweso**, hereby declare that the research project titled **THE LIVED EXPERIENCES AND HARDSHIPS ENCOUNTERED BY DAY LABOURERS IN EAST LONDON** towards the qualification to be awarded is my own work and that it has not previously been submitted for assessment or towards the completion of any research study to another university or towards another qualification.



January 2019

SIGNATURE

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my parents and my girlfriend, **Sinazo Zodwa Sitokwe**, whose prayers and support enabled me to maintain my commitment to completing it. I love you all and thank you for your support.



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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ABBREVIATION	FULL NAME OR TERM
EAP	ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION
ILO	INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION
SA	SOUTH AFRICA
SBT	STRENGTHS-BASED THEORY
STATS SA	STATISTICS SOUTH AFRICA
USA	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
WB	WORLD BANK
GDP	GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT
NELP	NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT LAW PROJECT
SPSS	STATISTICAL PACKAGE FOR THE SOCIAL SCIENCES
UCT	UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN
UCLA	UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LOS ANGELES
DEPT.	DEPARTMENT
WHO	WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION
EC	EASTERN CAPE
SERO	SOCIO-ECONOMIC REVIEW OUTLOOK
ECSECC	EASTERN CAPE SOCIO- ECONOMIC CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL
QLFS	QUARTERLY LABOUR FORCE SURVEY
ILC	INTERNATIONAL LABOUR CONFERENCE
EPWP	EXTENDED PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME
SAPS	SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICES

ABSTRACT

The study upon which this dissertation was based was conducted against the backdrop of day labouring as a global phenomenon. In order to position the research topic, namely, the lived experiences and hardships encountered by day labourers in East London in the province of the Eastern Cape of South Africa, a comprehensive review of the relevant available literature pertaining to the phenomenon was conducted. The review covered both international trends and the relatively few significant studies which have been conducted in South Africa. A mixed methods approach was adopted in order to gather both quantitative and qualitative data, by means of a research design whose theoretical framework was derived from systems theory and the strengths-based theory. Of the twelve hiring sites which had been identified in East London during the conducting of a national study, six were selected and a survey questionnaire was administered to three participants at each, which yielded a research sample of eighteen participants. The participants were selected at each site through the use of convenience or availability sampling. The data which the survey questionnaire generated was presented in the form of descriptive statistics and analysed by means of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software to develop a socioeconomic and demographic profile of the participants. The findings of the quantitative study were subsequently evaluated against the qualitative data pertaining to the lived experiences of day labourers in East London, which was generated by conducting in-depth semi-structured interviews with three participants who were willing to be interviewed at each site. The qualitative data was analysed through thematic analysis. The integration of the two sets of data enabled a credible and meaningful assessment of the lived experiences of day labourers in East London and the hardships which they are obliged to endure to be made. On the basis of the findings, recommendations are made concerning appropriate strategies for integrating day labourers into initiatives which are designed to grant social justice to groups who continue to be unfairly marginalised and to live in abject poverty more than two decades after the official demise of apartheid.

Key words: Day labourers, unemployment, hardships, lived experiences, coping strategies.

CHAPTER 1: PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

Unemployment in South Africa represents a significant socioeconomic ill. The Quarterly Labour Force Survey revealed that the unemployment rate for the first quarter of 2018 officially stood at 27.2% (Stats SA, 2018), by comparison with 26.7% for the fourth quarter of 2017 (Stats SA, 2017). The socioeconomic ravages which are wrought by unemployment are particularly prevalent among young people, who are disproportionately represented in the resulting drift of unemployed people to the informal economy. In South Africa, people between the ages of 15 and 34 years are classified as constituting the youth of the country. As unemployment among the youth stood at 38.2% during the first quarter of 2018 (Stats SA, 2018), the magnitude of the problem can be demonstrated by more than one in every three young people in South Africa being unemployed. Although the informal economy plays a crucial role in easing unemployment by creating work and providing opportunities for free enterprise (Fapohunda, 2013:232; Ruzek, 2015:26), it does not represent a solution to the problem of unemployment. The informal sector tends to be made up largely of people who are vulnerable to poverty and have few prospects for entering the formal sector of the economy (Bernabè, 2005:229; Van der Berg, 2014:8).

As is the case in many developing countries in Africa, Asia, and the far East, informal employment in South Africa can take many forms. The relative sizes of the informal sectors of the economies of individual countries are also significant. It is generally acknowledged that the informal sector in South Africa is relatively small by comparison with that of many other developing countries (Schenck, Blaauw, & Viljoen, 2012; Ngwenya, 2018). By contrast, as it accounts for 18% of the GDP, it is comparable with the performance of the informal sectors and shadow economies of developed countries such as Spain, Italy, and Greece and is growing at a greater rate than the formal sector of South Africa (Professional Career Services, 2018). In India, informal workers constitute 81% of the workforce (International Labour Organisation, 2018), while for Ghana, during the 2011/2012 financial year, the figure stood at 80% (Osei-Boateng & Ampratwum, 2011). This research study was concerned with a particular sub-sector of the informal economy of South Africa, namely, that of day labour. Day labour is a phenomenon which occurs throughout both South Africa and the rest of the world (Blaauw, 2010; Louw, 2004). According to Blaauw, Harmse,

and Schenck (2008), an estimated 45 000 unemployed people, most of whom are black men, stand each day at the nearly 1000 hiring sites which are located throughout South Africa, in the hope of finding work for a single day. Blaauw, Louw, and Schenck (2006:458) define day labourers as informal workers who gather at hiring sites in search of opportunities for casual employment.

Day labourers are employed on a daily basis by different employers. Their informal status precludes them from being eligible for the benefits which are associated with permanent employment (Blaauw, Pretorius, Louw, & Schenck, 2007). Blaauw *et al.* (2007) explain that day labourers are typically vulnerable, frequently required to perform dangerous tasks, and subjected to abuse and violence as they endeavour to eke out a meagre living. Informal workers such as day labourers are also often the targets of anti-immigrant prejudice and even violence at the hands of residents of communities, merchants, security guards, and the police. Valenzuela Jr., Theodore, Meléndez, and Gonzalez (2006) explain that day labourers perform a wide variety of work, including dangerous tasks which expose them to occupational hazards such as chemical waste. As the human rights and well-being of significant numbers of South Africans who have yet to emerge from the privations of discrimination by the apartheid regime are in jeopardy owing to the phenomenon of day labour and there appears to be a dearth of research pertaining to the daily experiences of day labourers in South Africa, the researcher elected to conduct the study which forms the basis for this dissertation.

1.2 Background to the study and historical context

During the mid-20th century, the white minority government of South Africa, through its policy of apartheid, introduced the concept of Bantustans or homelands, the nominally independent states of which the various peoples who comprised the Bantu population of the country, as it was defined in the lexicon of apartheid, were to be citizens (Blalock, 2014). The Bantustans represented the administrative means of excluding black South Africans from the political, economic, education, and development systems of the country. The creation of the homelands established decentralised local authorities which were presented to the world as independent governments, although South Africa was the only country in the world to recognise the national sovereignty of the homelands. Despite the ostensible independence of their governments, officials within the national government of South Africa acted as the *de facto* administrators of the homelands (Rogers, 1980). Although the development of the homeland system served the grand spatial policy of apartheid, the urban

areas of South Africa were delineated into racially segregated areas, with members of non-white population groups being forced to live in townships which were usually far from the economic activities of the towns and cities. The apartheid government did little to expand the infrastructure or improve the agricultural or economic bases of areas which were designated for blacks and apartheid policies effectively hindered the economic development of the homelands (Blalock, 2014). Economic growth, employment, and development were stunted under the banner of 'independent' homelands, owing to policies which favoured white-owned businesses, a lack of basic infrastructure, geographic isolation, and a general lack of opportunities for education and training for the ostensible citizens of the states (Rodrik, 2008). Owing to a lack of opportunities to generate independent and sustainable livelihoods within the homelands and the pass laws, which prevented unemployed black workers and their dependents from relocating to more favourable areas, circular labour migration became the primary means of survival and generating incomes in many of the former homelands. Circular labour migration entails workers migrating to urban and industrial centres to earn a living and returning to their homes in rural areas at regular intervals. It requires them to live as workers in one location and as heads of families in another (Hugo, 2013). The phenomenon is frequently characterised as a response to negative factors such as undesirable environmental changes, population growth, or increased economic pressure (Blinder, 2015).

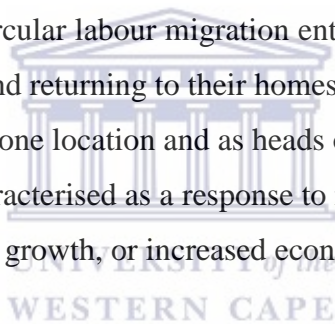
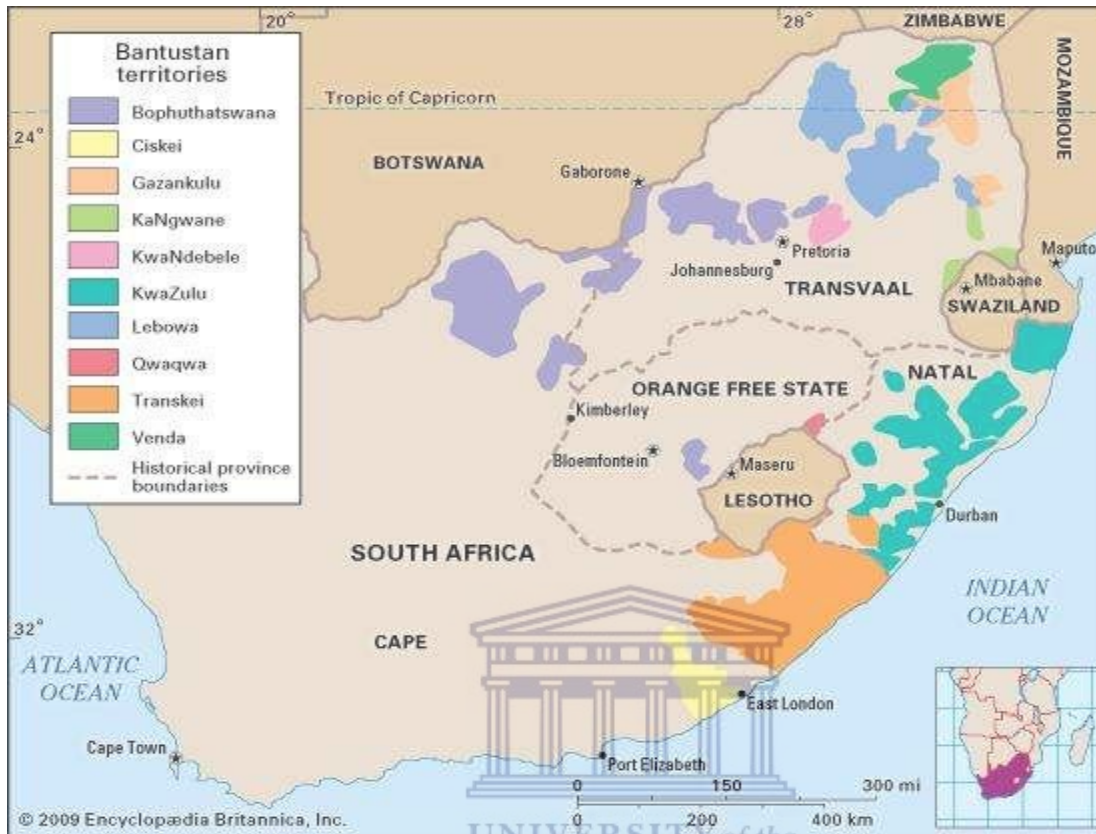


Figure 1.1: Bantustan territories in South Africa during the apartheid era



(Source: *Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc.*)

During the apartheid era, circular labour migration was particularly prevalent in the mining industry in South Africa. In an attempt to encourage people to live permanently in the allegedly independent homelands, the government facilitated the development of the so-called border industries to create opportunities for employment in them. The decentralisation policies of the apartheid government resulted in the establishment of factories in the homelands. Transkei, which today falls under the province of the Eastern Cape, was the largest homeland during the apartheid era and was home to the largest numbers of unemployed and unskilled people by comparison with any of the other homelands. Ciskei also formed part of the homelands in which by contrast, it was made up of patchwork of reserves and had a relatively educated class populace than the Transkei. Factories were established in Mthatha and the surrounding areas (Blaauw *et al.*, 2008). After the attaining of a democratic dispensation in 1994 and the reintegration of the homelands into South Africa, many of the factories were either closed down or relocated. As a direct consequence, high

levels of unemployment have resulted in the mass migration of potential day workers to the metropolitan areas of the province, such as East London and Port Elizabeth, although large numbers have migrated as far as Cape Town. As East London is one of the largest urban areas in the province, it has been inundated with large influxes of people who are obliged to resort to working as day labourers from former homeland areas such as the rural Transkei and Ciskei. Although concerns were expressed that migration could become permanent and circular migration would cease (Posel, 2013), circular migration patterns have proved to be enduring.

The phenomenon of migration in South Africa and in the province of the Eastern Cape, in particular, can be aligned with the contention of Adepouju (1998) that migration in Africa can best be understood 'within the context of political and historical evolution of African societies'. As the consequences of colonisation and the subsequent gaining of independence by African countries would inevitably have significant implications for their economies, patterns of migration would be influenced accordingly. Economic conditions, particularly with respect to a lack of opportunities for employment, often promote perceptions among members of societies of developing countries that migration is essential for their survival (Maphosa & Morojele, 2013). Rampant unemployment and adverse economic conditions in the rural areas in the Eastern Cape have obliged large numbers of people to migrate in order to seek employment in the industrialised centres of the country, such as Cape Town, Johannesburg, and East London (Blaauw *et al.*, 2008). Labour migration entails migrants either planning to engage, or engaging in activities for which they are paid in countries other than those in which they were born or in other parts of their home countries (Du Plessis, 2015).

High levels of unemployment in the rural homelands oblige ever-increasing numbers of people to adopt survivalist strategies such as day labour. According to Blaauw, Botha, Schenck and Schoeman (2013), day labour represents a highly observable and visible response to unemployment in South Africa and those who participate in it are extremely vulnerable. As it has been noted, it is evident that day labourers are often severely exploited by some employers and subjected to harassment by the police and local residents. In addition, they are often poorly paid, subjected to poor working conditions, have little or no hope that their lives will improve, and struggle from one day to the next, merely to survive (International Labour Organisation, 2001). It

is for all of these reasons that Standing (2011) characterises the circumstances of day labourers as ‘precarious’, in that they afford them no security whatsoever and require them to accept the reality of the survival of the fittest, with all of the psychological distress which accompanies it (Wilson, 2006). Consequently, an in-depth investigation was conducted to explore the lived experiences of day labourers and the hardships which they face in the course of endeavouring to survive.

1.3 Theoretical framework of the study

The two broad approaches which were adopted in order to develop the research design for the study were systems theory and the strengths-based approach. It needs to be emphasised that the principal motivations included their inherent suitability for obtaining a proper understanding of the phenomenon under investigation, which is further articulated in the sections which follow, and the complementary manner in which they support each other. Brief summaries of the approaches are provided in the sections which follow.

1.3.1 Systems theory

As Coady and Lehmann (2016) explain, systems theory is widely used in social work research. It entails an awareness of the various different systems in which individual people and groups function and the ways in which systems interact with one another. The approach was considered to be appropriate because it enabled a comprehensive understanding of the systems in which day labourers function, such as their family systems, the system which is represented by East London, the socioeconomic system in which they function, and the groups which they form with other day labourers.

1.3.1.1 The complex interactions which are inherent in systems theory

Systems theory holds that systems are composed of many components, which may interact with one another. The complex nature of systems becomes apparent when they are considered as sets of interrelated elements, each of which is related either directly or indirectly to every other element and no subset of elements is unrelated to any other subset (Emery, 1981:380). For the purposes of this research study, the definition implies the assumption that although day labourers may not be aware of some of the subsystems in which they function, all are either directly or indirectly interrelated, with reciprocal effects being felt among the various subsystems.

1.3.2 The strengths-based theory (SBT)

The strengths-based approach is based upon a theory for social work practice which emphasises the strengths of individual people and their capacities for self-determination. It is both a philosophical standpoint and a means of viewing clients as resourceful agents who are resilient in the face of adversity (Saleebey, 2008). The approach is client-centred and emphasises future outcomes and the strengths which individual people possess to overcome particular problems or crises. The strengths-based approach can also be applied outside of the domain of social work through the adoption of strengths-based practices (Pulla, 2006). Irrespective of the discipline to which the approach is applied, its defining characteristic is the emphasis which it places upon facilitating the development of the abilities of individual people and groups to foster their ability to assist themselves. According to Pulla (2006), the strengths-based approach concentrates on enabling individual people, groups, and organisations to make optimal use of the strengths and resources which they possess in order to become the agents of their recovery and empowerment. The significance of the strengths-based approach for the purposes of this research study lies in the coherent framework which it provides for assessing and evaluating the strategies which day labourers develop to overcome the hardships which they encounter daily.

Strengths-based theory is also concerned with the concept of resilience. Theron and Theron (2010) define resilience as the capacity to perform well, despite adverse conditions. They characterise the processes and resources which encourage resiliency as ‘resilience-enablers’. Resilience accords with the imperatives of the strengths-based approach as they are enumerated by Pulla (2006). In addition, it also provides a relevant criterion for evaluating the ability of people to maintain adequate levels of functioning in the face of adversity within a number of different systems in their social environments (Van Breda, 2018a).

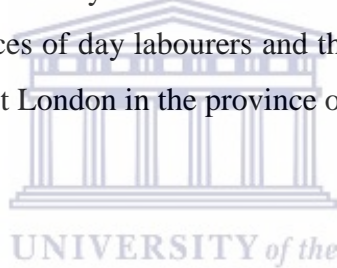
1.4 Formulation of the research problem

The defining characteristics of day labourers which have been emphasised so far do not provide an adequate definition of the global phenomenon of day labouring. Day labouring is essentially non-continuous employment which is not regulated by the labour laws of individual countries. The precarious nature of day labour is not confined to standing at collection points in the hope of obtaining a single day’s poorly paid and possibly hazardous employment. Day labourers find

themselves completely outside of the frameworks which normally afford employed people secure employment and ensure that their basic human rights are upheld. They are effectively without rights and they are constantly at the risk of losing the meagre remuneration which working under these debilitating circumstances provides to them.

It appears that, to date, most studies pertaining to day labourers have been quantitative in nature and have concerned their socioeconomic circumstances (Blaauw *et al.*, 2007; Viljoen, Schenck, & Blaauw, 2012; Blaauw, 2010) and paid little attention to their subjective experiences. A notable exception is the qualitative study which was conducted by Malinga (2015) in Cape Town, concerning the fathering practices of African men in precarious employment. As the plight of day labourers can be properly understood only through an in-depth investigation of their perceptions, beliefs, and opinions, there is a great need for qualitative studies which allow their voices to be heard. Consequently, this research study was conducted in order to carry out an in-depth investigation of the lived experiences of day labourers and the nature of the hardships which are inherent in their experiences in East London in the province of the Eastern Cape in South Africa.

1.5 Research questions



As the study was conducted in order to carry out an in-depth investigation of the lived experiences of day labourers and the nature of the hardships which they encounter in the informal labour market in East London in the province of the Eastern Cape, the following research questions were outlined:

- **What are the lived experiences of day labourers in East London?**
- **What is the nature of the hardships which day labourers encounter in East London?**

1.5.1 Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study were:

- To develop a **socioeconomic profile** for day labourers in East London
- To investigate and identify the difficulties which day labourers encounter at **hiring sites**

- To investigate and identify the difficulties and problems which day labourers encounter at their temporary **places of employment**
- To investigate and identify the nature of the problems which day labourers encounter in their **family life**
- To investigate and identify the **coping strategies** which day labourers use to cope with the hardships, difficulties, and problems which they encounter in their daily lives

1.5.2 Research approach

A mixed methods approach was elected as an appropriate research approach to the study, by making use of both quantitative and qualitative research methods. Mixed-methods research entails collecting and analysing both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or series of studies. Its central premise is that combining quantitative and qualitative approaches to research is likely to provide a better understanding of research problems than using only one of the two approaches (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2011).

A mixed-methods approach in the research study was considered to be appropriate for two principal reasons:

- Triangulation, which permits comparisons to be made between the findings which are generated by quantitative and qualitative data and sets of findings to corroborate each other.
- Complementarity, in the sense that mixed-methods research exploits the strengths of each approach and compensates for the weaknesses of each.

1.6 Research design

In this research study a sequential mixed-methods explanatory research design was developed, which entailed the collection and analysis of quantitative data being followed by the collection and analysis of qualitative data. The mixed-methods research design was developed for the purpose of using the qualitative results to assist in explaining and interpreting the findings of the quantitative study (Creswell, 2011). It was also considered that the sequential explanatory research design would enable a socioeconomic profile of the day labourers. The day labourers comprised of the research sample which was developed by means of quantitative measurements, before proceeding to triangulate the qualitative and quantitative findings.

1.7 Research methodology

The research methodology for this study covered the selection of the target population, sampling techniques, the methods which were used to collect and analyse the data, the measures which were taken to ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, and the ethical considerations which were respected at all times during the conducting of the study. It needs to be emphasised that the two sets of data were collected and analysed separately, with the gathering of the qualitative data commencing after the completion of the collecting of the quantitative data.

1.7.1 The province of the Eastern Cape

The province of the Eastern Cape is situated in the south-eastern region of South Africa. It is the second largest province after the Northern Cape and covers an area of 169 580 square kilometres. It comprises the Alfred Nzo, Buffalo City Metropolitan, Amathole, Cacadu, Chris Hani, Nelson Mandela Bay Metropolitan, and Ukhahlamba district municipalities (Department of Social Development, Research and Population Unit, 2010).



Figure 1.2: Map of the province of the Eastern Cape



(Source: <https://www.roomsforafrica.com/dest/south-africa/eastern-cape.jsp>)

In 2010 Macaula assessed that more than a decade after a successful democracy had been established in South Africa, the province of the Eastern Cape remained mired in structural poverty, which was evident according to all demographic, health, and socioeconomic indicators. From this statement it may be inferred that the Eastern Cape is characterised by economic conditions which are skewed in favour of relatively few people at the expense of the overwhelming majority (Ntingi, 2016). According to the Real Economy Bulletin Provincial Review (2016), the Eastern Cape has been more adversely affected than other provinces by the effects of the apartheid dispensation upon economic structures, particularly with respect to access to economic opportunities for ordinary South Africans. As it has already been mentioned, the widespread poverty stems partly from the recent history of a sizeable portion of the province as the former homeland which were referred to as Transkei and Ciskei.

Provincial Premier ¹Phumulo Masualle has spoken out against the high levels of unemployment which are largely responsible for the poor socioeconomic conditions which prevail in the province. According to the Eastern Cape Socio-Economic Consultative Council, the rate of unemployment among the youth in the province was 41.1% and 18.48% for adults (ECSECC, 2010). More recently, the rate for the expanded definition of unemployment stood at 41% (Stats SA, 2018). At present, 950 000 people are seeking employment in the province, many of whom are young people from the rural areas (QLFS, 2018). Although the 2018 Quarterly Labour Force Survey suggests that the government of the Eastern Cape has taken steps to alleviate the unemployment crisis (QLFS, 2018), socioeconomic conditions in the province remain generally dire.

Standards of education continue to be generally very poor in the historically deprived areas of the Eastern Cape (Fobosi, 2018), are largely unchanged by comparison with the apartheid era, and the numbers of children who are attending school in the Eastern Cape may even be decreasing. Education is a significant indicator of development, owing to the influence which it exerts upon the development of human capabilities, productivity, and, ultimately, levels of income (SERO, 2015). Levels of educational attainment are used as indicators of the levels of skills which the members of populations possess, and the higher the levels of educational attainment, the more opportunities there are for increased earnings, improved social circumstances, and attracting investment to developing countries. Annual levels of educational attainment in each province are expressed in terms of Senior Certificate pass rates. In 2014 it was found that levels of educational attainment in the Eastern Cape were low, as only 20.1% of the population had matriculated (SERO, 2015). Table 1.1 demonstrates that the Eastern Cape had the poorest pass rate of the nine provinces of South Africa in 2017, which does not bode well for the future socioeconomic advancement of the province.

¹ Phumulo Masualle is the Premier of the province of the Eastern Cape, who announced on News24 on August 5 of 2018 that unemployment was a ‘blemish we must confront, fight, and defeat’.

Table 1.1: The performance of schools measured according to Senior Certificate pass rates per province (%)

Province	Pass rate (%)
Northern Cape	75.6%
Western Cape	82.8%
Eastern Cape	65%
Limpopo	65.6%
North West	79.4%
Gauteng	85.1%
Mpumalanga	74.8%
KwaZulu Natal	72.9%
Free State	86.1%

(Source: The National Senior Certificate Schools Performance Report, 2017)

1.7.2 The setting in which the study was conducted and the research population

The study was conducted in East London, which falls under the Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality, in the province of the Eastern Cape. The municipality is one of two metropolitan municipalities in the province and has witnessed dramatic influxes of day labourers endeavouring to enter the informal labour market owing to high levels of unemployment. The rate of unemployment, which stands at 42% according to the expanded definition, is the highest of the nine provinces in South Africa (Stats SA, 2018) and economic conditions are generally correspondingly poor. A research population can be defined as the entire group of people, objects, or events in which the characteristics in which a particular investigator is interested are to be found (Bless & Higson-Smith, 2006). The research population for this research study comprised all of the day labourers who gathered at hiring sites in East London where the study was being conducted.

1.7.3 Sampling techniques

To recruit and select the participants in the study, a convenience or availability sampling was used for the first quantitative phase of the study. Selecting this technique entailed selecting all of the day labourers who were available and willing to be interviewed to participate in the study (Bless and Higson-Smith, 2006). Participants for the second qualitative phase of the study were recruited from some of the same sites at which day labourers were interviewed during the first phase. Owing to the mobility and the continuously changing numbers of the target population, it was not possible to use purposive sampling, as there was no information concerning any potential participants and could not be sure who would be at the hiring sites. Accordingly, convenience sampling was used to select participants who were available and willing to be interviewed.

1.7.4 Methods used to collect the data

The quantitative data was collected by means of a questionnaire which was administered with the assistance of trained fieldworkers. The fieldworkers were recruited through the Department of Social Work at Fort Hare University. The fieldworkers were newly qualified social workers who were awaiting to be placed in positions at the Department of Social Development.

The questionnaire consisted of both open- and closed-ended questions. The open-ended questions were included to provide additional details concerning the responses to some of the closed-ended questions. The questionnaire was made available in two languages, namely, isiXhosa and English, as they are the predominantly spoken languages by the day labourers who gather at the sites.

After the quantitative data had been collected, cleaned, and captured, the process of collecting qualitative data began. The decision to include qualitative data was also partially motivated by a desire to obtain a better understanding of the processes and the social and cultural contexts which underlie patterns of human social behaviour (Maree, 2007). One-on-one in-depth interviews were conducted with day labourers at the four sites which were identified. The sites have been randomly selected in each of the areas of East London. One in the mid city (east), one site to the South, one to the North (more affluent area) and another to the west. Interviews were conducted until data saturation was achieved.

The qualitative data was collected by mean of two methods, namely:

- Observations, which can provide researchers with the perspective of an insider in relation to the group dynamics which prevail and the behaviour of participants in various different settings (Maree, 2014). From the standpoint of an observer, it was possible to observe both the interactions between the day labourers, the day labourers and their potential employers and the physical settings in which the interactions occurred. While observing the behaviour of the day labourers and prospective employers, the field notes were taken down to record actions, interactions, and events. (De Vos, Strydom, Fouché, & Delport, 2005).
- Semi-structured one-on-one interviews with day labourers. According to Krysik and Finn (2013), semi-structured interviews represent an effective means of collecting richly detailed data from participants. In the case of this study, semi-structured interviews enabled the obtaining of a deeper understanding of the phenomenon under the investigation (De Vos *et al.*, 2005).

1.7.5 Analysis of the data

After it had been captured in Excel, the quantitative data was analysed by means of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. The results were presented in the form of descriptive statistics. Descriptive analysis is used to describe the basic features of the data which has been collected during the course of conducting a research study. It provides simple numerically-based summaries of the characteristics of research samples in which individual researchers are interested (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). By contrast, the qualitative data was analysed by means of thematic analysis. The procedure entails analysing data by breaking it down and organising it in order to discern themes or patterns (Brown & Clarke, 2006).

1.7.6 Measures taken to ensure the trustworthiness of the research instruments

In social research it is essential to ensure the trustworthiness of both quantitative and qualitative research instruments (Shenton, 2004). According to Shenton (2004), qualitative researchers are required to present a convincing case to demonstrate that their work is academically sound, in accordance with specific criteria and by means of certain procedures, namely, credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability. Each of these four criteria contributes to

ensuring the reliability of qualitative research findings. Conversely, quantitative research instruments were evaluated according to the criteria of validity and reliability (Burns and Grove, 2006).

1.7.7 Ethical considerations

All reasonable measures were taken to adhere to the ethical code of behavior which applies to all professional research in the social sciences. The permission to conduct the study was obtained from the Senate Research Ethics Committee of the University of the Western Cape. The Research Ethics Committees of the university protect the welfare and rights of participants in all research studies, in accordance with national standards for ethical conduct.

The consent forms which the participants were required to sign enabled them to make informed decisions concerning whether they wished to participate and informed them that their participation would be strictly voluntary and that they had the right to withdraw their participation at any time, without incurring any penalties of any sort whatsoever. The participants were assured that they would be requested to provide information which related to the study only and that their privacy would not be compromised in any way. It was ensured that their anonymity was preserved by omitting the names of individual participants from transcripts of interviews and allocating fictitious names to them.

1.8 Definitions of key concepts

Neuman (1997) defines key concepts as significant words or phrases which are likely to be found in the title of a research topic. In order to facilitate an understanding of the theoretical framework upon which this research study was based, the following definitions are provided:

Day labourers: People who gather at informal pick-up points such as street corners, to sell their labour for the day, by the hour, or to perform a particular specific task for an employer (Schenck & Louw, 2005).

Day labour work: An activity or category of employment which entails seeking day-to-day temporary employment by people who have either lost the positions in which they had been employed or have not managed to secure full-time employment (Blaauw, Botha, Schenck, & Schoeman, 2013).

Vulnerable: Exposed to the possibility of being attacked or harmed, either physically or emotionally (Oxford Dictionary, 2010).

Lived experiences: Knowledge of the world which is gained through direct, first-hand experience of everyday events (Oxford dictionary, 2016).

Unemployment: A phenomenon which occurs as a result of failing to find work by people who actively seek employment (Quarterly Labour Force Survey, 2016).

Coping strategies: Behavioural, physical, and psychological strategies which people adopt or develop to master, tolerate, reduce, or minimise the effects of stressful events (Taylor & Kemeny, 1998).

1.9 Outline of the thesis

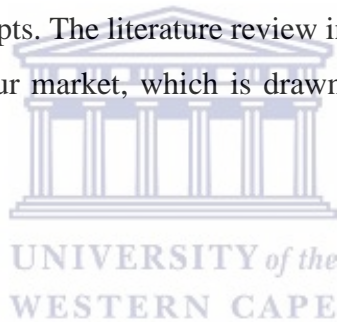
Each chapter commences with an introduction to provide an outline of its scope and closes with a summative conclusion. The chapters are arranged as follows:

- **Chapter 1:** Provides an introductory background to the research before proceeding to introduce the components of which the remaining chapters are comprised.
- **Chapter 2:** Takes the form of a comprehensive review of the relevant available literature pertaining to the phenomenon of day labour and a broad overview of the prevailing unemployment crisis in South Africa.
- **Chapter 3:** Is a discussion of the theoretical framework which was developed, using systems theory and the strengths-based approach to guide the conducting of the study.
- **Chapter 4:** Is devoted to a discussion of the research methodology and covers the research design, the target population, sampling techniques, the methods which were used to collect and analyse the data, and the ethical standards for conducting research in the social sciences, which were respected at all times during the conducting of the study.
- **Chapters 5 and 6:** Are devoted to a presentation of the data and a discussion of the methods which were used to analyse the sets of quantitative and qualitative data.
- **Chapter 7:** Takes the form of a review of the study, a summary of the findings, a presentation of the conclusions which were drawn from them and the

recommendations which were made on the basis of the conclusions, before concluding with suggestions for future research and concluding comments.

1.10 Chapter summary

Chapter 1 has endeavoured to provide a general overview of the research topic and the nature of the study. Its chief function is to introduce the discussions which are developed in each of the chapters which follow, in order to lay an effective foundation for the structure of the dissertation. Accordingly, a brief description and a concise introduction to the relevant available literature which is reviewed in Chapter 2, the theory upon which he drew in order to construct the theoretical framework, the research methodology which was developed in order to conduct the study, the methods which were used to ensure the validity and the reliability of the findings, and the ethical considerations which were respected in relation to the rights of the participants, before proceeding to provide definitions of key concepts. The literature review in the following chapter commences with an overview of the day labour market, which is drawn from both local and international sources.



CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1: Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the findings which were generated by a comprehensive review of the relevant available literature pertaining to the phenomenon of day labour and draws upon the work of both South African researchers and researchers who have conducted studies in other countries. The purpose of a literature review prior to designing a research study is to gain a comprehensive understanding of a particular research topic in relation to the research which has been conducted and a critical understanding of the events, occurrences or phenomena which are to be investigated, in order to identify areas which have not been adequately covered in existing bodies of knowledge (Terre Blanche, Durrheim, & Painter, 2006).

As Blaauw (2010) explains, day labour is a global phenomenon. Although valuable research has been conducted in countries abroad by researchers such as Valenzuela Jr. *et al.* (2006) in the United States, academic literature pertaining to the phenomenon in South Africa tends to be scarce. This section surveys both the limited amount of research which has been conducted in South Africa and research which has been conducted in other countries. Despite the limited amount of research which has been conducted in South Africa, it is abundantly evident that those who resort to day labouring encounter great hardships and are economically vulnerable (Schenck *et al.*, 2012; Blaauw, 2010). Blaauw, Pretorius, and Schenck (2007) confirm that the characteristics of the day labour market in South Africa leave day labourers vulnerable.

The literature review has been divided into sections, the first of which endeavours to provide an appropriate conceptual basis for the study by evaluating definitions of day labourers.

2.2: Towards a definition of day labourers

The National Employment Law Project (NELP) (2007) in the United States defines day labourers as short-term employees who work in industries such as landscaping, construction, food processing, and domestic and factory work. In the United States, some day labourers gather on street corners or negotiate with potential employers at designated shape-up sites, while others seek work through sites which are operated by community or faith-based organisations, a practice which

is not prevalent in South Africa. According to the NELP (2007), a growing number of day labourers find work through employment agencies which usually collect fees from employers and from day labourers for placement with third party employers. The day labourers to which the researcher refers in this study are those who stand at streetcorners each day in the hope of finding employment, without soliciting the services of labour brokers.

Day labourers constitute a significant sector of the informal labour market in South Africa. Blaauw *et al.* (2006:460) characterise the informal sector as including street traders, hawkers, suppliers of 'street services' such as shoe repairs and hairdressing, taxis, informal manufacturers, car guards, and waste pickers, although they differentiate between activities which merely allow those who engage in them to survive and those which may be more lucrative than similar work in the formal sector.

Louw (2007) defines day labourers as people who find work with different employers each day, for which they are paid at the end of each working day. Day labourers are excluded from the formal labour market, are paid in cash, and do not enjoy benefits such as health insurance and other employment benefits. Employers are the chief beneficiaries of day labour, as they have few responsibilities towards the workers whom they hire and they are able to make use of them at their own convenience.

2.2.1: Terminology

Different meanings are ascribed to the concept of day labour and different terminology is used to describe day labourers in different parts of the world. In the United States, Valenzuela Jr. and co-researchers at the Centre for the Study of Urban Poverty at the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) use the term 'day labourers', while the findings of a ground-breaking study by Schenck and Louw (2005:4) revealed that no single word is used for day labourers throughout South Africa. In different regions the names which are applied to day labourers and day labour often reflect the ways in which they are perceived. The terms which are used to describe day labourers in the province of Gauteng in South Africa include 'casuals', 'piece jobbers', and 'dailys'. In the Northern Cape they are colloquially referred to in Afrikaans as *skroppie-soekers*, which implies that they are people who are seeking scraps of employment (Blaauw, 2010:1).

Malinga (2015:79) explains that the day labourers who gathered at roadsides among whom she conducted her research referred to themselves as *umavumbuka*. She explains that the name is derived from the isiXhosa and isiZulu name for the *Hydnora Africana* plant, which develops underground and emerges only to bloom. Accordingly, the name is applied by day labourers to themselves as an apt metaphor for their periodic appearances at particular points such as roadsides and street corners.

In Japan, day-labour pools are known as *yoseba*. Although the effects of globalisation have resulted in large numbers of relatively unskilled Japanese workers in sectors such as the construction industry becoming unemployed, the concept of *yoseba* dates back to the Edo period, which endured from 1603 to 1868. The term was originally applied to labour camps for drifters and criminals, which underscores the degree of social censure which is associated with being unemployed in Japan (Gill, 2001). It needs to be emphasised that the phenomenon of day labour is significantly more prevalent in some countries than in others.

Although different terms may be used to describe the phenomenon of day labour in different countries, the forms which it may take have a number of characteristics in common, irrespective of where the phenomenon is found in the world. Day labourers are usually unemployed people who are unable to find employment in the formal economies of their countries, or people who enter the labour market for the first time by working in the the informal sector. In many countries, home owners, owners of businesses, and building contractors predominate among employers of day labourers (Blaauw, 2010; Valenzuela Jr. *et al.*, 2006).

2.3 Informal economies

The informal economies of countries are usually collections of unorganised, unregulated, mostly legal but unregistered, economic activities which are either individually or family-owned and use simple, labour-intensive technology (Barker, 2007:59). In the International Labour Conference (ILC) (2002), the term ‘informal economy’ was adopted to refer to all economic activities by workers and economic units which are, in law or in practice, not covered or insufficiently covered by formal arrangements. As these activities are not covered by the labour laws of individual countries, they either fall outside of the formal reach of the law, or they are not covered in practice

(ILC, 2002). Consequently, although people who participate in the informal economies of countries operate within the formal scope of the law, the law is not applied to, or enforced in, informal economies.

Informal economies tend to flourish in conditions which are characterised by unemployment, underemployment, inequality, and precarious employment (ILC, 2014). They play crucial roles in societies in which these circumstances prevail, particularly with respect to enabling people to generate incomes, owing to the relative ease with which informal economies can be entered and low requirements in terms of levels of education, skills, technology, and capital (ILC, 2014). Nevertheless, most people enter the informal economies of their countries not by choice, but as a result of the need to survive and to have access to basic income-generating activities (Blaauw, 2010). According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO) (2002), the informal economies of countries are characterised by severe shortages of employment and disproportionate shares of their working poor. Research which has been conducted by the ILO (2002) reveals that workers in informal economies are exposed to significantly greater risks of poverty than their counterparts in the formal economy. Owing to these factors and others, there is a significant positive correlation between working informally and being poor and vulnerable (ILC, 2014). Although some activities provide reasonable livelihoods and incomes, most people who work in informal economies are required to work in inadequate and unsafe working conditions, tend to have low literacy and working skills, and to have had few opportunities to receive appropriate training (ILO, 2002; Blaauw, 2010; Schenck *et al.*, 2012).

Informal economies are growing features in most developing countries and continuously increasing in size (Cichello & Rogan, 2017). It is estimated that the non-agricultural sector accounts for 78% of the informal work force in Latin America, 57% of that of the Caribbean, and between 45% and 85% of that of Asia (Sida, 2004). In all developing countries, self-employment comprises a greater proportion of informal employment than wage employment (Cichello & Rogan, 2017). Self-employment comprises 70% of informal employment in sub-Saharan Africa. If South Africa is excluded, it comprises 81%, while the figures for North Africa, Latin America, and Asia are 62%, 60%, and 59% respectively. By contrast, informal wage employment in the developing world constitutes 30 to 40% of informal employment outside of agriculture (Sida, 2004). In recent times, a great deal of evidence has been provided throughout the world to confirm

that the informal economy has significant potential for creating employment and generating incomes (Blaauw, 2010).

2.3.1 The informal economy in South Africa

Very high rates of unemployment in post-apartheid South Africa played a considerable role in the emergence of the informal sector of the economy (Cichello & Rogan, 2017:1). As the informal economy in South Africa is considered to be made up of very small economic units which operate outside of the purview of regulations and statistics, there is little, if any, data available concerning their output (Valodia & Devey, 2012). Lund and Skinner (2004) maintain that the informal economy in South Africa is underdeveloped, mainly as a result of a lack of education and the ability to develop skills which make people employable. From a similar standpoint, Cichello and Rogan (2017) assess that the informal economy in South Africa is characterised by poor levels of education and unskilled workers. They contend that even in instances in which there has been a degree of recognition of the potential of the informal sector to create employment and generate livelihoods, policy responses remain unsupportive. Conversely, Yu (2013) maintains that significant numbers of the uneducated youth who struggle to find employment in the formal sector could survive in the informal sector.

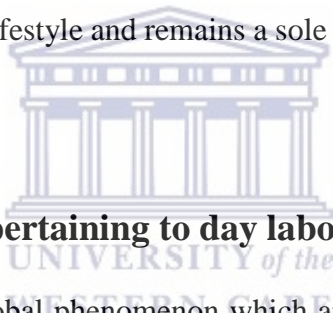
The informal sector in South Africa makes a relatively small contribution to absorbing its labour force by comparison with that of many other countries. In India, the sector absorbs 90%, while the figures for the Democratic Republic of Congo, Cameroon, and Mozambique are 77%, 84%, and 87.2% respectively (Harmse, 2012). As the informal sector in South Africa has a meaningful role to play to combat the present rate of unemployment, which stands at 27.2% (Stats SA, 2018), appropriate policy frameworks and strategies for the informal economy need to be developed in South Africa, without hampering the potential of the informal economy to contribute to increasing the GDP of the country, creating employment, and economic growth. The role which day labouring plays in this respect can not be ignored.

2.3.2 Characteristics of day labouring in South Africa

The essential characteristics of the informal economy in South Africa, as they are summarised by Blaauw (2010), are particularly applicable to the day labouring sector: low levels of educational attainment, uncertain levels of income, its long-term nature, and a skewed racial distribution (Blaauw, 2010).

- **Low levels of educational attainment:** As the informal economy in South Africa is characterised by low levels of educational attainment, those who participate in it experience great difficulty competing for positions in the formal labour market, which inhibits making transitions from the informal to the formal economy (Blaauw, 2010). Malinga (2015:37) maintains that educational attainment has long been established as one of the principal contributory factors to the high levels of unemployment which prevail in South Africa. Low levels of educational attainment inevitably entail few opportunities for gainful employment and little likelihood of making transitions from informal to formal employment (Riddel & Song, 2011).
- **Uncertain levels of income:** Precarious incomes represent a defining distinction between the informal and formal labour markets (Cichello & Rogan, 2017:4). The general lack of skills and educational qualifications in the informal labour market usually severely restricts the earnings of those who participate in it, by comparison with the formal sector, which employs 6.2% of the population of South Africa (Stats SA, 2017).
- **Its long-term nature:** People tend to participate in the informal economies in South Africa (Blaauw, 2010; Louw, 2004) and other countries (Valenzuela Jr., 2006) for extended periods, often with no prospect of ever finding employment in the formal economies of their countries. According to McKeever (2007:82), it has been established that from 1951 to 1991 the average length of time for which people have remained in the informal sector in South Africa was ten and a half years. In a study of the employment histories of day labourers in South Africa, Blaauw (2010) found that the participant who had worked as a day labourer for the longest had commenced in 1958, while another had done so in 1971, another in 1972, and another in 1979. Although their tenure as day labourers working in the informal sector had been long, it should not be assumed that they were always in secure employment, as they would have been vulnerable to periods of unemployment.

- **A skewed racial distribution:** According to Petersen (2011), drawing from the statistics which were provided by the Quarterly Labour Force Survey of 2011, more than 80% of workers who participate in the informal economy in South Africa are black and black workers are particularly predominant in urban areas. The preponderance of workers in the sector is generally acknowledged to result from the policies of the previous government, which denied black people access to high quality education and the right to reside in urban areas, where employment in the formal sector was to be found. Participation in the informal economy by whites, Indians, and coloureds is significantly lower than that of blacks. Whites tend to consider the informal economy as a temporary option in the absence of formal employment, by contrast with blacks, who are generally obliged to remain in the informal economy for much longer, owing to a lack of financial security and few options for employment. Many spend most of their working lives in informal employment and for some it becomes a default lifestyle and remains a sole source of income (McKeever, 2007; Saunders, 2005: 130).



2.4 International literature pertaining to day labour markets

Day labour markets represent a global phenomenon which appears to be becoming increasingly pronounced and widespread (Blaauw, 2010:1). Intensive research concerning day labour markets has been conducted in the United States. As the market is an informal one, its exact size is very difficult to determine (Gallardo, 2012: 4). Valenzuela Jr. *et al.* (2006) estimate that on any working day in the United States, of the order of 117,600 workers are either seeking employment as day labourers or working in that capacity. Gonzalez (2007) has calculated the number of day labourers in the state of California alone to be in the region of 40 000, which amounts to approximately 3% of employed undocumented immigrants in California or 0.2% of its employed labour force.

In cities throughout the United States, groups which are comprised mainly of Latino immigrants gather each morning on street corners and outside of home improvement stores and moving van rental businesses seeking employment, which is in most cases temporary, in construction, painting, moving, landscaping, or other types of strenuous and often dangerous manual labour which are generally scorned by many of the country's citizens (Gallardo, 2012:1). According to Valenzuela Jr. *et al.* (2004), the phenomenon represents an employment-seeking strategy which all immigrant

workers, most of whom have come from Latin America, use to gain a foothold in the economy of their host country.

The phenomenon has also been observed in other countries, such as Egypt, Greece, Hong Kong, Canada, India, Russia, the United Arab Emirates, Kazakhstan, and El Salvador (Valenzuela Jr. *et al.*, 2006). By contrast, it has not yet been observed in developed countries such as Germany, the United Kingdom, and Australia (Valenzuela Jr. *et al.*, 2006).

2.5 The day labour market in South Africa

Both Barker (2003) and Louw (2007) define the day labour market as an imaginary market, where labour is bought and sold. Louw (2007:327) qualifies the definition by maintaining that the day labour market is not only an imaginary marketplace, but also ubiquitous and highly visible in the form of the informal hiring sites by the sides of roads in cities throughout South Africa. Day labourers constitute an integral component of the labour force whose labour is traded on the open labour market. Although the labour market, like other markets, allocates resources and distributes income, it also differs from commodity markets. The labour force of a country is its economically active population (EAP) and comprises the total number of people in a country who are willing and able to work, irrespective of whether they are employed or temporarily unemployed. The EAP consists of workers who are in formal employment, engage in atypical work, are self-employed, underemployed, and unemployed in the formal and informal sectors of the economy of a country (Department of Labour, 2018).

Blaauw *et al.* (2013:635) concur with the assessment of Louw (2007), by maintaining that day labouring in South Africa occurs throughout South Africa and is observably visible from the hiring sites at roadsides everywhere. They elaborate by explaining that day labouring has recently gained momentum in South Africa as an informal survivalist economic activity in which unemployed people engage (Schenck & Nell, 2009). Workers congregate on street corners in all cities and towns in the country, seeking temporary employment for the day or for a limited extended period (Xipu, 2014). The day labour market in South Africa is similar to that of the United States, in the respect that it serves mainly as a catchment area for those who have never been employed, those who have become unemployed and seek re-employment, and also for those who know that they will not find employment because they lack qualifications or formal schooling, those who have been in prison and have criminal records, or those who regard themselves as being too old for the

formal market (Valenzuela Jr., 2003; Valenzuela Jr. *et al.*, 2004; Schenck & Louw; 2005; Blaauw, 2010).

After conducting a national study, Blaauw (2010) estimated that 45 000 people, mostly male and black, congregated at more than a 1000 places in South Africa to seek casual employment (Blaauw, 2010).

2.6 Unemployment: global and South African contexts

High rates of unemployment in many countries and chronic vulnerable employment in many emerging and developing countries continue to devastate livelihoods throughout the world (ILO, 2017). Unemployment has a decisive influence upon the size of the day labour market in South Africa, as it does in all other countries in which the phenomenon of day labour is observed. In South Africa day labourers form a segment of the unemployed population in a relatively small growing economy, which is characterised by very high income inequality, social exclusion, very high rates of unemployment, and a considerable amount of absolute poverty (Louw, 2007:325).

The next section is devoted to definitions and categories of unemployment and a discussion of the social ill which it represents from both global and South African perspectives.

2.6.1 Definitions of unemployment

A broad introductory explanation of the concept of unemployment could refer to a state of affairs which is characterised by people not having paid employment or being out of work (Oxford Dictionary, 2010). In relation to South African unemployment statistics, the term ‘unemployed’ is used to refer to people between the ages of 15 and 64 years who were without work during the week of reference, had actively sought work in the four weeks before they were interviewed for the survey, were available to begin employment, or had obtained employment which they were due to commence in the future (Stats SA, 2016:xxi). Other definitions, such as that of McConnell, Brue, and Macpherson (1999:565), are much broader and make allowances for circumstances which are beyond the control of individual people. According to their definition, a person is classified as being unemployed if he or she is older than 16 years of age, is without work, had sought work within the previous four weeks, expected to be re-hired for a position from which he or she had been retrenched, had a desire to seek work but had been ill, or was waiting to begin

work within 30 days (McConnell *et al.*, 1999:565). Blaauw *et al.* (2008) maintain that unemployment represents a socioeconomic problem of great magnitude for South Africa, with debilitating effects in relation to economic welfare, the erosion of human capital, social exclusion, and social instability. In addition, Louw (2007) considers that unemployment could be the most severe socioeconomic problem in the world and that for South African society it is the root cause of many other problems and social ills, an assessment which is shared by many.

2.6.1.1 Categories of unemployment

The many categories of unemployment include frictional unemployment, seasonal unemployment, cyclical unemployment, and structural unemployment. Each category is discussed in the sections which follow.

- **Frictional unemployment** refers to the type of unemployment which occurs as a result of misaligned information and time lags in the labour market, as people seeking employment and employers attempt to locate each other (Borjas, 2010:504; Ehrenberg & Smith, 1988:591). Frictional unemployment remains a constant feature of all economies, because even during full employment, when the demand for labour is equal to the supply, there are always new entrants into the labour market and people leaving it (Ehrenberg & Smith, 1988:591).
- **Seasonal unemployment** is caused by reductions in demand in the labour market (Borjas, 2010:504). According to Mafiri (2002:11) and Borjas (2010:504), seasonal unemployment is often highly predictable, with employment being available during ‘peak periods’ and unemployment being prevalent during ‘off-peak periods’. This definition is relevant to the interrupted patterns of employment which are associated with day labouring (Valenzuela Jr., 2006) and the seasonal nature which Blaauw (2010) attributes to it.
- **Cyclical unemployment** is also known as demand-deficient unemployment. It occurs as a result of downward wage rigidity and an oversupply of labour (Borjas, 2010:505). Downward wage rigidity results from employers being unable to reduce the wages of their employees in order to reduce costs, owing to the rights of employees being upheld by the labour unions which represent them.

Structural unemployment is often considered to represent the most problematic type of unemployment, as it is characterised by mismatches in the labour market. It can be caused by mismatches with respect to particular skills, which result in people who seek employment not having the skills which are required to occupy vacancies which are available in the market (Borjas, 2010:504).

2.6.2 Global overview of unemployment

Unemployment represents a global socioeconomic problem. The findings of a study which the International Labour Organisation (2004) conducted to investigate levels of unemployment throughout the world revealed that there were nearly 88 million unemployed people in the world and that the youth constituted only 25% of its working population (ILO, 2004). These statistics convincingly underscore the magnitude of the problem unemployment represents throughout the world. In addition, reducing levels of unemployment would also lower levels of poverty and increase the GDPs of impoverished countries (World Bank, 2006). In 2016 the International Labour Organisation projected that there would be more than 201 million unemployed people in the world, with an additional 2.7 million in 2018, as the pace of the growth of the labour force continues to increase (ILO, 2016). According to Guy Ryder, the Director-General of the International Labour Organisation, the two principal priorities for the global labour market are to repair the damage which was caused by global social and economic crises and to create employment which is of adequate quality for the tens of millions of people who enter the labour market for the first time each year (National Bureau of Statistics, 2017).

Global economic growth continues to lag behind, in terms of both the levels of growth and the degree of inclusivity which are achieved. Consequently, the outlook for the global economy and its ability to generate sufficient employment is not an altogether optimistic one.

2.6.3 Unemployment in South Africa

The devastating global crisis of unemployment, which has disastrous consequences for developing countries such as South Africa, automatically transfers the effects of the collapse of world markets and the global recession to the local arena. As a direct consequence, South Africa still struggles to return to sustainable economic growth. The year-on-year growth of the GDP has been below 1% in each quarter since 2015Q3 and dropped to 0.1% in 2016Q1, the lowest since the 2009 global

recession (Statistics South Africa, 2017). The picture is even gloomier when population growth is factored in. The per capita GDP has been stagnant since 2013, growing only marginally in 2014 and falling marginally in 2016. Consequently, the economy and the labour force of South Africa is faced with significant obstacles in relation to retaining or generating employment, particularly for less skilled workers.

The South African economy witnessed a decline in employment of 944 000 or 6.4% from 2008 to 2009, which was sparked by the local effects of the global financial crisis. Subsequently, employment has decreased steadily, with 16 million workers having lost their positions by 2015Q4. If the expanded definition of unemployment is adopted, which includes discouraged work seekers, it can be concluded that unemployment has followed a generally upward trajectory. In 2008, it was at its lowest, with average figures of in the region of 5.5 million. For the next six years, levels of unemployment increased continuously, surpassing 8.0 million in 2016. The rate has risen steadily since the global recession of 2009, reaching a high of 34.4% in 2016Q2. Despite the efforts of the government to tackle the problem, unemployment remains one of the most significant threats to the well-being of a great many South Africans, particularly the youth (Statistics South Africa, 2017). Although public employment programmes such as the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) have been developed and implemented to provide unemployed people with employment, rates of unemployment remain alarmingly high. The government of South Africa has been perceived to be unwilling to prioritise attracting foreign investment in order to promote steady economic growth and it has also been suggested that the influence of trade unions has served as a significant disincentive for potential foreign investors. By contrast, the recent jobs summit which was spearheaded by President Cyril Ramaphosa and convened by the National Economic Development and Labour Council (NEDLAC) ostensibly represented a concerted initiative of the government to work with both business and organised labour to develop effective means of combating unemployment, although the South African Federation of Trade Unions (SAFTU) declined to attend (News24, 2018).

The increasingly disturbing statistics concerning unemployment have been accompanied by correspondingly increasing evidence of institutionalised corruption, with ‘state capture’ becoming a popular rallying cry in the political and economic arenas of South Africa in concerted campaigns

to end the presidency of Jacob Zuma (Martin & Solomon, 2017). As the allegations of state capture and wholesale looting of state resources came at a time which was characterised by sluggish economic growth, the prospects for alleviating unemployment remained dismal (Martin & Solomon, 2017). Hartley (2016:1) maintains that as the watchword of state capture began its ascendancy, the economy of South Africa shrank by 1.2% in the first quarter of 2016 alone. By 2016 the country had lost its pre-eminence as the wealthiest country in Africa in terms of the size of its economy and its GDP and unemployment stood at 26.7%, an eight-year high (Stats SA, 2016). It has subsequently risen to 27.2% (Stats SA, 2018), as the economy has become increasingly centralised and only a relatively small segment of society is able to benefit from it. Table 2.1 provides rates of unemployment according to the expanded definition in South Africa from 2014 to 2016, in terms of specific demographic characteristics.



Table 2.1: Unemployment trends in South Africa

	2014	2015	2016	Change ('15-'16)	
	Quarter 3 (Percent)	Quarter 3 (Percent)	Quarter 3 (Percent)	<i>Absolute (Points)</i>	<i>Relative (Percent)</i>
Overall unemployment rate	33.6	32.5	34.0	1.5	4.5
By population group					
Black	38.0	36.8	38.2	1.4	3.9
Coloured	26.8	26.2	26.3	0.1	0.5
Asian	14.8	15.1	17.2	2.2	14.4
White	9.3	7.0	8.6	1.7	23.9
By gender					
Male	30.7	29.4	30.9	1.4	4.8
Female	37.0	36.1	37.6	1.5	4.2
By age group					
15-to-24-year-olds	62.2	59.2	62.5	3.3	5.6
25-to-34-year-olds	39.1	37.6	39.3	1.7	4.4
35-to-44-year-olds	25.6	25.1	26.7	1.6	6.4
45-to-54-year-olds	19.8	19.6	20.5	0.8	4.3
55-to-65-year-olds	12.8	13.9	14.4	0.5	3.6
By educational attainment					
Primary or less	36.1	32.1	35.1	3.0	9.3
Secondary not completed	42.6	41.2	42.5	1.4	3.4
Secondary completed	32.3	32.5	32.7	0.2	0.6
Diploma or certificate	17.4	18.7	20.5	1.8	9.7
Degree	6.3	5.9	9.4	3.6	60.5

(Source: Statistics South Africa, 2017)

It demonstrates that young people are particularly adversely affected by unemployment and the relationship between rates of unemployment and educational attainment. It also confirms that only tertiary education qualifications militate against extremely high rates of unemployment (Stats SA, 2017; SERO, 2017).

2.6.4 Unemployment among the youth of South Africa

South Africa is particularly severely afflicted by unemployment among its youth (Lam, Leibbrandt, & Mhlatsheni, 2008:1). Recent statistics which have been released by Statistics South Africa revealed that of the 433 000 of people who joined the ranks of the unemployed during the first quarter of 2017, in the region of 58% were young people between the ages of 15 and 34 years, the age group which is most adversely affected by the ever-increasing rates of unemployment (Stats SA, 2017). Consequently, it can be anticipated that the ranks of day labourers may be swelled by young people in search of employment.

The rate of unemployment among people in South Africa who have not matriculated remains high at 33.1%, which is 5.4 percentage points higher than the national average. Low levels of educational attainment and rampant unemployment oblige many of the unemployed youth to adopt survivalist strategies such as day labouring. As day labouring is one of the most precarious forms of employment in South Africa and generally yields low and uncertain earnings, many are compelled to eke out existences in circumstances which are characterised by severe deprivation and marginalisation (Blaauw *et al.*, 2013:637). According to the International Labour Organisation (2001:2), informal workers such as day labourers frequently live in conditions of abject poverty, are grossly exploited, have no access to protection, fall ill as a result of not having access to potable water or basic social services, are often seriously injured, maimed or worse, owing to a lack of basic safety conditions at work, have little or no hope that their lives will improve, and struggle from one day to the next, in order merely to survive (International Labour Organisation, 2001:2). This assessment is eloquent testimony to the extent to which day labourers are denied social justice.

2.7 Demographic and economic characteristics of day labourers

2.7.1 Demographic and economic characteristics of day labourers in the United States

Valenzuela Jr. (2000) conducted a national study in the United States in 1999, in which 481 day labourers were surveyed to obtain demographic data. More than 30% of the day labourers in his research sample had been born in the United States. Two thirds of the participants were young men who were under the age of 30 years. The findings suggested that males predominated in the informal day labour market. In 2012, Gallardo also found that males predominated in the informal

day labour market. More than half of the participants in the research sample for the study of Valenzuela Jr. (2000) had six years or less of formal education, while 5% had none at all. Approximately 53% of male Hispanics graduate from high school, the lowest rate among the predominant ethnic groups of the United States, and among day labourers the rates are even lower (Valenzuela Jr., 2000). Although low levels of education may help to explain why day labourers resort to low-paying, often dangerous work, Valenzuela Jr. (2000) found that more than a third of the day labourers in his sample had attended high school or even progressed beyond high school. Among Mexican immigrants in particular, levels of educational attainment have been steadily increasing in recent times. As fewer than 28% of the Mexican-born population had attended high school in 2000, they comprised a significant proportion of the day labour market. Valenzuela Jr. (2000) found that nearly 60% of the day labourers whom he surveyed actively sought work on four or more days per week. Their mean yearly earnings from day labour work were estimated to be of the order of \$US8500 (R123005.63²).

The findings of the national study which was subsequently conducted by Valenzuela Jr. *et al.* (2006) provided a profile for the phenomenon of day labour in the United States. They revealed that men and women sought employment in open-air markets by the side of the road, at busy intersections, in front of home improvement stores, and in other public spaces in cities throughout the United States. They also revealed that women constituted just 2% of the day-labour workforce, which was comprised largely of immigrants from Mexico and Central America. This finding corresponds with the generally accepted assessment that day labourers migrate from neighbouring countries to wealthier ones, in the hope of finding opportunities for economic advancement. Valenzuela Jr. *et al.* (2006) found that 59% of the 2260 day labourers whom they interviewed had been born in Mexico, 14% in Guatemala, 8% in Honduras, while 29% were citizens of the United States who had been born in the country. They estimated that day labourers who had been born in the United States comprised just 7% of the day-labour workforce.

Many of the day labourers in the national study of Valenzuela Jr. *et al.* (2006) were married and they engaged in labouring to support their families. The findings revealed that 36% were married, 7% lived with partners, and a significant majority of 63% had children. Consequently, it could be

² Exchange rate as of 01 January 2019

<https://www.google.co.za/search?q=exchange+rate&oq=ex&aqs=chrome.4.69i57j69i59j0l4.6975j0j8&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8>

concluded that the motivation for a very significant number of the day labourers to earn an income was provided by the need to support their families. While a small minority of 6% had not received any formal schooling, the remainder had been educated either in the United States or in their home countries. Only 22% were found to have received five years or less of schooling, while 30% had received six to eight years, and 42% nine or more years of schooling. While some day labourers regard their tenure in the market as a temporary necessity, for others it is a long-term source of employment. Conversely, most day labourers are unable to enter the formal labour economy, owing to a lack of the educational qualifications which could provide more secure and better remunerated employment to support their often large families (Valenzuela Jr., 2006; Schenck *et al.*, 2012; Blaauw, 2010; Malinga, 2015).

2.7.2 Demographic and economic characteristics of day labourers in South Africa

Blaauw (2010) developed a socioeconomic profile of day labourers in South Africa from a national study which he conducted from 2007 to 2008 throughout South Africa. The findings revealed that males predominated in the day labour market in South Africa (Louw, 2004; Blaauw, 2010). The principal demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of day labourers in South Africa which emerged from the study which was completed in 2010 are as follows:

- **Gender:** The day labourers were almost exclusively males. As only 138 women were found among the 3830 day labourers who were interviewed, the gender distribution was 96.4% male and 3.6% female.
- **Age:** As almost 70% of the day labourers were less than 35 years old and 47.1% were younger than 30 years old, the vast majority of day labourers in SA can be classified as young.
- **Countries of birth:** In the region of 85% had been born in South Africa, while a minority of 14.2% had been born in Zimbabwe, Namibia, Swaziland, Botswana, or Lesotho, all of which are neighbouring countries. A significant majority of 9.5% of the day labourers who were interviewed had been born in Zimbabwe and had migrated to South Africa to seek employment away from the chaos and political strife which has laid waste to the economy of their home country.
- **Language:** Of the many different languages which were spoken by the day labourers who participated in the study, Blaauw (2010) found that the largest group of 28.1% of the

sample spoke isiXhosa, while 17.5% spoke isiZulu, 2.5% English, 11.8% Sesotho, 6.1% Sepedi, 4.4% IsiNdebele, 5.5% Xitsonga (5.5%), 7.8% Afrikaans, 7.9% Setswana, 1.5% Tshivenda, and 3.1% Seswati.

- **Dependants:** Each day labourer was found to support four people, excluding himself or herself, with the income which he or she earned in the informal day labour market. Almost 61.1% supported four other people.
- **Education:** Of the 3830 day labourers who were interviewed, a relatively small minority of 229 or 6% had never attended school, while in the region of 20% had attended primary school. Only 14.8% had completed secondary school, while a tiny minority of 0.6% of the South African-born day labourers had obtained tertiary qualifications.
- **Other formal post-school training:** The findings revealed that the day labourers were in need of formal training to equip themselves to obtain gainful employment. The levels of skills which the day labourers possessed were found to be generally fairly low (Blaauw, 2010:104). A significantly large group of 15.2% believed that they needed training to find employment in the construction sector.
- **Earnings per week:** It was found that the day labourers earned an average of R 171.69 per week and less in bad times.
- **Other sources of income:** For 48.8%, child support grants represented a crucial alternative source of income, while 0.7% received disability grants, and 2% received the Older Person's Grant. These findings indicate that social support from the government represents an alternative source of income upon which day labourers depend to support their children and families.

The findings with respect to gender distribution of the study which was conducted by Louw (2004) in both Pretoria and the national study by Blaauw (2010) were remarkably consistent, with male day labourers comprising 97.5% of the sample in Pretoria and 96.4% in the national study. As Valenzuela Jr. *et al.* (2004) found a similar distribution in the United States, it can reasonably be concluded that the day labour market is generally dominated by males, mainly owing to the often hazardous nature of the work and the precarious incomes which are derived from it.

2.8 Hardships encountered by day labourers

Day labourers are often faced with contingencies, owing to the unregulated nature of their work. The hardships which day labourers constantly endure include gathering at hiring sites in the hope of finding a single day's poorly paid employment, the arduous and often hazardous nature of their work when they do find employment, and the financial hardships which their families and extended families endure. These categories of hardships are discussed in the sections which follow.

2.8.1 Hardships entailed by the nature of the work which day labourers are required to perform

- *Work-related hazards*

Day labourers are often required to perform strenuous, difficult, and dangerous work (Blaauw *et al.*, 2007). According to Kerr and Dale (2001), 70% of day labourers in Cleveland, a city in the so-called Rust Belt of the United States, which is characterised by drastically declining industry, work in unsafe working environments. Their survey revealed that 39% of the day labourers in their research sample reported that they had sustained injuries during the course of working in the capacity. In some instances, injuries were either not treated or not reported, because the workers had feared that they would not be paid. As it has already been noted, from a similar standpoint, Valenzuela Jr. *et al.* (2006) found that day labourers were required to perform a wide variety of tasks, many of which were dangerous, which could expose them to chemical waste and other occupational hazards. Approximately 79% of the day labourers in the research sample of Kerr and Dale (2001) considered some of the tasks which were assigned to them to be dangerous. When they were asked whether they had received training to ensure their safety or in preventing work-related injuries, an overwhelming majority of 81% replied that they had not received any type of training in safety. An equally disturbing finding was that 51% indicated that they had not been issued with safety equipment such as protective gloves, boots, or masks, to prevent workplace injuries.

The finding accords with the assessment of Blaauw *et al.* (2007) that day labourers in South Africa work in unsafe working environments. The day labourers in their research sample reported that they had sustained work-related injuries which had been left untreated, as they were not provided with any form of medical care. It also emerged that, in most cases, the day labourers could not

afford medical treatment and that employers were seldom willing to accept responsibility for their injuries. The findings of Valenzuela Jr. *et al.* (2006:13) in the United States were similar, in that the day labourers in their sample were poor and could not afford extensive medical treatment, while employers often refused to cover the medical expenses of day labourers who were injured at work. In addition, in some instances, even if day labourers were permitted to obtain medical assistance, they tended to be reluctant to make use of the available clinics. They maintained that they would lose income, owing to the waiting times at the healthcare facilities and immigrant day labourers were also reluctant on account of their undocumented status in the country.

- ***Non-payment of wages***

Valenzuela Jr. *et al.* (2004) found that the most common forms of abuse which the day labourers in their sample suffered at the hands of employers included the non-payment of wages, being paid with dishonoured cheques, and being paid amounts which were less than had been agreed upon. Smith (2008) also maintains that vulnerable employees such as day labourers are easily targets of invalid cheques and found that many agencies and employers illegally deducted expenses from the wages of day labourers for cashing cheques, transport, meals, and even safety equipment. In the national study which was conducted in the United States by Valenzuela Jr. *et al.* (2006), it was also found that day labourers often work in untrustworthy environments. Once again it was found that employers frequently failed to pay in full the wages which they had negotiated with the day labourers whom they hired and, in some instances, abandoned them on site instead. The findings of the NELP (2007) accord with those of the two studies which have been cited in this section.

- ***Fluctuating earnings***

The different categories of employers for whom day labourers work include subcontractors in the construction industry and individual people in their private capacities. Owing to the sporadic nature of their work, its tendency to be seasonal, and the inconsistency with which they obtain work from the same employers on subsequent occasions, calculating hourly rates of pay or the monthly incomes of day labourers is not easily accomplished (Valenzuela Jr. *et al.*, 2004:11). According to Valenzuela Jr. *et al.* (2006), a common method for determining the average wages of day labourers entails assessing the volatility of monthly earnings by comparing the distributions

of earnings for peak and slow periods. They found that median earnings levels for good months rose to \$US1400 (R20259.75³), while they fell to just 36% of those of peak period levels, or \$US500 (R7235.63⁴). Consequently, even in cases in which day labourers have many more good than bad months, it is unlikely that their annual earnings would exceed \$US15 000 (R 217068.75⁵), which would keep most day labourers either at or below the federal poverty threshold.

This trend has also been observed in South Africa. Blaauw *et al.* (2007) found that the incomes of day labourers were subject to significant differences between the amounts which they earned in good months and those which they earned during bad months. The resulting uncertainty effectively precludes day labourers from being able to plan ahead. Blaauw *et al.* (2007) emphasise the uncertainty and anxiety which the day labourers who participated in their study expressed concerning their ability to support their dependents each month. An analysis of the incomes which the day labourers earned revealed that most of them struggled to support their dependents, even in months which could be classified as extremely good in terms of the opportunities for earning income which they provided.

- ***Tensions between local and foreign day labourers***

Schenck *et al.* (2012) found that the South African-born day labourers in their research sample perceived that foreign day labourers, to whom they referred as *Makwerekwere*, were denying them opportunities to earn acceptable wages by being prepared to work for very little. The perception has resulted in heightened tensions between local and foreign day labourers. In the words of one of the South African-born day labourers:

‘These Makwerekwere (foreign day labourers) are spoiling the employers by charging R 20 per day when we charge R100. They must go back to Zimbabwe and leave us alone’.

By contrast, Blaauw *et al.* (2012:192), found that foreign day labourers earned significantly more than their South African-born counterparts during peak periods and more or less the same during

³ Exchange rate as of 01 January 2019

<https://www.google.co.za/search?q=exchange+rate&oq=ex&aqs=chrome.4.69i57j69i59j0l4.6975j0j8&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8>

⁴ Exchange rate as of 01 January 2019

<https://www.google.co.za/search?q=exchange+rate&oq=ex&aqs=chrome.4.69i57j69i59j0l4.6975j0j8&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8>

⁵ Exchange rate as of 01 January 2019

<https://www.google.co.za/search?q=exchange+rate&oq=ex&aqs=chrome.4.69i57j69i59j0l4.6975j0j8&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8>

slow periods. The disparities with respect to rates of remuneration result mainly from the generally higher levels of educational attainment and working skills of foreign day labourers, which often results in correspondingly higher levels of productivity. These findings are analogous to those of Valenzuela Jr. *et al.* (2006) in the United States, where foreign day labourers from Mexico, Central, or Latin America are often found to possess more of the skills which are required by prospective employers than day labourers who were born in their adopted hostcountry.

- ***Unregulated employment procedures***

As day labouring is informal, the procedures by means of which day labourers obtain employment is unregulated. Day labourers are neither recruited by prospective employers nor necessarily interviewed. There is usually insufficient time to conduct interviews or to verify the credentials and the competencies of potential employees and employers. Consequently, the employing of day labourers entails as much risk for employees as it does for employers and sometimes results in disappointment, unfulfilled promises, and exploitation (Schenck *et al.* 2012). Valenzuela Jr. *et al.* (2006:14) maintain that owing to the unregulated nature of the employment process, incidents of exploitation and wage theft have been reported, which suggests that the unregulated procedures lack the degree of transparency which is usually required in the formal labour sector. Meléndez, Visser, Theodore, and Valenzuela Jr. (2014) explain the absence of laid down procedures by maintaining that workers are hired strictly on an ‘as-needed’ basis, the conditions of employment are verbal and afford workers no security whatsoever, with the task which is to be performed, the wages which are to be paid, as the length of employment usually being discussed and negotiated in a matter of moments. Conversely, no research appears to have been conducted to determine the risks which employers take by employing day labourers.

- ***Low levels of educational attainment***

The literature confirms that day labourers who have received little formal education have few prospects of obtaining positions in the formal labour sector (Blaauw *et al.*, 2007). Wilson (2006) maintains that there are indisputable correlations among poverty, a lack of formal education, and an inability to find formal employment. Blaauw (2010) arrived at a similar conclusion after finding that most of the day labourers in South Africa were unable to find employment in the formal sector

owing to a lack of formal schooling and necessary skills. He also found that Zimbabwean day labourers had received significantly more formal schooling than their South African counterparts and had access to more opportunities to earn more than the minimum wage as a direct consequence. The comparisons which Blaauw (2010) made between the daily earnings of foreign day labourers who had received at least primary school education and South African day labourers who had received less or no formal schooling revealed that Zimbabwean day labourers earned from R63 to R142 per day, while the South African day labourers earned from R57 to R117 per day. It was also found that Zimbabwean day labourers tended to be employed more often than South Africans, in all probability, owing to their better qualifications and greater proficiency in English (Blaauw, 2010).

2.8.2 Hardships encountered by day labourers at hiring sites

- ***Exploitation and abuse***

Day labourers are vulnerable to exploitation and abuse (Valenzuela Jr. *et al.*, 2004). In their study of day labourers in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area, Valenzuela *et al.* found that 58% of the labourers whom they surveyed had experienced at least one instance of brutal abuse by their employers, while 33% indicated that day labourers had been abandoned at worksites, and 23% reported that they had experienced violence at the hands of employers. Other highly prevalent forms of abuse which were reported included receiving no food or breaks from work. Some of the day labourers reported having experienced harassment from the local police or security guards, while of the order of 16% reported that they had been either insulted or arrested by the police. Some had been questioned concerning their immigrant status, while others had been either photographed or videotaped by the police, or reported by security guards to the police or the immigration authorities.

Gallardo (2012) obtained similar findings from a study which had been conducted in order to investigate and identify the coping strategies of day labourers in San Mateo in California. The findings revealed that day labourers tended to be easy targets for violence by the police, local residents, and security guards. Day labourers who had recently arrived in the United States from other countries were found to be particularly vulnerable in this respect, owing to a lack of the knowledge and experience which are needed to cope in modern urban environments in developed

countries. In many cases, owing to their undocumented status, newly-arrived immigrants do not have safe places to keep their savings.

In South Africa, Schenck, Xipu, and Blaauw (2012) found that relationships between day labourers and employers, shop owners, the police, motorists, and local residents were often characterised by hostility. The managements of the businesses which are located in the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality frequently objected to the presence of day labour workers, maintaining that it tended to be a source of anxiety for customers who were concerned about the possibility of car thefts and other forms of crime. Most of the day labourers who participated in the study reported that they had experienced hostility from motorists who drove recklessly through their worksites. Although some had been hit by speeding motorists, when they reported the incidents to the police, no steps were taken to arrest the perpetrators. It was also learnt that some corrupt members of the police force solicited bribes from day labourers who were illegal immigrants, threatening to arrest them if they did not comply with their demands. It was evident that the dire circumstances of the day labourers were characterised by extreme poverty and desperation (Schenck *et al.*, 2012).

The findings of Smith (2008) in the United States were similar to those of Schenck *et al.* (2012) in South Africa. Smith (2008) concludes that hostility on the part of employers is both observable and widespread and results from a lack of protective legislation for day labourers. As a direct consequence, day labourers can be taken advantage of by unscrupulous employers. Smith (2008) also explains that the abuses which are inflicted upon day labourers stem chiefly from labour agencies, the owners of businesses, and the general public near hiring sites and worksites.

- ***Perceptions of people who come into contact with day labourers***

In the study which Schenck and Nell (2009) conducted in Tshwane, they investigated the perceptions of the members of the subgroups in which it was believed that the lives of people were adversely affected by the presence of day labourers. The residents who were interviewed complained of an invasion of their privacy, being deprived of their personal freedom, and feeling victimised. Many believed that they were constantly watched by the day labourers at the hiring sites and reported that they felt intimidated when they left their houses and when they were observed in their gardens and in the streets: they felt that their movement was being restricted by their perceptions that they were being watched by the day labourers. The second group of people who were interviewed for the study were local business people, who also had negative perceptions

of the day labourers. They explained that as their customers experienced anxiety owing to the presence of the day labourers, they had been obliged to employ security guards to remove day labourers forcibly from their premises and ensure that they stood on the opposite sides of the streets in which their business premises were located (Schenck & Nell, 2009). Some expressed the belief that day labourers could potentially serve to mask the presence of criminals (Schenck & Nell, 2009; Schenck *et al.*, 2012), as drug dealers and people who engage in other criminal activities could pose as day labourers in order to escape detection. By contrast, some of the day labourers claimed that they had substantially reduced crime in the areas by not allowing miscreants to stand at their hiring sites (Schenck *et al.*, 2012).

- ***Seasonal changes***

Schenck *et al.* (2012) found that seasonal changes exerted a considerable influence upon the ability of vulnerable groups such as day labourers to earn livelihoods, as they affect their movements to and from hiring sites. Both inclement weather conditions and extreme heat tend to reduce the numbers of day labourers who gather at sites in the hope of finding employment. Extreme weather conditions affect the livelihoods of day labourers adversely, because they usually work out of doors and hiring sites afford them no cover. Valenzuela Jr. *et al.* (2006:4) maintain that owing to the informal nature of day labouring and a lack of infrastructure, day labourers stand at street corners and other exposed locations which offer them no protection from extreme weather conditions.

2.8.3 Hardships which affect the family lives of day labourers

- ***Family ties***

In South Africa, the family ties of day labourers and the social networks within their families are often subjected to great strain, owing to the precarious nature of their work and the frequent need to relocate to seek employment, very often leaving their families behind. Family ties are maintained by some day labourers and tend to recede in the case of others. In the study which they conducted in Pretoria in 2007, Blaauw *et al.* found that 33% of the day labourers in their research sample were married, under either customary or common law, and that 61% lived with partners (Blaauw *et al.*, 2007). This finding accords with that of the study of Valenzuela Jr. *et al.* (2004) in

the United States, which confirmed that day labourers were generally aware of their responsibilities to their families and worked in often arduous circumstances to support them, although in many instances their precarious livelihoods effectively precluded them from doing so. Blaauw *et al.* (2007) found that many of the day labourers who participated in their study had come from other centres, did not live with their families and dependents, and, in some cases, had created new second families in their adopted cities. From the findings, it was evident that most of the day labourers did not see their families regularly. The findings of Valenzuela Jr. *et al.* (2004) were similar, in that 40% of the day labourers in their research sample had lived in the United States for more than six years, away from their families, effectively separated from their spouses and placing immense strain upon their family ties. Although the circumstances in which day labourers in South Africa find themselves in relation to their family lives are harsh, many perceive themselves to be responsible people who are trying, in the face of a great deal of adversity, to support not only their families, but also their extended families (Schenck & Louw, 2005).

- ***Personal circumstances***

As the lives which day labourers lead are harsh and oblige many to be separated from the members of their families for long periods of time (Blaauw *et al.*, 2007:229), the circumstances in which they live while they work as day labourers are of considerable significance. Blaauw *et al.* (2007) sought to determine where the day labourers in their research sample slept at night. In terms of the degrees of comfort and privacy which their accommodation afforded them, the participants appeared to be divided into four roughly equally sized groups, with 23.2% sleeping in residences which comprised more than one room. In most cases, these participants were the same as those who reported that they did not see their families regularly. A further 24.5% were less fortunate and slept in small rooms in the back yards of houses and 23.7% took shelter in shacks in informal settlements. A single participant reported that he slept on the street. It was evident that the circumstances under which many of the day labourers in the sample lived were unsafe. Although many of the participants reported that they went without food during the days on which they worked, 31.8% maintained they had sufficient food and explained that community organisations provided them with soup during the early mornings of their working days.

2.9 Coping strategies adopted by day labourers

- *Support from local communities*

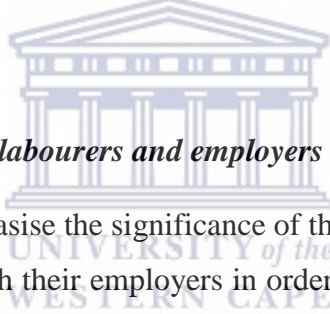
The hostility to which day labourers are subjected in the course of endeavouring to eke out livelihoods has significantly adverse effects upon their well-being. Gallardo (2012) found in the United States that support from local communities and religious organisations tended to be relied upon most by day labourers during lean periods. He suggests that churches play a vital role in providing food parcels to informal workers, as 52% of the participants in his research sample cited church groups and civic-minded and charitable members of local communities as alternative means to obtain food during months when employment was difficult to secure. The findings of Blaauw *et al.* (2007:131) in South Africa were similar, in that 65% of the participants in their research sample maintained that compassionate members of local communities and church groups played a crucial role in supporting day labourers when they were unable to find employment.

- *Support groups*

In their study of day labourers in Pretoria, Blaauw *et al.* (2007) attempted to determine the ways in which they supported one another, particularly with respect to those who were unable to find employment on a particular day. The responses to the question revealed that in some instances, they obtained loans from one another and in others, day labourers who had found employment allowed others to take their places. They concluded that the degrees of support which they extended to one another played a crucial role in enabling them to cope with the range of negative effects of long spells of unemployment. It was evident that social support among day labourers reduced the negative consequences of stressful experiences and helped to maintain their psychological and physical well-being. The reasons which the participants gave for forming groups ranged in descending order from having come from the same towns, villages, or regions, sharing a common language, shared religious faiths, family affiliations, and being of similar ages. The men relied upon one another for assistance in a number of respects in their everyday lives.

- ***Mobility strategies***

The nature of hiring sites allows day labourers to move from one site to another in search of better payment. According to Valenzuela Jr. (2003:326), hiring sites can be classified as connected or unconnected and regulated or unregulated. The term ‘connected’ refers to sites which are situated near companies or businesses which attract day labourers who possess the skills which they require. Examples of connected sites would include sites which are situated opposite or adjacent to plumbing units or paint supply stores. Day labourers who possess the skills which prospective employers who visit connected sites require tend to move from unconnected to connected sites in search of improved earnings. The need to move affects older day labourers particularly adversely, as they are often denied employment owing to being unable to walk long distances to connected sites (Valenzuela Jr., 2003). Conversely, day labourers who possess wide ranges of skills are found mainly at unconnected sites along busy main roads, where they are conspicuous to prospective employers (Schenck, 2014).



- ***Relationships between day labourers and employers***

Blaauw and Pretorius (2005) emphasise the significance of the long-term relationships which day labourers endeavor to maintain with their employers in order to increase their earnings as a vital coping strategy. One of the day labourers who participated in the study said:

‘White employers in this area mostly speak Afrikaans and they like workers who know Afrikaans, because they know that you will be able to understand instructions and do what they want.’

The day labourers who participated in the study maintained that establishing long-term relationships with employers was a proven means of increasing their earnings and obtaining sustainable employment. They believed that the ability to speak the languages of their employers provided the means of creating favourable impressions and maintaining regular long-term relationships with individual employers. This finding accords with the findings of a study of day labourers which was conducted in Tshwane in 2004 by Louw (2007), which revealed that day labourers who were able to communicate effectively with their employers in English and Afrikaans tended to earn higher levels of income than those who struggled to express themselves.

The findings of the comparative study of day labour in the United States and South Africa which was conducted by Theodore, Blaauw, Schenck, Valenzuela Jr., and Meléndez in 2014 confirmed

that working repeatedly for the same employer represented a highly effective means of increasing wages. According to Theodore *et al.* (2014), working regularly for a single employer not only stabilises employment and earnings, but also allows day labourers to demonstrate that they possess attributes which are desired by employers, such as skills and dependability. Employers are often willing to pay premium wages to workers whom they have found to be highly skilled and dependable. It was found among the South African day labourers who participated in the study that those who were rehired by individual employers earned an average of in the region of 30% more than those who were not regular employees.

Malinga (2015) maintains that there is a particular need to understand relationships between employers and workers in the case of day labourers who gather at roadsides, whose relationships with those who hire them are characterised by instability. Malinga (2015) found in her study that the races and nationalities of both employers and work-seekers were particularly significant factors which influenced how well day labourers were treated by their employers. She found that white employers tended to have particularly good relationships with day labourers with respect to providing benefits after tasks have been accomplished and breaks between tasks, by comparison with employers of other races. Many of the participants whom she interviewed maintained that relationships between day labourers and black employers were fraught with unpleasantness and tension.

2.10 Chapter summary

The literature which has been reviewed in this chapter reveals that unemployment, particularly among the youth, is on the rise in South Africa and many other countries. The chapter has provided a comprehensive overview of the phenomenon of day labour as a response to unemployment in South Africa and other countries, and also of the socioeconomic conditions and circumstances in which day labourers endeavour to survive. From the review it is apparent that day labouring is a precarious occupation, owing to the irregularity with which day labourers are able to find employment. The findings of the relatively few studies which have been conducted in South Africa indicate that day labourers are confronted with the daily probability of unemployment, as daily averages appear to suggest that less than half of those who gather at hiring sites are employed. Owing to their exclusion from the formal labour market in South Africa, day labourers are

vulnerable to the exploitation which is rife in the informal labour market. The dynamics of the day labour market are complex and need to be monitored through the formulation and implementation of appropriate policies to ensure the well-being of those who are prevented from entering the formal labour market and to provide effective points of entry into it.



CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1: Introduction

The research study is underpinned by two interlinked bodies of theory in order to construct the theoretical framework upon which this study was based, namely, systems theory and the strengths-based approach. The merits and weaknesses of the two theoretical approaches are evaluated in the sections which follow.

3.2: Systems theory

During the 20th century, several scientists and philosophers began to lay the foundations of systems theory in their respective disciplines, and its influence has also been felt in social work theory and practice (Miley, O'Meila, & DuBois, 2009). The theoretical approach provides a conceptual basis for understanding the functioning of whole systems, such as families, organisations, and communities. Teater (2014) maintains that the principal rationale for applying systems theory in social work was an acknowledgement of a need to move away from viewing individual people in isolation. Systems theory is concerned with the ways in which people interact with their environments by acknowledging inherent connections between people and their environments and analysing how societies adapt through structural adjustments to their environments, with significant implications for understanding particular social orders. Consequently, it represents a significant move away from viewing individual people as isolated beings, without considering the specific contexts in which their interactions occur (Coady & Lehmann, 2016). The fundamental premise of systems theory is that a change in one part of a system results in changes in other parts, which, in turn, changes the holistic functioning of the entire system (Miley *et al.*, 2009:38). Systems theory reveals the complexity of social functioning within entire systems and holds that it is possible to obtain a coherent understanding of the vast complexity of individual societies and the relationships among the people who comprise them (Jones, 1993).

Jones (1993) defines a system as a group of elements which interact with one another over time, in a manner which results in their recursive patterns of interaction forming a stable context for individual and mutual functioning. By contrast, Gibson (2018) defines systems theory from a sociological standpoint as the study of society as a complex arrangement of elements which

include individual people, families, and communities, in terms of the beliefs and perceptions which connect and relate them to one another to form a coherent whole. According to Teater (2014), systems theory explains human behaviour as the intersection of the influences of several interrelated systems. This assessment underscores the emphasis of systems theory upon all systems being interrelated with and connected to one another, all parts constituting an ordered whole, and each subsystem directly influencing the other parts of the whole system.

3.2.1: The complex interrelations which systems theory entails

A fundamental tenet of the application of systems theory to sociological contexts is that individual people, families, groups, and broader communities should not and cannot be viewed in isolation (Neal & Neal, 2013). Accordingly, it holds that the behaviour of individual people can be understood within the context of the complex interrelationships which characterise their environments, systems whose character is determined by the relationships among the subsystems of which they are comprised. As the stability of societies as overall systems is predicated upon the interrelationships and connectedness of people with one another and their environments, which entail interactions among subsystems at various levels, social problems which threaten the stability of societies tend to emerge when crucial relationships are in jeopardy (Maistry, 2010). Day labourers function in many systems, including those which are comprised of their families, the broader socioeconomic systems in which they endeavor to survive, and the hiring sites, in which they interact with prospective employers and the other members of the groups of day labourers which they form at the sites.

3.2.2: Essential concepts of systems theory

According to Zastrow and Kirst-Ashman (2016), an understanding of the concepts which are explained in the sections which follow is crucial to a proper understanding of systems theory:

- **Boundaries**

Boundaries refer to the borders or margins which separate one entity from another (Zastrow & Kirst-Ashman, 2016). Lamont and Molnár (2002) distinguish between symbolic and social boundaries. They characterise symbolic boundaries as ‘conceptual distinctions made by social actors to categorise objects, people, practices, and even time and space’. By contrast, they define social boundaries as ‘objectified forms of social differences manifested in unequal access to and unequal distribution of resources and social opportunities’ (Lamont & Molnár, 2002:168-169). Although both employers and day labourers function together in the informal economy, their respective roles are mediated by boundaries. There is a tacit mutual understanding that each is dependent upon the other and the boundaries are established and maintained by a shared understanding of the roles and expectations of each group. Tensions can arise if members of either group breach boundaries and assume the roles of the other (Zastrow & Ashman, 2016). The findings of the study which was conducted by Malinga (2015) among day labourers in Emdeni in Cape Town revealed that the participants had established several categories of boundaries by constructing their identities as day labourers. Although some were based upon their individual skills and qualifications, personal work ethics, nationalities, ethnicities, and languages, others were informed by their roles in the various systems in which they functioned. Boundaries were discerned between day labourers and their employers, the businesses in which they found temporary employment, the communities in which the hiring sites which they frequented were located, the local municipalities, and also in their interactions as customers of the local shops.

- **Subsystems**

A subsystem is a secondary or subordinate system which is a component of a larger system (Zastrow & Kirst-Ashman, 2016). At the hiring sites, subsystems take the form of groups of day labourers which are formed on the basis of ties such as friendship, family or extended family affiliations, or even shared clan names. In this study, it was found that the subgroups of day labourers tended to have profiles which were determined by one of these categories of ties and that they were formed for mutual benefit, principally in order to enable the members to assist one another to find employment. From the findings of research which has been conducted in the United States, Valenzuela Jr. (2000) contends that day labourers seek one another out for companionship, the

mutual support which camaraderie provides, to seek advice, and to solicit favours. The subgroups which are formed at hiring sites often entail sharing transport, accommodation, or food.

- **Homeostasis**

Homeostasis is the tendency for a system to maintain a relatively stable, constant state of balance. In essence, homeostasis implies maintaining the status quo, irrespective of whether the consequences of doing so are positive or negative (Zastrow & Kirst-Ashman, 2016). Consequently, homeostasis in a system may be harmful and even contribute to exacerbating existing problems. Systems in which it prevails are self-correcting and when their internal equilibrium is disturbed, adjustments and realignments occur among their constituent subsystems in order to restore it. In the case of day labourers, the disturbance to the overall system in which they function results from a lack of work. In order to obtain work, prospective day labourers enter the informal labour market, which has consequences for the systems in which the local formal labour market, home owners in the community, the customers of local shops, and local municipalities function. In a self-correcting system, the adjustments and realignments which occur among subsystems to restore the equilibrium within the system will inevitably promote the interests of the members of some subsystems, to the detriment of those of others.

- **Differentiation**

Differentiation is the tendency of a system to become increasingly complex, a notion which is based upon the premise that relationships, situations, and interactions tend to become more complex over time (Zastrow & Kirst-Ashman, 2016). In this study, differentiation serves to explain how day labourers become obliged to expand the complexity of the systems in which they function in order to support their dependants or extended families. Unemployed men who are the sole breadwinners in their families are likely to be obliged to relocate to cities to find employment or to work as day labourers. Finding employment necessitates expanding the numbers of systems in which they function and entering into reciprocal relationships with employers, while failing to do so limits both the diversification of the systems in which they function and their ability to support their families (Blaaw *et al.*, 2007).

- **Entropy**

As entropy refers to the degree of disorder in a closed system, it is an indicator of the likelihood of a system to progress towards disorganisation, depletion, or death (Zastrow & Kirst-Ashman, 2016). Change can result in the emergence of problems which accompany the ways in which individual self-regulating systems adapt to changes. As entropy is inevitable in all societies which undergo change, the ability of subsystems in which vulnerable segments of societies function to adapt in productive ways can be severely compromised. According to Valenzuela Jr. (2003), the unremitting experiences of day labourers of the harsh realities of their circumstances can be sufficiently depressing to extinguish all hope of finding permanent employment. When feelings of futility, despair, and apathy become pervasive in communities to the extent that their social fabric begins to unravel, concerted social work interventions may represent the only effective means of restoring cohesion and stability. In the case of day labourers who live in economically depressed communities, interventions to coordinate initiatives to find regular employment for them could generate significant socioeconomic benefits for entire communities.

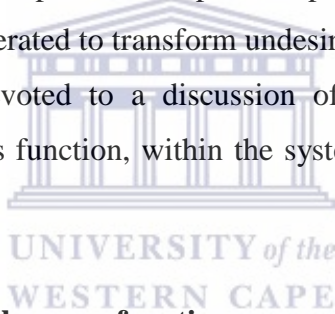
- **Negative entropy**

The concept of entropy was borrowed by sociology from physics and refers to the wastage of thermal energy owing to its unavailability for conversion into mechanical work. Conversely, negative entropy refers to systems becoming less disordered and wasted energy being converted into work (Zastrow & Kirst-Ashman, 2016). The physical, intellectual, and emotional development of individual people, families, groups, and communities as systems and subsystems can be adversely affected by rapid unanticipated change. In the case of day labourers in South Africa, the sustainability of the systems in which they function is determined to a large extent by the relationships which are forged between employers and employees. As Blaauw (2010) explains, the growth of the informal economy in South Africa, in which ever-increasing numbers of people find employment, is fostered by relationships between employers and employees. Malinga (2015) found that the day labourers among whom she conducted her research in Cape Town had typically been finding employment in this capacity for a period of five years. The finding suggests that the interactions between the two systems of day labourers and their employers have attained a significant degree of self-sustaining stability.

- **Equifinality**

Equifinality refers to the biological principle that in open systems any particular end state can be attained through many different means (Zastrow & Kirst-Ashman, 2016). The relevance of the principle to this study lies in the diversity of strategies which the researcher found that day labourers developed and adopted to cope with adversity. As day labourers do not have constant access to assistance in the form of social services, they need to be resourceful and to realise that there is not only one possible source of assistance or solution to their problems. Instead, they need to develop their inherent potential to make themselves employable. A practical understanding of the import of equifinality could enable them to adopt an open-ended approach in order to discern the skills and qualities which could increase their bargaining power in their relationships with potential employers. Van Breda (2018a) holds that resilience is an essential attribute for enabling people to overcome adversity and is predicated upon a capacity to assess the different ways in which negative entropy can be generated to transform undesirable circumstances.

The section which follows is devoted to a discussion of the interrelationships among the subsystems in which day labourers function, within the system of the broader society of which they are members.



3.2.2 The systems in which day labourers function

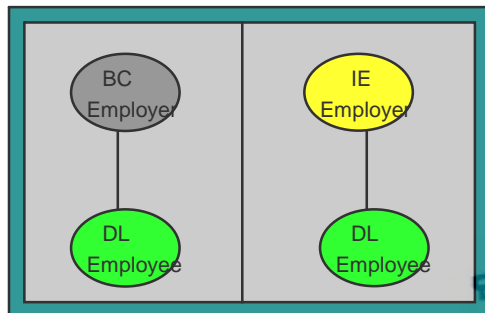
3.2.2.1 Patterns of interaction in relationships between employers and employees

Patterns of interaction are used in systems theory to describe the complex exchanges which take place among the subsystems of a single system, which can be evaluated by making use of the concept of *relations* (Mele, Pel, & Polese, 2010:131). The subsystems which are of significance for the purposes of this research study are those of prospective employers and day labourers. Relations between the two subsystems are predicated upon the desire of employers to obtain the services of temporary employees, such as day labourers, to perform the manual labour which they require and that of day labourers to find gainful employment.

Although some day labourers are too old to participate in the formal economy, the informal sector enables them to work and generate a modest income. Despite the mutual dependence of the two subsystems, in that the collapse of one would preclude the continued existence of the other, the

relationship between them is an unequal one. Power is effectively concentrated in the hands of employers, upon whom day labourers are completely reliant for their survival. In addition, both Blaauw *et al.* (2013) and Valenzuela Jr. (2006) found in their respective studies in South Africa and the United States that temporary employees such as day labourers were frequently subjected to abuse by employers.

Figure 3.1: Schematic depiction of the unequal relationship between the systems of day labourers and employers



(Source: Nel, 2007)

Figure 3.1 is a graphic representation of the findings of Nell (2007) concerning the relationship between employers and day labourers in Tshwane. The two sets of employers comprise of a variety of employers that include individual employers (IE) and building contractors (BC). According to Nell (2007), the figure depicts the perceptions of employers of day labourers as inferiors in relationships in which the sole priority of employers is the completion of the task at hand, as the essential determinants of the nature of the systems in which day labourers function in the informal labour market.

3.2.2.2 The family systems in which day labourers function

From the relevant available literature, it is evident that family ties have considerable significance for day labourers in South Africa (Schenck *et al.*, 2012). Like other social systems, a family system is characterised by complex and dynamic interdependent relationships. In families in which there is adequate cohesion, individual members are not isolated from one another, bonds of affection and loyalty are strong, and all members participate actively in family life. By contrast, the research which has been conducted by Schenck *et al.* (2012) revealed that the family life of day labourers

often fails to fulfil these criteria. Some day labourers are able to maintain their connection to their families, while others are not. In addition, the findings of studies which have been conducted by Schenck *et al.* (2012), Blaauw (2010), and Malinga (2015) all reveal that their families supply one of the principal motivations for day labourers to seek employment, as in many instances they are the sole providers of support to their families and, in some cases, more than one family. Although day labourers usually have families to maintain and support (Blaauw *et al.*, 2007), the levels of income which they earn make it difficult for them to do so. Many day labourers are unable to live with their immediate families. Those who have migrated from neighbouring countries or provinces or from rural areas of their provinces in South Africa to seek employment in urban areas are effectively precluded from remaining in close contact with their families for extended periods (Blaauw *et al.*, 2007).

Accordingly, systems theory enables an understanding of the complex relationships which day labourers have with their families. Blaauw *et al.* (2006) conclude that it is unlikely that many day labourers are able to attend to family matters, see their families regularly, or provide them with adequate support. By contrast, Malinga (2015) explains that in many traditional societies in South Africa the manhood of men is not expressed solely through their roles as fathers. The societies are intensely patriarchal, with authority being vested solely in men, although men also function in systems in which they are advised and supported in their male roles by other men. The raising of children has traditionally been considered to be a collective responsibility of communities and children who are without biological parents, as a result of either death or absence, are nurtured within the systems of their communities.

3.2.2.3 Groups of day labourers as systems

According to Barnes, Ernest, and Hyde (1999:2), a group can be defined as an aggregation which is formed by several people who happen to be engaged in the same activity at the same time and in the same place. They expand upon the definition by maintaining that the people need to have some discernible *connection* to one another, in terms of the way in which they come together for a common purpose. The definition accords with the philosophical foundations of systems theory, with its emphasis upon connections and the influence of multiple interrelated subsystems upon whole systems (Emery, 1981:340). From a different sociological perspective, a group is defined

as a social vacuum in which two or more people regularly interact solely on the basis of mutual expectations and a shared common identity (Llewellyn, n.d).

As members of groups inevitably influence one another (Meyer, Moore, & Viljoen, 2008:295) and day labourers are not homogenous in terms of ethnicity or their geographical origins, the ways in which they relate to one another as they stand together for hours on street corners waiting for employment are inevitably complex. Schenck and Louw (2005) found that day labourers tend to separate themselves into groups according to bonds which are encouraged by factors such as shared home languages, similar ages, and friendship. Groups tend to serve as support systems for obtaining employment, food, and accommodation. Groups also compete against one another to occupy particular positions in order to attract the attention of prospective employers (Schenck & Louw, 2005).

3.2.2.4 Social environments as systems

According to Zastrow and Kirst-Ashman (2016), a social environment includes the physical setting in which a particular society or culture functions. It is comprised of the types of homes in which people live, the types of work which they do, and the social rules which govern their conduct. In addition, social environments are made up of the individual people with whom people interact, and also of the groups, communities, and the other systems in which they function.

As an environment is a system and a structure of subsystems and systems theory is used to develop a holistic paradigm of the functioning of individual people within their social environments, systems theory is best applied to situations in which several systems are inextricably connected and influence one another (Coady & Lehman, 2016). Relationships between individual people and their social environments are reciprocal, in that the actions of individual people influence their environments, while their actions are also influenced by their environments. Consequently, systems theory represents an optimal means to analyse the complex interrelationships among the systems in which day labourers function in their social environment, which includes the physical settings in which they gather in the hope of finding employment and those in which they work when they are able to do so. The hiring sites to which Valenzuela Jr. (2002) refers in the context of the United States may be defined as open-air geographical locations such as street corners, pavements, parking lots, or factory gates (Blaauw, 2010).

As it has been explained in Chapter 2, hiring sites are classified by Valenzuela Jr. (2003:326) into four specific categories, namely, connected or unconnected and regulated or unregulated sites. Sites which are connected are situated adjacent to particular companies or businesses and attract day labourers who possess skills which are relevant to their lines of business, while unconnected sites are not situated near any particular companies or businesses. Regulated sites are sites which have been formally established and are managed by particular organisations. Although regulated sites are common in the United States and are managed by the state, NGOs, or temporary agencies (Meyer, 2003:7; Peck & Theodore, 2001:472), Blaauw (2010) could find no evidence of their existence in South Africa.

As day labourers are likely to be attracted by hiring sites at which they often find employment, conflicts are bound to occur at popular sites. The dynamics of conflicts of interest can generally be accurately analysed through the application of systems theory. In South Africa, there have been sharp divisions between foreign and South African day labourers and there have been outbreaks of violence against foreign day labourers at hiring sites (Schenck *et al.*, 2012). It has been suggested that the perceptions of local day labourers of their foreign counterparts are xenophobic in nature. According to Schenck and Louw (2005), South African day labourers tend to make very clear distinctions between themselves and foreign day labourers, using the derogatory terms *Makrikampas* to refer to foreigners from Mozambique and *Makwerekwere* to those from Zimbabwe. It was evident at all of the sites at which a study was conducted by Xipu (2014) that there was tension and suspicion between local and foreign day labour workers, because local day labourers believed that as most employers were South Africans, they should not employ foreigners at their expense.

3.3 The strengths-based theory (SBT)

The strengths-based theory is a relatively recent development in social work theory (Saleebey, 2008). The purposeful application of the strengths perspective as an approach to social work practice began in the early 1980s at the School of Social Welfare at the University of Kansas (Saleebey, 2008). In 1989, Weick, Rapp, Sullivan, and Kishardt coined the term 'strengths perspective' to develop a system in which practitioners recognise the authority and assets which clients possess and the unique frame of reference which the life story of each client affords him or her. The strengths-based theory embodies a holistic respect for the dignity and uniqueness of

individual people and recognises the subjective nature of experience and that individual people construct their own social realities (Saleebey, 2008). The fundamental tenet of the strengths-based perspective is its conception of human beings as being capable of change by making appropriate use of their positive attributes and strengths (Gardner & Toope, 2011:89), as opposed to assessing people in terms of problems and deficiencies.

From a similar standpoint, Pulla (2006) explains that the strengths-based approach is a theory for social work practice which emphasises both self-determination and strengths. It is both a school of thought and a means of treating clients as people who are resourceful and resilient in the face of adversity. It is client-centred and endeavours to identify the strengths which individual people have at their disposal to overcome particular problems or crises, in the interests of arriving at optimal outcomes. When it is applied outside the field of social work, strengths-based practice is also characterised as employing a strengths-based approach (Pulla, 2006:53), in order to develop specific abilities. The application of a strengths-based approach can facilitate enabling marginalised people to develop the abilities which they need to assist themselves. Pulla (2006) emphasises that strengths-based approaches are applied in order to draw upon the inherent strengths of individual people and organisations to enable them to become the agents of their own recovery and empowerment. The assumption that most people potentially have the strengths and resources to empower themselves has significant implications for the potential of day labourers to cope in the face of adversity.

3.3.1 The strengths-based theory and resilience

A key tenet of the strengths perspective is resilience in response to adversity (Vaillant, 1993). According to Van Breda (2001), resilience entails a multifaceted field of study of the strengths which enable people and systems to rise above adversity. By contrast, Theron and Theron (2010) define resilience simply as the capacity to excel, despite adverse conditions. In its true sense, resilience refers to the attributes and insights which people accumulate over time which enable them to realise that adversity need not be insurmountable and can be overcome (Van Breda, 2011). In this context, it concerns the ability of people not to be cowed by adversity, or even, in some instances, to thrive in the face of it. Resilience is essentially embodied in the capacity of people to cope during adversity. The strengths-based approach fosters resilience by developing the ability to cope with, withstand, absorb, or recover from shocks and stresses, and even from social, economic,

or political upheaval (Folke, 2006:259). Although it may be difficult, if not impossible, to measure human capabilities with respect to the ability of individual people or groups of people to respond with resilience to adversity, the strengths-based approach does permit assessments to be made of the potential of people to overcome their own problems.

Pulla (2006) maintains that in times of social upheaval and calamity people often become resilient and resourceful and develop new strategies to overcome adversity. For the purposes of this research study, the strengths-based theory played a crucial role in obtaining an understanding of the resilience of day labourers with respect to their ability to identify their capabilities which could provide the means to overcome adversity (Saleeby, 2008). The perspective provides a framework for identifying the ways in which day labourers are able to draw upon their personal strengths and to discover resources in their environment to meet their needs. In strengths-based practice, environments are conceptualised as 'helping environments' (Saleeby, 2008) and evaluated in terms of the extents to which they encourage or discourage resilience (Gilligan, 2000). As systems theory emphasises the reciprocal relationships which exist between individual people, families, and communities and their environments, from a strengths-based theoretical perspective environments represent a potential source of resilience, in that particular interactions among subsystems can enable their members to make effective use of the resources which they derive from their environments (Early & GlenMaye, 2004:113).

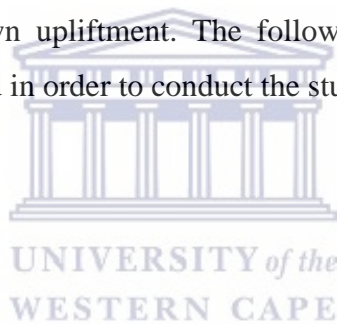
3.3.2 The strengths-based theory and empowerment

Empowerment is a proactive process by means of which individual people and groups gain power, access to resources, and control over their own lives (Robbins, Chatterjee, & Canada, 2006:94). Empowerment is central to the strengths-based approach, as it promotes self-determination by enabling people to recognise their uniqueness and to take control of their lives. Social empowerment provides resources and opportunities to enable people and communities to participate actively in their environments and to contribute to the shaping of them (Robbins *et al.*, 2006:263). Empowerment in the context of the strengths-based theory enables individual people and communities to recognise barriers to participation and the dynamics which allow oppression to persist, and also the circumstances and actions which promote change, human empowerment, and liberation. As the strengths perspective prioritises developing the aspirations, strengths, resources, and resiliency of people and encourages them to engage in pursuing social justice and

personal well-being (Robbins *et al.*, 2006), it can be considered to constitute a theory of empowerment. Accordingly, it may be concluded that empowerment is central to strengths-based practice and is nurtured by the discovery of strengths by individual people and communities (Cowger, 1994).

3.4 Chapter summary

This chapter provides a comprehensive overview of the theoretical framework in order to give the study a sound theoretical foundation. The two theoretical approaches played complementary roles in enabling the research of the lived realities of day labourers in East London and the hardships with which they are obliged to contend. Systems theory enabled an or the evaluation of their interactions from an established sociological standpoint, while strengths-based theory was used to determine how the strengths of day labourers could be harnessed to empower them to become active agents in their own upliftment. The following chapter takes the form of the methodology which was developed in order to conduct the study.



CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1: Introduction

This chapter is devoted to a comprehensive overview of the research design which was developed and the methodology which was employed to conduct the study. It includes a profile of the geographical location of the study, an elucidation of the approach which was adopted in order to conduct the study, a comprehensive discussion of the research design, the research instruments, the procedures which were used to collect the data, the methods which were used to select the research sample, and the ethical standards which were maintained at all times during the conducting of the study.

4.2: Research questions

As Creswell (2008) explains, in social research, studies are conducted in order to answer specific research questions, which are developed from their stated purposes. Research questions set boundaries, guide the developing of research designs, and control the directions which individual studies take (Cresswell, 2011).

The research questions which this research study was conducted in order to answer were:

- **What are the lived experiences of day labourers in East London?**
- **What is the nature of the hardships which day labourers encounter in East London?**

4.3 Recapitulation of the aims and objectives of the research study

The research questions were developed once the aims and objectives of the study had been clearly articulated. It is crucial in all research in the social sciences that the aims of a research study and the specific objectives which are developed from them should be concerned solely with the specific characteristics of an event, occurrence, or phenomenon which are of interest to the researcher.

In the case of this research study, the aims were to investigate the lived experiences of day labourers in East London in the province of the Eastern Cape in South Africa and to determine the precise nature of the hardships which they encounter.

The objectives which were derived from the aims were:

- To develop a socioeconomic profile for day labourers in East London.
- To investigate and identify the difficulties which day labourers encounter at hiring sites.

- To investigate and identify the difficulties and problems which day labourers encounter at their places of temporary employment.
- To investigate and identify the nature of the problems which day labourers encounter in their family life.
- To investigate and identify the coping strategies which labourers use to cope with the hardships, difficulties, and problems which they encounter in their daily lives.

4.4: Research approach

In order to achieve the objectives which have been articulated, a sequential mixed methods approach was adopted which entailed making use of both quantitative and qualitative research methods. The first objective required the adoption of a quantitative approach, while the remaining objectives were achieved through the use of qualitative research methods.

According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2007), mixed methods approaches are becoming increasingly popular in many fields in the social sciences, such as sociology, nursing, healthcare, and education. Mixed-methods research entails collecting, analysing, and combining both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or series of studies. Its central premise is that the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches in combination permits a more comprehensive understanding of research problems to be obtained than would be possible through the use of either approach alone (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2011). In the case of this study, a mixed-methods approach was adopted for two principal reasons, namely:

- **Triangulation:** The use of both quantitative and qualitative methods enables comparisons to be made between sets of independently gathered data and sets of findings to corroborate each other.
- **Complementarity:** The use of both quantitative and qualitative methods can also yield different pieces of evidence with respect to the events, occurrences, or phenomena which individual studies are conducted in order to investigate and permit solid findings to be generated (Bronstein & Kovacs, 2013).

Several justifications can be provided for adopting a mixed-methods approach. First, doing so permits the inherent weaknesses of one approach to be counterbalanced by the strengths of the other. For this reason and to ensure that the research topic was investigated with sufficient rigour,

it was concluded that a mixed-methods research design would be optimal. Secondly, the use of mixed methods enables researchers to draw upon a wide range of methods to collect data in order to study research problems in a comprehensive manner: a significant consideration for a study which is conducted in order to investigate a complex phenomenon. Mixed-methods research also facilitates answering questions which cannot be answered sufficiently comprehensively through the use of quantitative or qualitative research methods alone and encourages collaboration among researchers in different fields of inquiry and the use of several different worldviews and research paradigms (Bronstein & Kovacs, 2013). The practical value of mixed-methods research lies in the way in which it enables research problems to be solved through the combined use of numerical data and detailed descriptions.

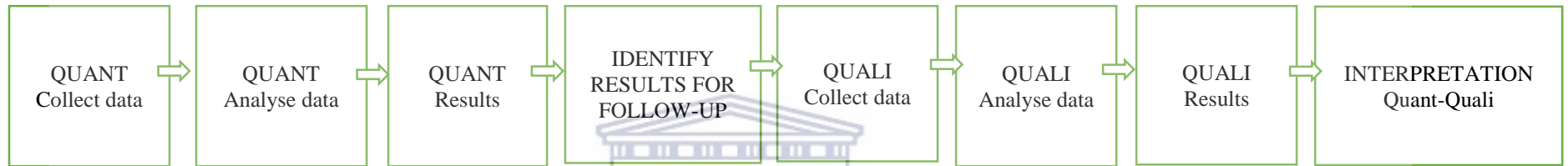
4.5 Research designs

4.5.1 Sequential explanatory research designs

According to Burns & Grove (2003:195), a research design is a plan for conducting a research study which affords the researcher maximal control over the factors which could interfere with the validity of the findings. To conduct this study, a **sequential explanatory** research design was developed. These research designs entail following the gathering and analysis of quantitative data with the gathering and analysis of qualitative data. This type of design was chosen to enable the use of qualitative findings to assist in the interpretation of the quantitative findings and also to place them in a realistic perspective in relation to the research topic (Creswell, 2011). A sequential explanatory design was also selected in order to develop a socioeconomic profile of day labourers in East London through quantitative measurements and using the findings of the qualitative study to enlarge upon the quantitative findings in relation to the experiences of the day labourers and the hardships which they encounter. The characteristics of the participants which emerged from the quantitative study enabled the use of a purposive sampling effectively to select a research sample which comprised participants who possessed the characteristics in which this was particularly an interest for the qualitative phase of the study (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2003).

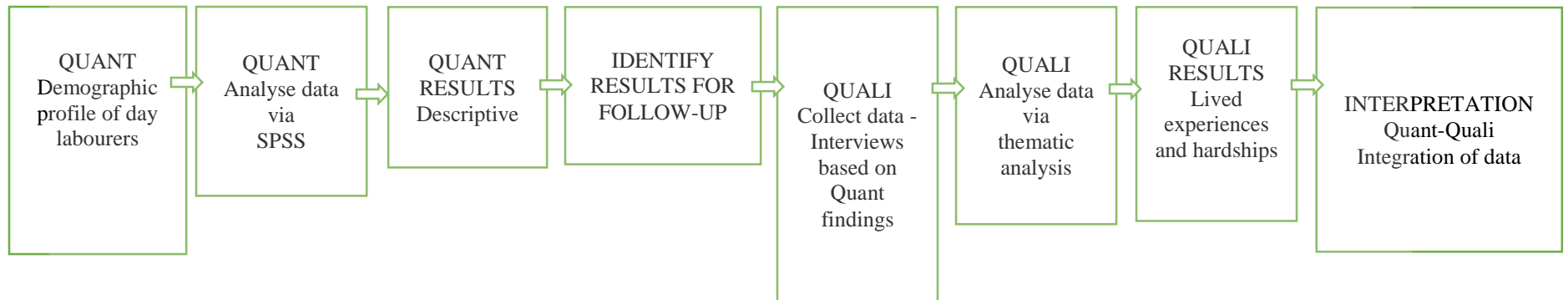
A sequential explanatory design is a two-phase mixed-methods research design. **PHASE A** entails the collection and analysis of the quantitative data, after which the qualitative data is collected and analysed during **PHASE B**. The second qualitative phase of the study was designed to be carried out in a manner which took the findings of the first quantitative phase into account.

Figure 4.1: Mixed-methods sequential explanatory diagram



(Source: Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007:73)

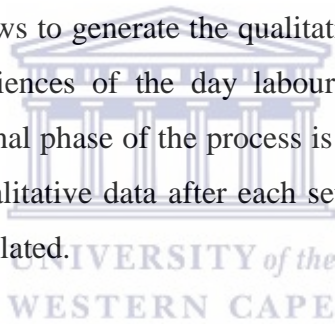
Figure 4.2: A mixed-methods sequential explanatory study to investigate the lived experiences of day labourers in East London and to determine the nature of the hardships which they encounter



(Source: The researcher)

The diagram in Figure 4.1 depicts the sequential explanatory model which was used to conduct the research study and illustrates the processes by means of which the data was collected and analysed. It provides a schematic representation of the sequence of the research process from the beginning to the end and demonstrates how the qualitative data was used to expand and elaborate upon the quantitative data which had been collected initially (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2011). The advantages of a sequential explanatory study design included its two-phase structure and the manner in which it permitted the integration of the quantitative and the qualitative phases of the study to enable the design of the second qualitative phase to emerge directly from the findings of the initial quantitative phase.

Figure 4.2 depicts the sequential explanatory research design which was developed for the specific purpose of conducting this research study. It illustrates the entire research process from the collecting of the quantitative data to generate a demographic profile of the day labourers in East London to the one-on-one interviews to generate the qualitative data, which enabled an in-depth understanding of the lived experiences of the day labourers and the hardships which they encountered to be obtained. The final phase of the process is represented by the interpretation of the integrated quantitative and qualitative data after each set of data had been analysed, which permitted the findings to be triangulated.



4.6 The area in which the research was conducted and the selection of hiring sites

Figure 4.3: Map of the area in which the study was conducted



(Source: <https://www.sa-venues.com/maps/easterncape/east-london>)

4.6.1 The selection of hiring sites

During the first quantitative phase of the research study, all of the hiring sites in East London from which data could potentially be collected were identified. In order to locate the hiring sites, the national study which had been conducted in South Africa in 2008 by Blaauw (2010) helped as a guide to select the hiring sites for this research study. All the documented sites in the national study were visited in order to identify and document them, it was established that all of the sites from which data had been obtained in 2007 and 2008 were still in existence. No new sites were found.

Throughout the East London area, some sites were connected, in that they were located near businesses such as hardware shops, while others were unconnected and located at busy intersections in residential areas. Sites were selected for the study because they were typically located in or near to:

- Large residential areas, busy intersections, or industrial areas, from which it was easy to be hired
- Streets in which there were several businesses which attracted customers who were likely to hire casual labourers, such as home improvement stores

Day labourers could be observed congregating outside of paint stores or hardware stores, in search of employment from people who purchase home improvement materials who may require the services of workers who are able to perform tasks such as tiling or painting.

4.7 Research methodology

4.7.1 Research populations

De Vos, Strydom, Fouché, and Delpont (2011) explain that a research population refers to the total number of subjects in a designated area who possess the attributes which are considered to be significant for the purposes of particular research studies. According to Burns and Grove (2003), a research population comprises all of the elements in a specified research setting which fulfil the criteria for inclusion in a research study. In this study, the research population comprised all of the day labourers who gathered at the 12 hiring sites in East London which were selected, during the period in which the study was conducted.

4.8: Phase A: The quantitative study

4.8.1: The research sample and sampling techniques

At most of the selected hiring sites in East London, day labourers were usually to be found from 07:00 until approximately 13:00. The many variables pertaining to the geographical area and the sizes and characteristics of the hiring sites were also taken into account in order to select a representative sample of day labourers (Louw, 2007:71). Owing to the fluctuating numbers of day labourers at the sites, it was not possible to estimate the size of the target population. Consequently, convenience or availability sampling were employed to select the research sample from day labourers who were willing and available to be interviewed for the purpose of completing the questionnaire which had been developed in order to generate the quantitative data (Bless & Higson-Smith, 2006:105).

4.8.2: Collecting the quantitative data

A team of 6 trained fieldworkers interviewed the day labourers over a period of 6 days. The fieldwork commenced at 7:00 each morning until approximately 13:00, when those day labourers who had not been able to find employment began to return home. It took six days to collect data at the hiring sites, during which time 131 questionnaires were completed. Although each questionnaire usually took in the region of 30 minutes to complete, in some instances more time was required, as the respondents wished to describe their experiences at length. As soon as each questionnaire had been completed by a fieldworker, it was checked to ensure that it was both correct and complete. The data-cleaning process helped to ensure that the results were as accurate and representative of the research population as possible. All 131 questionnaires were accepted as being suitable for analysis. The aim of the first phase of the study was to gather demographic and socioeconomic information from the respondents, particularly with respect to their family life.

4.8.2.1 The questionnaire (Please see Annexure A)

In order to collect quantitative data from the respondents in a structured manner in which they were required to provide answers to the same questions, a questionnaire was developed which was administered by means of a structured guide for the fieldworkers who put the questions to the respondents (Polit & Hungler, 1997:202). According to Polit and Hungler (1997:202), a questionnaire can be defined as a formal, written document which respondents are required to complete themselves by answering the questions which it contains in a paper and pencil format. By contrast, in this research study, the researcher

and the fieldworkers completed the questionnaires, owing to the illiteracy of some of the respondents and the difficulty which others experienced with reading and writing. All of the respondents were asked the same questions, in a predetermined order. The respondents were assured that their responses would be treated as strictly confidential and obtained signed informed consent forms from them before commencing with the questions in the questionnaire. Although the questionnaire comprised mainly questions which were intended to generate quantitative data, it also contained some questions whose answers would yield qualitative data. These questions were intended to yield explanatory responses, in order to clarify some of the answers which yielded quantitative data. The questionnaire was not piloted as it was already used in previous studies such as the national study of day labour in South Africa which was conducted from 2007 to 2008 by Blaauw (2010).

The questionnaire was made available to the respondents in English or isiXhosa, the languages with which the respondents were most familiar. Translating the questionnaire into isiXhosa enabled the participants to understand the questions in their own language and facilitated the interpretation by the researcher of the information which the respondents provided. As the fieldworkers were able to speak both English and isiXhosa, they were able to communicate effectively with the respondents and to provide them with explanations which were meaningful to them. The mediating role which the fieldworkers played in the administration of the questionnaire ensured an optimal response rate from the participants (Mouton, 2003:258). In addition, the questionnaire provided a means of obtaining information from the respondents in a manner which required as little of their time as possible and the efficient use of time was also beneficial to the conducting of the study. All questions were clarified and answered throughout the conducting of the interviews to complete the questionnaires.

4.8.2.2 The fieldworkers who obtained the quantitative data

The fieldworkers were recruited through the Department of Social Work of the East London Campus at the University of Fort Hare. They were qualified social workers who had completed their degree courses at the university⁶. They were selected for their good communication skills and their ability to work with people. They were fluent in both isiXhosa and English and had received training in completing the questionnaire. Their presence helped to minimise the possibility of cultural bias, insensitivity, methodological errors, and potential ethical indiscretions.

⁶ The fieldworkers held bursaries from the Department of Social Development and were awaiting being placed in positions within the department.

4.8.3 Analysis of the quantitative data

The quantitative data was analysed after it had been collected, cleaned, and captured. The data was captured on Excel and analysed by means of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. The results were presented using descriptive statistics. As descriptive analysis is used to describe the basic features of quantitative data which is generated in a study (Babbie & Mouton, 2001), it was used to provide simple numerically-based summaries of the characteristics of the research sample. The answers to the questions which required qualitative analysis were also captured to support the quantitative data.

4.9: Phase B: The qualitative study

The qualitative data was collected after the process of collecting the quantitative data had been completed. The second phase of the study commenced on December 5 of 2017 and was completed a week later, on December 12. Owing to the mobility of day labourers, the continuously fluctuating sizes of the target populations of each site, and the nature of the phenomenon of day labour, the research sample for the qualitative study was drawn from a representative sample of the 12 sites at which day labourers had been interviewed in order to complete the questionnaires in the quantitative study. Six sites were selected for the qualitative study and one-on-one interviews were conducted with three day labourers at each site, thereby generating qualitative data from 18 interviews.

Table 4.1: The hiring sites in East London at which the qualitative study was conducted

Case No.	LOCATION OF SITE	TYPE OF SITE
EL01	AMALINDA	CONNECTED SITE
EL02	SOUTHERNWOOD	CONNECTED SITE
EL03	QUIGNEY	CONNECTED SITE
EL04	ARCADIA	CONNECTED SITE
EL05	BEACON BAY	CONNECTED SITE
EL06	GREENFIELDS	CONNECTED SITE

(Source: The researcher)

4.9.1 The research sample and sampling techniques

Creswell (2007) emphasises the need for researchers who make use of sequential research designs to study the same participants in both phases of their research studies, although he maintains that it is not necessary to select research samples which are of equal size for both phases. Participants in this study could not be selected purposively, because of the flexible nature of day labour work and it was not possible to determine who would be at a particular site at any time and the names of the potential participants were not known. The use of convenience sampling enabled the conducting of one-on-one semi-structured interviews with participants who were available and willing to be interviewed at six of the twelve sites at which the quantitative data had been collected until dat saturation was achieved.

Inclusion criteria were however developed to guide the selection of the participants among those willing and available.

4.9.1.2 Inclusion criteria for participants in the qualitative study

It was ensured that all of the participants in the one-on-one semi-structured interviews fulfilled the following criteria:

- They were over the age of 18 years.
- They had worked as day labourers for at least 6 months, as participants who had little experience of day labouring would be likely to be unaware of the nature of many of the hardships which are associated with the work.
- They were full-time day labourers and not people who worked as day labourers once a week or to supplement other sources of income.
- They gathered at hiring sites on at least 5 days per week.

4.9.2 Collecting the qualitative data

A consideration which motivated the incorporation of a qualitative component into the research design for this study was the emphasis which qualitative research places upon understanding particular events, occurrences, and phenomena through the eyes of those who experience them and the sociocultural contexts which underlie the patterns through which social problems manifest themselves (Maree, 2007:51). Interviewing three participants at each of the six selected sites enabled to establish that the point of saturation had been reached by the conclusion of the eighteenth interview, as no new data was being

generated. The methods which were used to collect the qualitative data are summarised in the two sections which follow.

4.9.2.1 Observations

Observation is an essential means of gathering qualitative data, as it affords researchers an insider perspective of the group dynamics which prevail in different research settings and the underlying motivators of the behavior which they prompt (Maree, 2014: 84). In this research the role as an observer needed to be applied throughout the process of gathering the data from the participants, observing interactions among the day labourers, between the day labourers and their employers, and the physical settings in which the interactions occurred. The observations were recorded in the form of field notes, which covered interactions and events which took place in both unstructured and semi-structured settings (De Vos *et al.*, 2005: 275).

4.9.2.2 Semi-structured one-on-one interviews

According to Krysik and Finn (2013), semi-structured interviews, which enable researchers to probe for clarification and additional information from participants, are frequently used to gather data in qualitative research. The process began by formulating the questions in the interview guide from the findings which the quantitative data had generated, in order to expand upon them and place them within the context of the lived experiences of the participants (De Vos *et al.*, 2005: 296). The interviews afforded an in-depth insights into the hardships which day labourers encountered, owing to the unregulated nature of the day labour market, and to identify their vulnerabilities and the coping strategies which they used in order to survive.

The interviews were conducted in either isiXhosa or English, in accordance with the preferences of the participants. Care was taken not to detain the participants excessively while they stood at the roadsides, in order not to jeopardise the likelihood of their finding employment. The timing of the interviews was crucial to obtaining the best possible data. The participants expressed their willingness to participate in the study and they were told that they would be free to terminate the interviews at any point if opportunities for employment arose. Fortunately, in that although it had been mutually agreed that the participants might be obliged to leave before their interviews had been concluded if employers arrived at the sites, the adverse

effects of terminated interviews were minimal, as it was able to establish by the conclusion of the eighteenth interview that the point of saturation had been reached.

4.9.3 Analysis of the qualitative data

The qualitative data which the interviews generated was analysed by means of thematic analysis, which entails analysing it in terms of the themes or patterns which emerge after it has been broken down into a manageable form (Brown & Clarke, 2006). It requires specific essential steps to be followed systematically, in order to arrive at coherent findings which accord with the aims and objectives of a particular research study.

The following steps for performing a thematic analysis of qualitative data were adopted as they have been enumerated by Maree (2012), after which the results were scrutinised by the supervisor. The sequence which the supervisor followed to analyse the qualitative data from the interviews is summarised as follows:

- **Step 1: Familiarise yourself with the data**

This initial step required a practical exercise to read and re-read the data which had been collected in order to become completely conversant with it and to record initial ideas concerning its import. The step enabled an engagement in the information which had been gathered and to reflect upon its overall meaning and implications (Creswell, 2009).

- **Step 2: Generating initial codes**

Once it had been ensured that data has sufficiently been clutched, a process began by assigning codes to the raw data which appeared to be significant and meaningful. The coded material was then further sorted and sifted. Although the number of codes was greater than that of the themes which were subsequently identified, the codes provided a meaningful context for assessing the nature of the discourse which had begun to emerge from the raw data.

- **Step 3: Searching for themes**

The process of searching for themes enabled to sort the data into potential information which was easy to read and comprehend, in order to begin to interpret and analyse the codes which had been collected together. A thematic table was designed (Please see Table 6.1), which demonstrates how the data was analysed in terms of the coded information and the themes which were identified in this step.

- **Step 4: Reviewing themes**

Once the relevant themes had been identified, they were all refined.

- **Step 5: Defining and naming themes**

At this stage, the supervisor for the research study was consulted, who reviewed the themes, thereby enabling the researcher to revise the themes and subthemes and to break broad themes down into more relevant subthemes. Subsequently, themes were named to formulate clear working definitions of each one. At this point, it became possible to understand the themes as representing interrelated and interdependent components of a single unified body of discourse pertaining to the research topic.

- **Step 6: Producing the report**

Once the thematic analysis had been successfully accomplished, there was a need to produce an appropriate report by citing relevant extracts of the qualitative data to illustrate the themes, in relation to the research questions and the literature which had been reviewed. All efforts were done to produce a report which was not merely a prosaic description of the themes, but rather a compelling analysis which was supported by valid empirical evidence which was relevant to the research questions.

4.10: Integrating the data

As Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003) explain, the term ‘mixed methods’ is a broad one, in that it refers to all of the procedures which are entailed in collecting, analysing, and presenting quantitative and qualitative data in a single study. Procedures for analysing data in studies which make use of mixed methods research designs require the separate analyses of both the quantitative and qualitative data through the use of appropriate analytical techniques and then ‘mixing’ the data (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). In this

research study, the data was systematically integrated to ensure that the quantitative and qualitative findings informed each other in a mutually reciprocal manner (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2013). The quantitative data provided the basis for conducting the qualitative study and, conversely, the qualitative findings explained the numerical data which had been obtained from the quantitative study.

4.11: Measures taken to ensure the trustworthiness of the research instruments

In social research it is essential to ensure the trustworthiness of both quantitative and qualitative research instruments (Shenton, 2004). According to Shenton (2004:63), qualitative researchers are required to present a convincing case to demonstrate that their work is academically sound, in accordance with specific criteria and by means of certain procedures, namely:

- ***Credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability:*** Each of these four criteria contributes to ensuring the reliability of qualitative research findings. Researchers need to ensure that their findings are credible, dependable in the sense that they make a valid contribution to an existing body of research, can be transferred to other similar settings, and can be confirmed by repeating a particular research study.
- ***Examining previous research findings:*** Shenton (2004) emphasises the necessity of examining previous research findings to assess the degree to which the findings of research studies are congruent with those of past studies. This requirement was fulfilled by conducting a comprehensive review of all relevant studies which were available.
- ***Audit trail:*** According to Lietz (2006) and Shenton (2004), audit trails are created by qualitative researchers while they analyse their data, in order to demonstrate to other researchers how they arrived at their findings. Conversely, quantitative research instruments are evaluated according to the criteria of validity and reliability.
- ***Validity:*** According to Burns and Grove (2006:28), validity in quantitative research is a measure of the truth or accuracy of the claims which researchers make on the basis of their findings and a crucial consideration throughout the process. The criterion of validity enables researchers to make decisions concerning which findings are useful. The validity of the findings of this study were ensured by conducting a comprehensive review of the relevant available literature, providing accurate and relevant definitions of the concepts from which the theoretical framework was

developed, and ensuring congruency between the research topic, the research questions and the objectives of the study.

- **Reliability:** Reliability is the extent to which the scores which quantitative research instruments yield are consistent or repeatable over time (Brink, 1996). Reliability also pertains to the degree of consistency or dependability with which an instrument measures what it has been designed to measure. To ensure the reliability of the questionnaire (Please see Annexure A), a pilot study was conducted and appropriate changes were made to questions which required them.

4.12: Ethical considerations

According to De Vos *et al.* (2011), research ethics comprise a set of widely accepted ethical principles which govern the conduct of researchers in the social sciences in relation to all of the people with whom they interact during the course of conducting their research studies. Permission to conduct this study was obtained from the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) of the University of the Western Cape. The Human Research Ethics Committee is responsible for safeguarding the welfare and the rights of participants in all research studies which are conducted by researchers who are affiliated to the University of the Western Cape, in accordance with the Code of Research Ethics of the Human Sciences Research Council. The particular attention to respecting the principles which are discussed in the sections which follow was adhered to:

4.12.1: Avoidance of harm

The fundamental ethical rule of social research is that it must cause no harm to those who agree to participate in research studies (Babbie, 2007). This ethical principle extends beyond the physical well-being of participants and also covers their psychological and emotional well-being and any possible adverse effects upon their personal reputations. In order to adhere strictly to the principle, all reasonable measures were followed to ensure that the participants were mentally and emotionally prepared for the questions which might be asked and were aware that they were required to divulge information which they were prepared to provide only. Before commencing with the interviews, it was important for the researcher to introduce himself to the participants. He explained the capacity in which he intended to interview them, the purpose of the research study, the benefits which it was intended to provide, the nature of the questions which they would be asked, and that the information which they provided would be treated as

strictly confidential and that their decisions to participate in the study would be purely voluntary (Cresswell, 2011).

4.12.2: Voluntary participation

Voluntary participation is a core principle of social research and researchers are made acutely aware that one should not be forced to participate in a research study. The essential tenet of voluntary participation concerns the right of all prospective participants to choose whether or not they wish to participate, without needing to fear any negative repercussions whatsoever as a consequence of declining to do so (Rubin & Babbie, 2005). The researcher took care to explain to the participants that they were not be obliged to participate in the study if they did not wish to do so and that that they could withdraw their participation at any time if they decided to participate.

4.12.3: Informed consent

Obtaining the informed consent of participants to participate in a research study entails informing them adequately of its purpose, the anticipated duration of their participation, the procedures which they will be required to follow, and the potential advantages, disadvantages and dangers which their participation could entail, and also presenting them or their legal representatives with the credentials of the researcher (Royse, 2004). Informed consent requires prospective participants to acquire an accurate understanding of the nature of the research and the roles which they will be required to perform. Cresswell (2011) emphasises the necessity of participants understanding the intentions behind the conducting of particular research studies before they agree to participate in them. In this study, the researcher informed the participants of the nature and purpose of the research, both verbally and in writing, in the form of a consent form, which they were required to sign.

4.12.4: Not deceiving participants

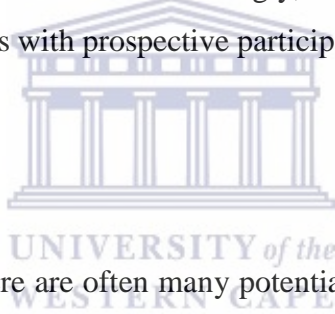
Struwig and Stead (2001) define deception in the context of social research in terms of misleading participants concerning the nature and purpose of research studies, deliberately misrepresenting facts, or withholding information from them. Transparency is crucial in social research, as it facilitates the development of mutual trust between researchers and the participants in their studies. It complements the principle of informed consent, in that participants are able to make informed decisions to participate in

research studies only in agreements which are characterised by transparency. The researcher endeavoured to maintain transparency at all times during the conducting of this study, in order to preclude the possibility of deceiving the participants, even unintentionally.

4.12.5: Avoidance of violations of privacy

According to De Vos *et al.* (2011), the most fundamental sense of privacy refers to the practice of individual people to keep from scrutiny information pertaining to themselves which they would normally be unwilling to divulge to others. In order to preserve the privacy of the respondents in the quantitative component of this study, they were not asked to give their names when they were interviewed in order to complete the questionnaires. By contrast, De Vos *et al.* (2011) maintain that confidentiality expands upon the concept of privacy, in that it refers to agreements between individual people to limit the access which other people have to private information. Accordingly, confidentiality needs to be maintained in social research from the initial meetings with prospective participants to the publication of the findings of research studies.

4.13: Limitations of the study



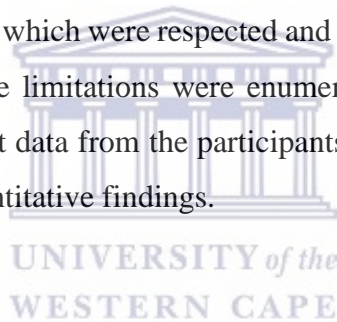
De Vos *et al.* (2005) advise that as there are often many potential limitations in even the most carefully planned research study, it is essential that they should be adequately taken into account and listed. Limitations are constraints which inhibit the progress of studies and are often inevitable. Accordingly, the limitations which were encountered during the conducting of this research study are summarised as follows:

- The quantitative findings cannot necessarily be generalised to their target populations, as the study was conducted in East London in the province of the Eastern Cape only. In addition, the qualitative findings were not intended to be generalisable to other populations because it was conducted in order to provide an appropriate local context to the quantitative findings and the research sample comprised only eighteen participants.
- As the sampling of participants was entirely dependent upon the availability and willingness of potential participants to participate in the study, owing to constant fluctuations in the sizes of the populations of individual hiring sites, establishing criteria for how representative the research sample was of all day labourers in East London was potentially problematic.

- Owing to the nature of day labouring and the locations at which the interviews were conducted, in some cases it was not possible to complete the interviews which the researcher conducted at roadsides. Most day labourers were at the sites from 07:00 onwards and if they were hired while an interview was in progress, it could not be completed. . In addition, some of the participants were unwilling to engage in conversations with the researcher because they feared that doing so could jeopardise opportunities for being hired.

4.14: Chapter summary

This chapter took the form of a discussion of the aims and objectives of the study, the selection of an appropriate research design, and the methodology which was used to collect, analyse, and integrate the quantitative and qualitative data. Succinct elucidations were provided of relevant concepts such as research populations, research samples, and research instruments. An in-depth summary was provided of the ethical principles of social research which were respected and rigorously upheld at all times during the conducting of the study. Although the limitations were enumerated, as they were not significant, the researcher was able to gather sufficient data from the participants. The following chapter is devoted to a presentation and discussion of the quantitative findings.



CHAPTER 5: PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS

5.1: Introduction

Although the questionnaire contained questions to which the responses required qualitative analysis, the principal purpose of the quantitative study was to develop a demographic profile for day labourers in East London, with the qualitative data playing a supporting role and providing additional depth. The demographic details of the day labourers who participated in the study are presented and discussed in the sections which follow.

5.2: Demographic data obtained from the participants

The tables which are provided in this section summarise the gender, racial, and age distributions of the research sample, levels of educational attainment and income, and the marital statuses of the participants. The data which appears in each table is discussed and interpreted.

5.2.1: Gender distribution of the research sample

From observation it could be concluded that black males predominated in the population of day labourers in East London and they comprised 100% of the research sample for this study. The gender distribution can be explained, to a large extent, by the strenuous and often hazardous nature of the work which day labourers are usually required to perform, which tends to discourage many women from attempting to compete for work as day labourers. In their survey of 2004 in Tshwane, Blaauw *et al.* (2006) found a similar preponderance of black males, who comprised 97.5% of their research sample. They attributed the trend to the physically demanding and frequently dangerous nature of the work.

5.2.1.1: Observations

The researcher observed that there were women at one of the hiring sites in East London, although they refused to participate in the study. By contrast with the men who stood at roadsides and street corners, these women sat sitting on chairs and buckets. Informal conversations with them revealed that they were hired mainly to perform domestic work and cleaning work at construction sites.

Figure 5.1: Women waiting at a roadside



(Source: News24 <https://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/women-wait-for-work-on-the-side-of-the-road-20180120>)

5.2.2. Distribution of home languages

As is summarised in Table 5.1, isiXhosa was the home language of almost all of the participants.

Table 5.1: Home languages of the participants

Language	Number	% of sample
IsiZulu	1	0.77
Xhitsonga	1	0.77
IsiXhosa	127	97.69
Other (Portuguese)	1	0.77
TOTAL	130	100

(Source: Data derived from the survey questionnaire)

Out of 130 participants, 127 (97.69%) spoke isiXhosa, a finding which is borne out by the same number having been born in the Eastern Cape, in some cases in deep rural areas of the province. The small minority for whom isiXhosa was not their home language was evenly divided among participants who spoke isiZulu, Xhitsonga, and Portuguese.

5.2.3: Countries of birth and home provinces of the participants

Table 5.2 : The home provinces of the South African day labourers who were interviewed in East

London

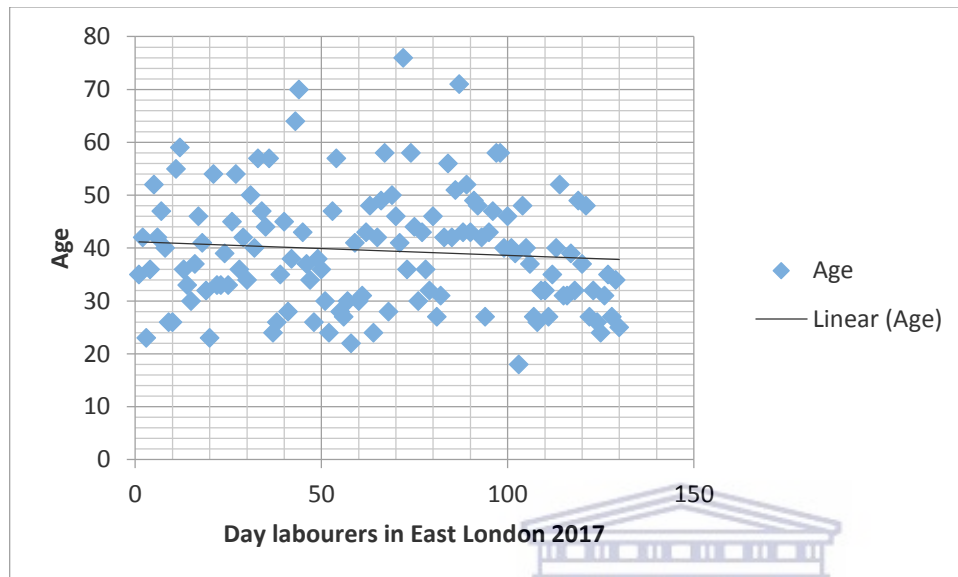
Province	Number	% of subsample
Gauteng	1	0.76
KwaZulu-Natal	1	0.76
Eastern Cape	126	97.72
Western Cape	1	0.76
TOTAL	129	100

(Source: Data derived from the survey questionnaire)

A large majority of 129 (99.23%) of the participants were born in South Africa, while one was born in Mozambique. As it can be seen in Table 5.2, an almost equally large majority of 126 (97.72%) had come from within the province of the Eastern Cape to seek employment in East London. This trend corresponds with the general trend for inhabitants of the rural areas of South Africa either to migrate in search of employment to the urban areas of their provinces, such as East London or Port Elizabeth in the case of the Eastern Cape, or even further afield to centres such as Gauteng or Cape Town. Of the South African participants whose home province was not the Eastern Cape, one (0.76%) had come from Gauteng, one (0.76%) from the Western Cape, and one (0.76%) from KwaZulu-Natal.

5.2.4: Age distribution among the participants

Figure 5.2: Age distribution of the day labourers in the research sample



(Source: Data derived from the survey questionnaire)

As Figure 5.2 demonstrates, the average age of the day labourers in the research sample was 40 years. By contrast, it emerged from the literature review that rates of unemployment among the youth of South Africa are particularly high, with young people between the ages of 21 and 35 years being particularly adversely affected. As the Eastern Cape Socioeconomic Consultative Council (2010) defines the youth of the province as comprising people between the ages of between 15 and 34 years (Vakalisa, 2005: 53; Schenck, 2009), it could be concluded that a significant majority of the day labourers in the sample could be classified as being relatively young, which has definite implications for the potential of day labour and the informal economy to empower the unemployed youth economically. At the outer limits of the distribution, one of the participants was under 20 years of age and three fell into the age range of between 70 and 80 years.

5.2.5: Marital status

Table 5.3: Distribution of marital statuses among the participants

Status	Number	% of sample
Never married / single	96	73.85
Separated / Divorced	5	3.85
Married	19	14.62
Widowed	3	2.31
Cohabiting with a partner	7	5.38
Other	0	0
TOTAL	130	100

(Source: Data derived from the survey questionnaire)

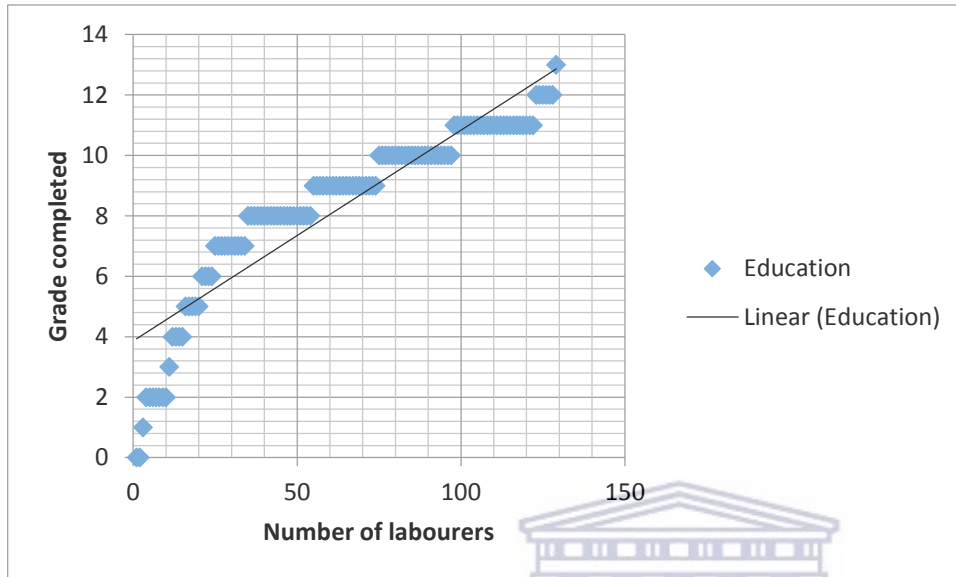
Table 5.3 reveals that 103 (79.23% were unmarried), of whom 96 (73.85%) had either never married and 7 (5.38%) cohabited with partners. A further 19 (14.62%) were married, 5 (3.85%) were divorced, and 3 (2.31%) were widowed. It appears to be entirely plausible that the significant majority of unmarried participants could not afford to pay lobola owing to their precarious financial circumstances. The qualitative data also revealed that in some instances the possibility of marriage had been precluded by the necessity of finding employment as day labourers to support their families. Some of the participants explained that they had dropped out of school after their parents had died and moved to East London in order to support their families, who remained behind in the rural areas. For some, cohabiting with a partner represented a viable alternative to the marriages into which they could not afford to enter at home. In the words of one of the participants who was interviewed:

Getting married was not an issue at all after the death of my parents. I needed to get a job and work to support my family. I was the only older child and I had no choice.

Malinga (2015) concur with the notion as quoted in the above section that formal marriage for day labourers becomes a cultural barrier because they need to pay lobola (bride price) at an expensive cost to formalise marriage and for some reason this is based on social and personal characteristics that include education or skills they possess and the degree of prestige in the community and this precludes them from getting married. However, this speaks to what Mubangizi (2012) have noted that the lobola practice has become commercialised with parents attaching monetary values to their children based on certain characteristics.

5.2.6: Levels of educational attainment

Figure 5.3: Levels of education which the participants had attained



(Source: Data derived from the survey questionnaire)

Figure 5.3 illustrates a predominance of relatively low levels of educational attainment among the participants, which inevitably makes the likelihood of finding employment in the formal sector remote in an economy which is characterised by high rates of unemployment. Wilson (2006) maintains that there is an undeniable positive correlation between low levels of educational attainment and an inability to find formal employment. Only 8.40% of the participants in the research sample had completed Grade 8 and only 4.66% had matriculated. A lack of financial support was the reason which was most cited for leaving school without matriculating. Of the 130 participants, only one had obtained a tertiary qualification, in food and beverage management. The most frequently cited reasons for leaving school prematurely, apart from a lack of the financial support which was needed to complete their schooling, concerned severe disruptions in the families, such as the death of parents and extreme poverty at home. In the words of one of the participants:

Yhoo, for me it was very hectic, bro. My beloved parents died when I was half way through high school. I had no choice but to leave school and search for employment. I first worked as a shoemaker in one of the malls here and then I decided to come here because I make more money than from shoemaking. You

cannot trust people in shoemaking. They bring their shoes, but they will never come back. Here at least I get money.

Apart from confirming that he had left school to find employment owing to the death of his parents, this participant revealed that he found it easier as an uneducated person to earn money in precarious employment as a day labourer in the informal sector than it had been when he was ostensibly in secure full-time employment in the formal sector. The account of one of the day labourers in the study which Malinga (2015) conducted was remarkably similar:

It was hard for us to complete school because of our mother's passing. Our mother passed away while we were young and just starting school. I went to school until I got to [Standard] Three, then we found that there was no one who...who was taking care of things at home, so I left and went to look for work in Port Elizabeth. I found a job in Port Elizabeth at a construction site and started pushing the wheelbarrow and mixing concrete. From there I...I have been on my feet since.

In their study of day labourers in Pretoria, Schenck and Louw (2005) found that owing to poor economic conditions, young men in particular were often expected to leave school and move to cities at a young age to seek employment, either as the primary providers for their households if there were no older males, or to supplement the incomes of their families (Schenck & Louw, 2005:5). A significant finding of the study was that many of the participants maintained that although they had wished to complete their schooling, family responsibilities after the death of their parents had obliged them to find work to support themselves and their families.

From a similar standpoint, the responses to the questionnaire in this study included a call for the reopening of a no-fee technical school in Mdantsane whose curriculum had been designed specifically for people with their needs. The response had been given to one of the open-ended questions in the questionnaire which required qualitative analysis, concerning why the participants had left school and was transcribed as follows:

The Border Training Centre was located in Mdantsane and people were taken there for free, paying not a cent, but now it's closed. Can it be opened again so that we can have certificates to show to employers and be able to search for work wherever possible?

The findings of this study and other relevant studies all confirm that day labourers are generally not sufficiently educated to enable them to market their skills and knowledge in the formal sector of the economy. The generally low levels of educational attainment which are depicted in Figure 5.3 accord with the findings of the national study which Blaauw (2010) conducted. He concluded that the generally low

levels of educational attainment of day labourers in South Africa severely impeded their access to the formal economy and even militated against opportunities for finding employment at hiring sites.

5.2.7 Self-reported levels of proficiency in the languages spoken by many prospective employers

Table 5.4: Self-assessed ability to understand the languages of many prospective employers

Assessment	English		Afrikaans	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Not at all	10	7.69	86	66.15
Somewhat	64	49.23	29	22.31
Well	55	42.31	14	10.77
Missing values	1	0.77	1	0.77
TOTAL	130	100	130	100

(Source: Data derived from the survey questionnaire)

Table 5.5: Self-assessed ability to speak the languages of many prospective employers

Assessment	English		Afrikaans	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Not at all	15	11.54	94	72.31
Somewhat	63	48.46	21	16.15
Well	50	38.46	14	10.77
Missing values	2	1.54	1	0.77
TOTAL	130	100	130	100

(Source: Data derived from the survey questionnaire)

Table 5.4 demonstrates that of the 130 respondents, only 55 (42.31%) maintained that they understood English well, while Table 5.5 reveals that 50 (38.46%) believed that they could speak English well. In order to understand who the employers were for the day labourers on sites, participants in this study were asked about their employers, who they are (demographic profile), it appeared that employers were mostly white, and English is the predominantly spoken language of white residents of East London, it would be reasonable to assume that day labourers who are able to understand and speak English would be more likely to find employment than those who cannot understand or speak English at all. A significant majority of 86 (66.15%) considered that they could not understand Afrikaans at all, while a minority of 29 (22.31%) assessed that they could understand Afrikaans ‘somewhat’, and 94 (72.31%) revealed that they could not speak Afrikaans at all. The general proficiency of the participants in the languages which were spoken

most by prospective employers accords with the conclusion of Blaauw (2010) that many day labourers are effectively rendered unemployable because they are unable to understand the instructions of employers who hire them.

5.2.8 Employment histories of the participants

Of the 130 participants who were surveyed, 65% reported that they had been in full-time employment before they became day labourers, a significantly higher percentage than the national average, which tends to be in the region of 50%. The remaining 35% had never been in full-time employment and a small minority of 3 (2.3%) did not wish to obtain full-time employment. The reasons which the respondents cited for leaving their most recent full-time positions are summarised in Table 5.6.

Table 5.6: Reasons cited for leaving full-time employment

Reason	Frequency	Percentage
Laid off owing to closure of business/mine/factory	18	21.4
Laid off owing to downsizing of business	14	16.7
Laid off owing to relocation of business	5	6
Disciplinary reasons	4	4.7
Left employment owing to low wages	6	7.1
Left employment for medical reasons	7	8.3
Left employment owing to ill treatment by employer	6	7.1
Other. Please specify, e.g. Contract ended.	21	25
Refused to answer	3	3.6
Total number of participants who had been in full-time employment	84	100

(Source: Data derived from the survey questionnaire)

As it can be seen in Table 5.6, 18 (21.4 %) of the 84 participants who had been in full-time employment revealed that they had left because the businesses or factories in which they had been employed had closed. A further 14 (16.7%) that their positions had become redundant as a result of downsizing, 5 (6%) that the businesses in which they had been employed had relocated, 4 (4.7%) that their employment had been terminated for disciplinary reasons, 6 (7.1%) that they had left owing to low wages, which had precluded them from fulfilling their responsibilities, 7 (8.3%) that they had left voluntarily owing to their medical conditions, and 6 (7.1%) that they had left as a result of being ill-treated by their employers. The findings suggest that a wide range of factors, reasons, and considerations could encourage workers to leave full-time employment in the formal sector and join the ranks of day labourers. One of the participants who cited low wages as his motivation for leaving full-time employment said:

I left work because I did not get paid every day. Here I get money every day and I do many things whenever I want. I was working in Butterworth in a factory. There I was getting paid R400 fortnightly. Here I can make R400 in a single day, so I decided to leave and come and stand here. Opportunities are great. Here at least I can trust people.

This finding suggests that if day labourers possess skills which employers require, they could benefit more from employment in the informal sector than from poorly paid employment in the formal sector which had no prospects for improvement. Some participants were obliged to enter the informal sector as day labourers because the contracts by means of which they had been employed had not been renewed. One of these participants said:

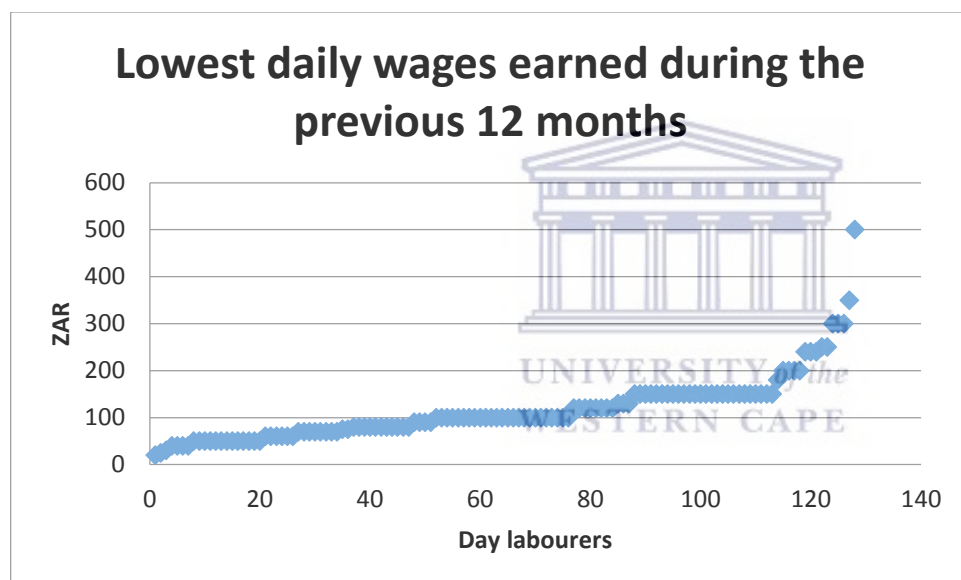
For me, Buti, it was the contract that ended... and you know I was working very nicely at that place. I was doing cutting in one of the factories in Butterworth, but then I had to go, because the man who employed us there called us one day and told us that the contract will not be renewed now, because they do not have money to employ us. I thought of dying at that moment, but I said to myself I am a man... I must find a job so that I'll be able to have money again.

5.2.9: Levels of income earned by day labourers in East London

It was difficult to determine the incomes of day labourers in East London with any degree of precision, as day labourers do not have fixed daily or monthly incomes. Consequently, incomes were calculated on the basis of answers to questions concerning the amounts which the participants had earned the previous day, week, or month, and comparisons between the amounts which they earned during months which they considered to be good or bad months. Estimates were made on the basis of verbal reports of the income which the participants had earned, as their fluctuating incomes were not reflected on payslips. The researcher calculated that the participants earned an average income of R27.65 per hour when they were able to find employment, with the lowest hourly wage amounting to R10.53 and the highest to R140.00. As of June 1 of 2018, the minimum wage in South Africa is R20.00 per hour, which is equivalent to a minimum monthly wage of R3500.00 for a 40-hour week and R3900.00 for a 45-hour week (Fin24, 2018). The findings revealed that the participants stood for an average of 6 days per week at street corners and roadsides and that the median was 7 days. Three sets of questions pertaining to the daily incomes which the participants earned were included in the questionnaire in order to estimate the composition of the total income of day labourers in East London. In an attempt to establish the existence of a possible reservation wage in this informal economic activity, the participants were asked to indicate the minimum wage per day for which they would be prepared to work. The researcher evaluated the responses of the participants

in relation to the many more hours which standing at hiring sites entail per week for day labourers, by comparison with the hours which people who are employed in the formal sector are expected to work each week, and also in relation to the lowest daily wages which they had earned during the previous 12 months. According to Theodore (2009), reservation wages are falling throughout the global informal labour market, as a result of the severe economic crisis which has been adversely affecting the economies of countries throughout the world.

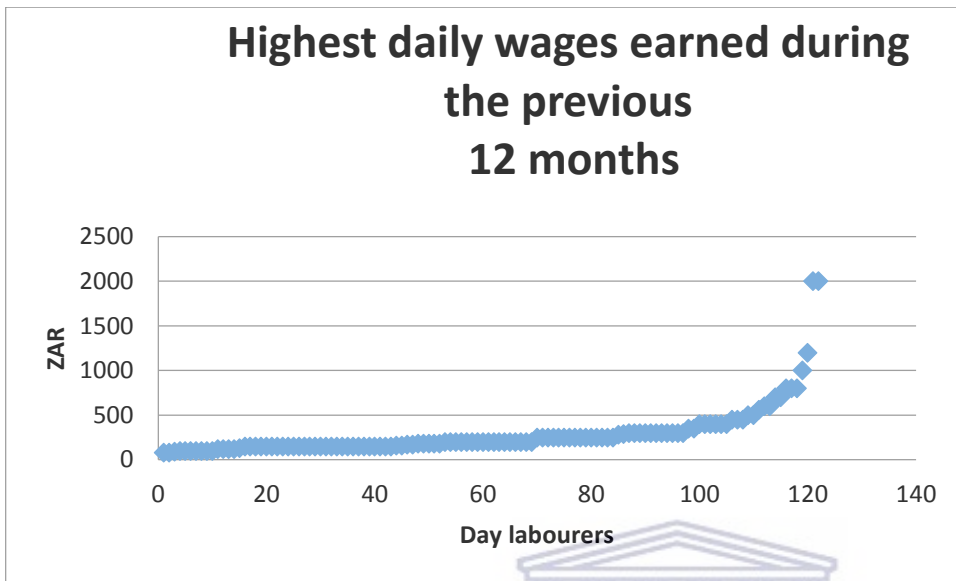
Figure 5.4: Distribution of the lowest wages per day earned by the participants during the previous 12 months



(Source: Data derived from the survey questionnaire)

Figure 5.4 illustrates that the participants had earned a daily average of R116.37 during the previous 12 months, with a median value of R100.00, a minimum value of R20.00, and a maximum value of R500.00. These figures can be compared with the lowest wage for which they were willing to work, for which the median value was R150.00. Although the lowest daily wage for which they were prepared to work was R100.00 and less than they expected to earn, they were nonetheless willing to work for the lower amount owing to the scarcity of work at hiring sites.

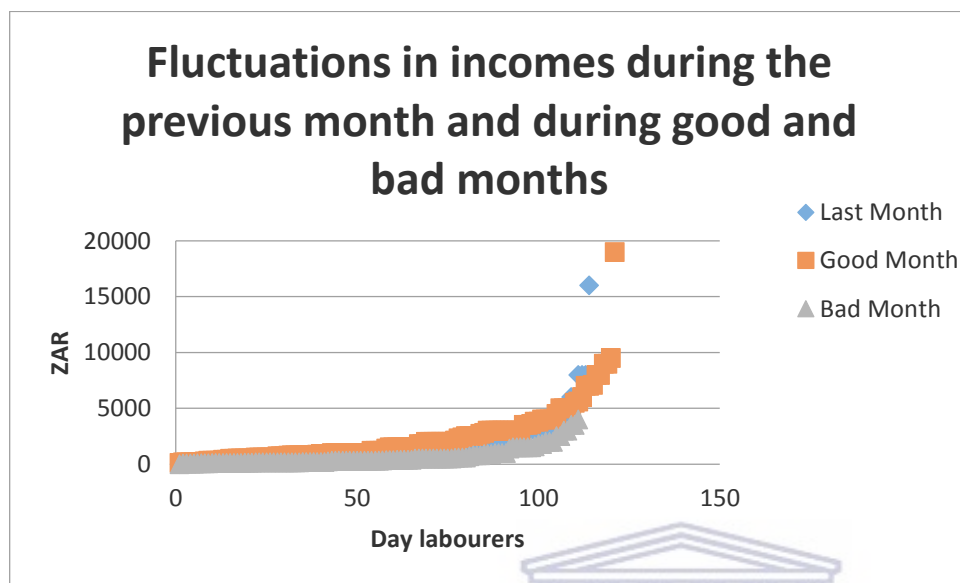
Figure 5.5: Distribution of the highest wages per day earned by the participants during the previous 12 months



(Source: Data derived from the survey questionnaire)

Figure 5.5 indicates that the participants had earned an average highest daily wage of R317.48 during the previous 12 months, with a median value of R200.00, which suggests that the amounts which most earned depended upon on how many times they were employed on particular days. The minimum value of R80.00 for days on which their incomes were optimal and the maximum monthly value of R3500.00, which corresponds with the legal minimum wage, are both indicative of the participants having worked very often during the stipulated periods.

Figure 5.6: The volatility of the incomes of the participants during the previous month and during good and bad months



(Source: Data derived from the survey questionnaire)

The volatility of the monthly earnings of day labourers can best be appreciated by comparing the distributions of earnings during peak and slow months (Valenzuela Jr. *et al.*, 2006:11-12). The large variances in the incomes of the participants were evident from the pronounced differences which were found among those of the previous month, bad months, and good months. The uncertainty which results from large fluctuations in their incomes has significant and stressful effects upon the lives of day labourers. Figure 5.6 demonstrates that the median value for the earnings of the participants during the previous month rose to R600.00, while during a bad month it fell to R300.00, against a peak value of R1500.00 during good months. Consequently, even in those instances in which day labourers have many more good months than bad months, it remains unlikely in most cases that their monthly earnings will exceed R1500.00, which obliges most workers in the informal day labour market to seek employment almost every day.

5.2.9.1 The extent to which the participants negotiated wages with employers

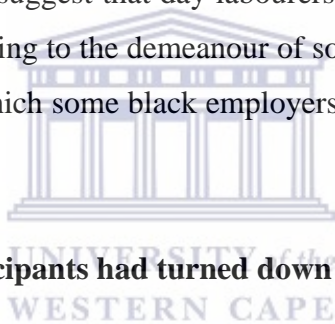
Eighty-two (64.06%) of the 128 participants who responded to the question in the questionnaire which asked whether they negotiated their wages with prospective employers did so in the affirmative. Although the ability to negotiate wages with employers often results in improved wages for day labourers, some of the findings of the qualitative study suggested that some of the participants had few opportunities to negotiate wages with their employers and, instead, felt obliged to accept any offer which prospective employers made. In the words of one of the participants who was interviewed:

We get what they think suits us best...we cannot say it's little..who are we to say that to them?

Another participant said:

I prefer white guys to the black guys...with the white guys, you can get more than you expected, because they allow us to say a price. Black employers do not want to hear a word from us...they give so little.

The two excerpts from the interviews suggest that day labourers sometimes find it difficult to negotiate wages with prospective employers, owing to the demeanour of some employers, and also, in some cases, to the animosity and condescension which some black employers display towards day labourers, thereby emphasising their powerlessness.



5.2.9.2 The extent to which the participants had turned down opportunities for employment during the previous month

The findings revealed that 31 (24.22%) of the 128 participants who responded to the question had turned down opportunities for employment during the previous month. The qualitative findings provided a number of contexts in which the participants had declined to accept work. In some instances, they did not have tools for the tasks which they were required to perform. In others, they considered the work to be too dangerous or the working conditions to be unacceptable. In addition, some were unwilling to accept rates of remuneration which would preclude them from providing adequately for their families. One of the participants said:

I cannot work so hard for nothing. I would rather work hard when I know I will get a good payment from the employers.

Others cited abusive treatment which they had received as having constituted the reason for which they had declined to work again for particular employers. Several of the participants maintained, during the interviews, that they were not prepared to continue working for employers whom they knew would treat

them very harshly or would not pay them sufficiently well once they had completed tasks. In the words of one of the interviewees:

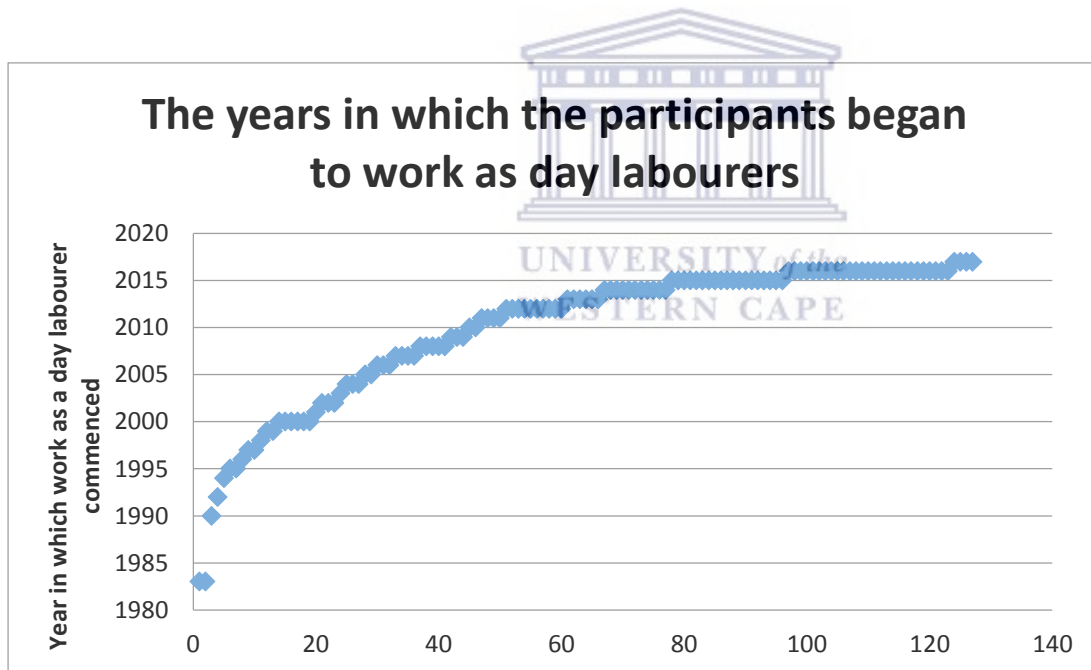
There is a guy here who does not want to pay...when he comes, I do not take his offer, because he is rude. Last time I worked for him, guess what happened: he chased me away because I wanted my money!

5.3: Living conditions of day labourers in East London

The sections which follow are devoted to discussions of the living conditions of day labourers in East London, with respect to their family life, the access which they have to food, and the structures in which they reside.

5.3.1: The years in which the participants began to work as day labourers

Figure 5.7: The years in which the participants began to work as day labourers



(Source: Data derived from the survey questionnaire)

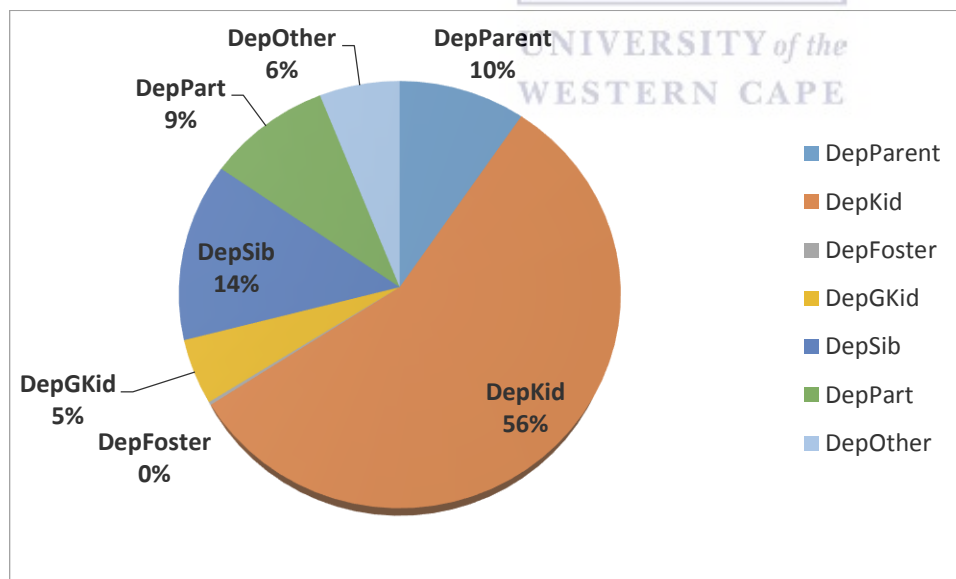
Figure 5.7 illustrates the distribution of the years in which the participants began to stand at street corners and roadsides in East London, in order to find employment as day labourers. Some had been working as day labourers from as early as 1985, for more than 30 years, while new arrivals continue to enter the market from different areas within the Eastern Cape. The steady influxes inevitably result in intense

competition for the limited amount of employment which is available. As the participants had been deriving their precarious incomes solely from day labouring for as many as 30 years or more, their stoical perseverance provides compelling evidence of considerable resilience and strength of character.

5.3.2: The composition of the families of the participants

All of the participants indicated that as they were responsible for supporting their families, they were obliged to stand at hiring sites in search of employment. The findings of the studies which were conducted by both Schenck *et al.* (2012) and Malinga (2015) suggest that the day labourers in South Africa generally seek employment in order to support their families and extended families. The findings of this study were similar in this respect, as they revealed that the participants supported several different categories of dependants and extended families, in some cases. Figure 5.7 provides a schematic graphic depiction of the numbers of dependants whom the participants supported.

Figure 5.8: Distribution of the different categories of dependants whom the participants supported



(Source: Data derived from the survey questionnaire)

Figure 5.8 illustrates that 56% (183) of the 436 dependants which the participants supported were children under the age of 18 years. From the data, the researcher calculated that the number of dependants whom each participant supported from the wages which he earned as a day labourer, excluding himself, was 3.3. The findings of the study which Blaauw *et al.* (2006) conducted in Pretoria were similar, in that they revealed that the participants supported an average of four other people with their incomes.

In East London, 42% of the participants reported that they lived with their families, while a significant portion, which comprised 46 (36%) of the 128 participants who answered the question, revealed that they did not live with their immediate families and dependants, as many of them spent most of each year in East London. The large number of participants who did not live with their families could relate to the finding that many day labourers in East London migrate to the city from villages in the deep rural areas of the Transkei and, in many cases, are not able to afford to return home to spend extended periods with their families. By contrast, the choices which they make to work in East London and not to migrate further afield to larger cities such as Cape Town could be motivated by a desire to return periodically to their families, owing to the relative proximity of the city to the rural Eastern Cape.

Table 5.7: The frequencies with which the participants visited their families

Frequency	Frequency of visits to family	Percentage
Daily	2	3.7
Weekly	3	5.6
Monthly	7	13
Four times a year	4	7.4
Twice a year	5	9.3
Once a year	22	40.7
Other. Please specify.....	10	18.5
Refused to answer	1	1.9
Total	54	100

(Source: Data derived from the survey questionnaire)

Table 5.7 reveals that many of the participants did not see or visit their families regularly during the course of a year. Twenty-two (40.7%) of those who answered the question reported that they visited their families only once a year and five (9.3%) reported that they did so twice a year. A further four (7.4%) reported that they were able to visit their families four times a year. While two (3.7%) claimed that they saw their families daily, three (5.6%) that they did so once a week, and seven (13%) that they did so once a month, the finding that two participants saw their families daily appears to be an anomaly. It would be reasonable to assume that these participants had either misunderstood the question or lived with their families. The figures and percentages which are reflected in the table, in conjunction with the responses to the open-ended questions in the questionnaire, suggest that most of the participants are prevented from visiting their families very often by the physical distances between East London and their homes in the rural areas, the small incomes which they earn as day labourers, and a lack of opportunities for sufficiently remunerative employment. Theron and Theron (2010) found that although day labourers tend not to visit their families often, they endeavour to support their families and dependants with money, specifically to fulfil responsibilities such as paying the school fees of dependants. Table 5.8 summarises the frequencies with which the participants sent money home to support their families and dependants.

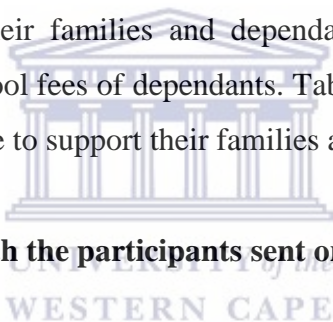


Table 5.8: The frequencies with which the participants sent or took money home

Frequency	Frequency of sending money home	Percentage
Weekly	3	6
Each month	17	34
Four times a year	8	16
Twice a year	5	10
Once a year	3	6
No money to take or send home	14	28
Total	50	100

(Source: Data derived from the survey questionnaire)

The participants were asked how often during the previous 12 months they had been able to send money home. Seventeen (34%) of the 50 participants who answered the question reported that they had sent money each month, while only three (6%) reported that they had been able to do so each week and eight (16%) had been able to do so four times during the 12-month period. Fourteen (28%) reported that they had been unable to send money home because they did not earn sufficient money to enable them to do so. One of the participants said:

You see, bhuti, for me it is difficult to send money home, because I earn peanuts.

Another said:

It is hard to stay without your family because they always think that I am earning a lot of money when I am here in this East London area. If I was staying with them, they would see that I cannot send money home because I am getting cents. They can only get money from me in December.

The findings also revealed that the most common methods which the participants used to send money to their families were money transfers which were made through transactions at the Money Market counters at Checkers or Shoprite stores and giving money to people whom they knew in East London who returned each weekend to the rural areas in which their families lived.

5.3.3: Types of accommodation in which the participants resided

Table 5.9: The types of accommodation in which the participants slept

Type of accommodation	Frequency	Percentage
Construction site		
Cohabiting with a sleep- in domestic worker in a backyard room		
Backyard room	2	1.6
Veld or vacant land		
On the street		
Backyard shack	15	11.6
Shack	73	56.6
Hostel or shelter	2	1.6
Houses constructed of materials such as bricks or reeds	36	27.9
Place of work		
Other Please specify.....	1	0.8

Total	129	100
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(Source: Data derived from the survey questionnaire)

Table 5.9 demonstrates that a majority of 73 (56.6%) of the 128 participants who responded to the question reported that they slept in their own shacks, while a significantly large group of 36 (27.9%) indicated that they resided in brick houses, which would have included houses which been provided by the government. A further 15 (11.6%) appeared to be tenants who rented the backyard shacks in which they slept. The monthly amounts which the participants paid for rented accommodation are summarised in Table 5.10.

Table 5.10: Monthly rentals paid by the participants for their accommodation

Monthly rental	Frequency	Percentage
Nothing	84	67.8
R1.00 - R49.00	1	0.8
R50.00 - R99.00	3	2.4
R100.00 - R199.00	13	10.5
R200.00 - R299.00	6	4.8
More than R300.00	17	13.7
Total	124	100

(Source: Data derived from the survey questionnaire)

The findings revealed that although the participants were generally poorly paid, nearly a third of those who answered the question pertaining to the cost of their accommodation needed to pay monthly rentals. Of the 84 (67.8%) who paid no rent at all, many would, in all probability, have been beneficiaries of municipal indigent programmes or the owners of their shacks or houses. Of the remaining participants who answered the question, 17 (13.7%) reported that they paid more than R300.00 a month for accommodation, which was roughly equivalent to the average earnings of some day labourers during bad months, while 13 (10.5%) paid from R100,00 to R199.00 a month, 6 (4.8%) paid from R200.00 to R299.00, a small minority of 3 (2.4%) paid from R50.00 to R99.00, and a single participant (0.8%) paid less than R50.00.

5.3.4: The degree of food security enjoyed by the participants

According to Blaauw (2010), households which eke out an existence in conditions of poverty are often characterised by uncertain and dramatically fluctuating levels of income, which obliges them to devote all of their resources to mere survival and maintaining equilibrium. From a similar standpoint, Collins, Morduch, Rutherford and Ruthven (2009) explain that members of poor households often skip meals and the quality of the food which they consume varies considerably. The survivalist nature of the lifestyles of those who participate in the informal labour market as day labourers is thrown into stark relief when the criterion of food security is applied. The responses to questions which had had been framed in order to determine the levels of food security which prevailed among the participants yielded disturbing responses. The findings revealed that food security was generally of great concern to the participants, as they frequently did not have access to nutritious food, particularly if they did not sleep at home and did not earn enough to buy proper food (Schenck *et al.*, 2012). Sixty-four (49.6%) of the 129 participants who responded to the question concerning whether any person, group, or organisation provided them with food gave negative responses. In the words of one of the participants:

Yazi yintoni,⁷buti, we work hard all day without food. Sometimes we collect thrown away food from the dustbin, sometimes we get food from people who sit next to the shops here, but it is not proper food, it's pieces of bread, but because we do not have anything, we cannot say that we do not want it.

To the question concerning how many times during the previous month there had been no food of any kind to eat in their homes, 68 (52.31%) of the 130 participants reported that on occasions they had been without any food to eat for a whole day. The average number of days for those participants who had gone hungry during the previous month was 4 days in a week, with a median of 3 days in a week, a minimum value of 1, and a maximum value of 21. Those participants who had no access to food on particular days reported that they were members the social groups which day labourers formed in order to assist one another. As one of the participants explained:

We are struggling... yhoo... sometimes we do not eat the whole day... uMelusi is our money collector. We use this guy, he helps us by collecting R1.00 from each one of us to buy bread and a very cheap drink, Drink O Pop. For some, even R1.00 is difficult to find, but shame, we assist, buti, and give to them, because isandla sihlamba esinye⁸.

⁷ Yazi yintoni is a phrase in isiXhosa which means 'you know what'.

⁸ 'Isandla sihlamba esinye' is a significant phrase in isiXhosa which expresses cultural values, as it refers to the belief that people should be compassionate and assist one another.

The levels of poverty which were prevalent among these participants suggested that their participation in informal labour was not always through choice, but stemmed rather from desperation. Consequently, their plight is symptomatic of an informal labour market which is unable to absorb the growing numbers of unskilled labourers which it attracts (Blaauw, 2010:114).

5.3.4: Levels of mutual support among the participants

Levels of mutual support among the participants appeared to represent the most effective means of coping with the daily hardships which they encountered and the enduring effects of unemployment. Gonzo and Plattner (2003: 26) maintain that social resources, such as groups, reduced the negative consequences of stressful events and could help to maintain the psychological and the physical well-being of people who stand at hiring sites, in the hope of obtaining the employment which is vital to supporting dependants, many of whom are not even close by (Blaauw, 2010).

Table 5.11: The number of participants who had formed groups to support one another

Groups	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	78	61.4
No	49	38.6
Total	127	100

(Source: Data derived from the survey questionnaire)

Table 5.11 reveals that of 127 participants, 78 (61.4%) reported that they were members of support groups which had been formed by day labourers in East London, while 49 (38.6%) reported that they were not. The finding confirmed that the forming of groups to support one another was a common phenomenon among the participants. Table 5.12 summarises the types of support which the participants provided to one another.

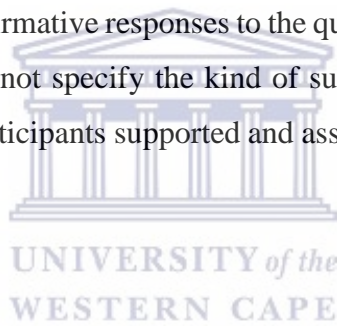
Table 5.12: The categories of support and assistance which the participants provided to one another

Type of support or assistance	Frequency of responses	Percentage of responses
Finding work	71	46.7
Transport or obtaining lifts	5	3.3
Loans	17	11.2
Food	48	31.6
Sleeping quarters or housing	5	3.3

Care during illness	6	3.9
Other Please specify.....		46.7
Total number of responses	152	100

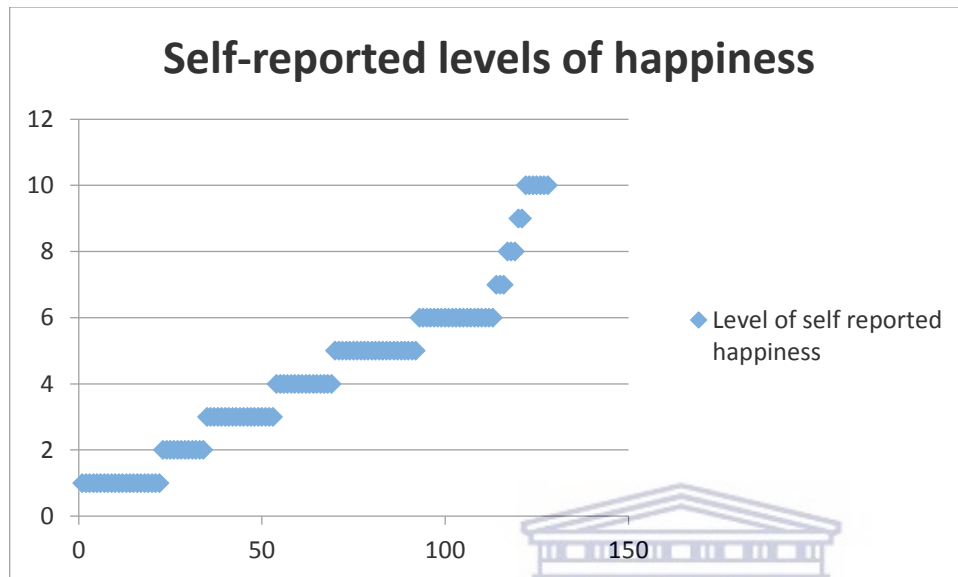
(Source: Data derived from the survey questionnaire)

Table 5.12 demonstrates that a significant majority of 71 of the participants reported that they helped one another by finding employment for each other, while five reported that they did so by obtaining lifts for one another when places of work were far from their homes. A further 17 indicated that they assisted one another with loans when they were in need of money, either to buy food or for transport when it was not provided by employers. A large group of 48 of the participants reported that they assisted one another by providing food to members of their groups who did not have proper food, six indicated that they supported one another by providing care when they were ill and five that they helped one another to find places to sleep. In addition, 46.7% of the 152 affirmative responses to the question of whether or not the participants supported or assisted one another did not specify the kind of support which was provided. The overall finding was that the majority of the participants supported and assisted one another in a number of crucial respects.



5.3.5: Self-reported levels of happiness among the participants

Figure 5.9: Self-reported levels of happiness among the participants



(Source: Data derived from the survey questionnaire)

The participants were asked to rate the levels of happiness which they felt by selecting a face from a series of depictions of facial expressions in the questionnaire. A median value of 4 was obtained from their responses to the question concerning how happy or unhappy they felt by working as day labourers. The average score was 4.23, with a minimum value of 1 and a maximum value of 10. The overall finding was that the participants did not feel happy at all, which was ably borne out by the findings of the qualitative study. When the participants were asked how they perceived the lives which they led as day labourers, some replied that they felt humiliated by working as day labourers, while others expressed a sense of desperation, because although they desired to find employment, the day labour market was not at all favourable. Some of the responses which needed to be analysed by means of qualitative methods revealed that the levels of income which they earned was one of the principal sources of the feelings of uncertainty and unhappiness which they experienced. Although they earned less than they expected to earn from their employers, because they had responsibilities towards their families, they had no choice but to persevere. The next section is devoted to an overview of the hardships which the participants encountered and the coping strategies which they adopted in order to overcome them. These findings emerged from the

responses to questions in the quantitative study which were analysed through the use of qualitative methods.

5.4: An overview and summary of the hardships which the participants encountered and the factors which promoted resilience

Table 5.13: Summary of the hardships encountered by the participants and the coping strategies which they adopted in order to overcome them

HARDSHIPS ENCOUNTERED BY THE PARTICIPANTS	COPING STRATEGIES WHICH ENCOURAGE THE DEVELOPMENT OF STRENGTHS AND RESILIENCE
1. Fluctuating wages	<p><i>Coping strategy 1: Arriving early at hiring sites</i></p>
2. A lack of food security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some of the participants arrived at the hiring sites as early as 06:00 and left 20:00, in order to maximise their daily earnings.
3. Being compelled to reside far away from their homes and families	<p><i>Coping strategy 2: Collecting money to buy food which is to be shared by the members of groups</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some of the participants revealed that they ate food from dustbins when they had no other sources of food. • Groups collect money from members, sometimes as little as R1.00 per member, to buy food.
4. Low levels of educational attainment	<p><i>Coping strategy 3: Sending money home to fulfil responsibilities to families</i></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many of the participants endeavoured to send money to their families to support their dependants and extended families.
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(Source: Data derived from the survey questionnaire)

5.5: Chapter summary

This chapter has endeavoured to provide a comprehensive descriptive analysis of the circumstances and living conditions of the participants who were interviewed to complete the questionnaire. The descriptive verbal data which was obtained from the open-ended questions in the questionnaire was incorporated into the analysis and interpretation, in order to broaden the understanding of the lives of the participants which the quantitative data generated. The findings of the study were similar in several respects to those of the study which was conducted by Schenck and Louw (2005) concerning the circumstances of day labourers in other parts of South Africa (Blauuw, 2010), which suggested similarities in the living conditions of people who engage in precarious employment in many countries throughout the world (Valenzuela Jr, 2006).

The findings which were discussed in this chapter raise a number of specific concerns. First, it became abundantly evident that males predominated in the informal day labour market in East London. The research sample comprised only males. The often dangerous and arduous nature of the work, the frequent abuse of day labourers by employers, and the extreme privations which day labourers are often required to endure in order to survive are among the most frequently cited reasons for the preponderance of males in the day labour market. Figure 5.2 illustrates that the majority of the participants in this study were between the ages of 25 and 35 years, which constitutes the largest group of unemployed men in South Africa. As this particularly vulnerable age group of South African males predominates in the informal day labour market, many of the dependants, families, and extended families who depend upon these men are obliged to try to survive in conditions of abject poverty.

Secondly, as the findings revealed that the average levels of educational attainment among the participants tended to be very low, most could compete for menial employment only. Some responses to the open-ended questions in the questionnaire suggested that as some of the Zimbabwean day labourers were able to provide prospective employers with papers which documented their specific competencies, they were

able to demonstrate that they possessed the skills which particular employers required. By contrast, South African-born day labourers were generally at a distinct disadvantage, as it was found that only one member of a relatively large research sample had received any training beyond the level of matriculation. For day labourers who have received little or no formal schooling, the possibility of ever being able to enter the formal labour market and earn more than subsistence wages is remote in the extreme. The findings also suggest that the average earnings of day labourers are insufficient to enable them to support themselves, without the added responsibilities of dependants, families, or extended families, although a significant number of the participants indicated that they sent money home to their families to pay domestic bills and the school fees of their dependants.

The quantitative findings were analysed by means of the SPSS software. The descriptive statistics which the analysis yielded were augmented by relevant excerpts from the verbal responses of the participants to the open-ended questions in the questionnaire. Translating the responses from isiXhosa to English brought an awareness of the inherent subtle differences in shades of meaning which are to be detected when particular ideas and concepts are expressed in different languages. Relevant material from the literature which was reviewed has been integrated into the discussion of the findings of the quantitative study, in order to place the findings within an appropriate research context. The chapter which follows takes the form of a comprehensive presentation, discussion, and analysis of the findings of the qualitative study.

CHAPTER 6: PRESENTATION, DISCUSSION, AND ANALYSIS OF THE QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

6.1: Introduction

The qualitative component of any social research study refers to the adoption of an open-ended approach in order to describe and analyse human behaviour from the point of view of those who are studied (Webb & Auriacombe, 2006). Thematic analysis enables qualitative data to generate in-depth understandings of events, occurrences, and phenomena from the subjective perceptions of the human beings who experience them. The qualitative data was analysed by means of thematic analysis, by breaking it down, organising it and coding the themes which emerged. The themes which were identified were expressed and supported by direct quotations from individual participants, in order to perform an in-depth interpretation of the findings. To recapitulate, the qualitative phase of the study was conducted to investigate the lived experiences of day labourers in East London and the hardships which they encounter in response to the following four exploratory objectives of the study, as they were summarised in Chapter 1:

- To investigate and identify the difficulties day labourers encounter at **hiring sites**
- To investigate and identify the difficulties which day labourers encounter at their temporary **places of employment**
- To investigate and identify the difficulties and problems which day labourers encounter in their **family life**
- To investigate and identify the **coping strategies** which day labourers use to cope with the hardships, difficulties, and problems which they encounter in their daily lives


The themes which have been identified and generated by the interviews, have been arranged and summarised in the following Table 6.1: in relation to the following five themes:

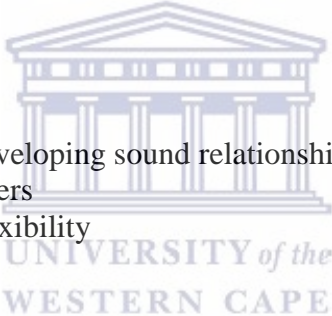
- Hardships experienced at hiring sites
- Hardships experienced owing to the nature of the work
- Hardships experienced owing to the effects of working as day labourers upon family life
- Hardships experienced owing to personal circumstances
- Coping strategies

6.2: Classification of the qualitative data into themes, sub-themes and categories

Table 6.1: Themes, sub-themes and Categories

THEMES	SUB-THEMES	CATEGORIES
<p>Theme 1: Hardships experienced at hiring sites</p>	<p>1.1: Verbal abuse and expressions of mistrust</p> <p>1.2: Tensions between groups of day labourers at hiring sites</p> <p>1.3: Extreme weather conditions</p> <p>1.4 The nature of hiring sites</p> <p>1.5: Harassment by the police</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hostility towards foreign day labourers • Animosity expressed towards one another by South African day labourers • Inability to come to sites owing to unfavourable weather conditions • Health problems, including epilepsy • Lack of infrastructure
<p>Theme 2: Hardships experienced owing to the nature of the work</p>	<p>2.1: Conditions of employment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long working hours • Negotiating with employers • Low wages, non-payment of wages, and fluctuating incomes • Unreliable employers who claim that they are unable to pay day labourers because their banks will not release funds

	<p>2.2: Hazardous work</p> <p>2.3: Violence and ill treatment</p>  <p>2.4: A lack of education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seasonal uncertainty: Peak and off-peak seasons • A lack of safety equipment and adequate working tools • Animosity towards day labourers by employers and shop owners • The abandonment of day labourers at worksites • Theft • Animosity towards day labourers by employers and shop owners • Little ability to attract employers
<p>Theme 3: The hardships which day labourers endure in their lives with their families</p>	<p>3.1: The responsibilities of day labourers towards their families and extended families</p> <p>3.2: The nature of relationships between day labourers and their families and extended families</p> <p>3.3: Food security</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceptions of day labourers of their responsibilities towards their families and extended families • A lack of contact between day labourers and their families and extended families
<p>Theme 4: Hardships experienced owing to personal circumstances</p>	<p>4.1: A loss of dignity</p> <p>4.2: A sense of desperation</p> <p>4.3: Loss of hope</p> <p>4.4: A lack of accommodation</p> <p>4.5: A lack of food at work</p> <p>4.6: Expressions of psychological or emotional distress</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feelings of frustration

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discrimination or rejection owing to age
<p>Theme 5: Coping strategies of day labourers</p>	<p>5.1: Sources of support</p>  <p>5.2: Developing sound relationships with employers</p> <p>5.3: Flexibility</p> <p>5.4: Alternative means of obtaining income</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support from local churches • Formation of groups for mutual support • Pooling earnings with partners or <i>isandla sesibini</i> • Maintaining relationships with employers • Working for preferred employers • Being willing to travel to other places or sites in search of work • Accepting employment on a standby basis • Selling <i>dagga</i> • Waste picking • Going from door to door in search of employment • Soliciting loans from Somalians

(Source: Data obtained from the qualitative study)

The sub-sections which follow are devoted to discussions of the themes and accompanying sub-themes which emerged from the qualitative data and illustrated with direct quotations from relevant excerpts of the interviews. The themes and sub-themes are then

integrated with the quantitative findings, in order to triangulate the findings of the study and place them within a meaningful context in relation to the available body of knowledge pertaining to the research topic.



6.2.1 Theme 1: Hardships experienced at hiring sites

The circumstances of day labourers in South Africa can be best understood in the specific contexts in which they try to find employment and against their shared socioeconomic history (Schenck & Nell, 2009). For the purposes of this study, the contexts in which they function are the geographical areas where they gather to be offered employment. The hiring sites at which day labourers are mainly found are usually public spaces which they share with local residents, shop owners, and others (Schenck & Nell, 2009). The findings of this study revealed that the perceptions and attitudes of residents, motorists, and shop owners often preclude day labourers from having access to the hiring sites which they know to be frequented by prospective employers. The relevant themes and sub-themes which emerged from the qualitative data are discussed in the sections which follow.

6.2.1.1 Sub-theme 1.1: Verbal abuse and expressions of mistrust

In this study it was found that negative perceptions of day labourers were common among the people with whom they came into contact and frequently expressed, in some cases even with acts of violence. Some of the interviewees reported that they were often subjected to verbal abuse by motorists who drove past the hiring sites or parked nearby to purchase goods. One of the interviewees said:

Some motorists who come and park their cars near the shops where we stand, they always swear at us, saying that we should not try to do anything close to their cars or they will get cross with us.

The findings also revealed that some of the motorists even attacked day labourers and accused them of stealing items from their cars to sell cheaply to their friends. In the words of one interviewee:

There are some motorists around parking sites, they fight with us concerning their cars...they try to hit us with their cars and they will never even say sorry... instead they will say 'Go away!' Some of them think we are robbers.

The findings of the studies which were conducted by Schenck *et al.* (2012) and Schenck and Nell (2009) were similar and generated the conclusion that relationships between day labourers and employers, owners of local businesses, motorists, and residents tended to be characterised by feelings of animosity and mistrust. Shop owners tended to complain that the presence of the day labourers had a negative effect upon their sales by deterring customers from parking outside their businesses, while motorists were usually concerned by the possibility of having their cars stolen or other types of crimes being committed.

Local residents tended to complain that the presence of day labourers made it unsafe for them to leave their homes and even placed their children at risk (Schenck & Nell, 2009).

Some of the day labourers who participated in the interviews in this study expressed concerns in relation to their relationships with members of local communities. Others complained about the treatment which they received from the general public while they waited for employment at hiring sites. Their perceptions of how they were treated by the public tended to vary considerably. In the words of one interviewee:

Some call us thieves.

As Schenck and Nell (2009) point out, perceptions that the presence of day labourers in public spaces could be ‘too close for comfort’ should be assessed in relation to the notoriously high crime rates which prevail in South Africa. In addition, it was found that not only do tensions exist between day labourers and society at large, but also among day labourers themselves, a phenomenon which is covered in the following section.

6.2.1.2 Sub-theme 1.2: Tensions between groups of day labourers at hiring sites

The available literature reveals that significant numbers of day labourers in many countries have migrated from foreign countries. Valenzuela Jr. *et al.* (2006) found that day labourers in and around Washington, D.C. in the United States had come mainly from Latin America. In South Africa, Blaauw *et al.* (2007) found that 7% of the population of day labourers in Pretoria were from Zimbabwe and 2.9% were from Mozambique. Consequently, conflicts of interest are bound to arise, particularly when opportunities for employment are scarce.

- **Hostility towards foreign day labourers**

Throughout the collecting of the data, many of the participants expressed dissatisfaction with the presence of the foreign day labourers, maintaining that they had come to steal their opportunities for finding employment. A representative comment was:

I wish Makwerekwere can go back home. We can have a lot of opportunities if they return home. We heard that Mugabe is no longer the president now. They were complaining about him. They must go now he is not the president. They are taking our places.

Another participant said:

Ezizinto zimnyama (a derogatory phrase which refers to foreigners as dark-skinned people), we do not want them here. They are sellouts and selfish.

6.2.1.3 Observations

Separate groups of day labourers who segregated themselves from one another at the sites were observed, with Zimbabweans clustering together and standing far apart from the clusters of isiXhosa-speaking day labourers. The findings of several studies which were consulted in the literature review (Schenck *et al.*, 2012; Blaauw, 2010; Xipu, 2014) also revealed that South African day labourers tended to have negative perceptions of their foreign counterparts and to refer to them in pejorative terms. Common complaints have been that foreign day labourers spoiled employers by working for low wages and held qualifications which were desirable to prospective employers. The general consensus among all of the South African day labourers who participated in the studies, including this one, was that foreign day labourers should leave South Africa (Schenck *et al.*, 2012).

- **Animosity expressed towards one another by South African day labourers**

A unique finding of this study, which did not emerge in any of the earlier South African studies which have been cited, was that groups of South African day labourers also tended to be in conflict with one another. It was found that they tended to identify themselves as groups according to criteria such as shared clan names, age groups, kinship ties, and places of birth. This regionally-based phenomenon was attributed to the preponderance of day labourers from the Eastern Cape in the research sample and concluded that they would be acutely aware of the significance of clan names in their home province. One of the interviewees said:

Uhlubi wam (a clan name), I try by all means to find work for him and we stay together always, no matter what.

One of the interviewees explained that some groups used derogatory terms to refer to others and flattering ones to refer to themselves. His group was considered to be *olwatha*, a slang term and not a word in formal isiXhosa, which is used to describe people who are not good, lack the skills to attract employers, and are quiet and reserved in the company of other day labourers. By contrast, those who confer superior status upon themselves at the expense of others referred to themselves as *izikhokho*, also a slang term and not a word in formal isiXhosa, which denotes the best people, who possess the skills which attract employers. In the words of the interviewee:

That group that you see there, bra, we do not work closely with them. They call us olwatha. Every time when we came across them, they will say 'olwatha ndini' (olwatha are despicable) and they think that they are the masters of this place, as they say they are more clever than us.

In the words of a self-styled member of the *izikhokho*:

We are izikhokho here. We do wonders when it comes to work. All the Ghana guys (employers from Ghana) and also some of our people, when they come here, they look for us, because when we do the job, we nail it and we are trusted.

6.2.1.4 Observation

The degree of segregation was evident from the groups which gathered on the opposite sides of the roads on which hiring sites were located.

6.2.1.5 Sub-theme 1.3: Extreme weather conditions

According to Walter, Bourgois, Loinaz, and Schillinger (2002), among the disadvantages which are inherent in the nature of day labour work, unpredictability has particularly adverse implications for earning secure incomes. Day labourers are contingent workers without steady work who subsist from task to task and day to day. As most day labourers work in construction, their incomes are dependent upon the weather. When it rains, the work ceases and wages are lost. When the weather is good, the sheer numbers of day labourers who are competing for the limited amount of employment which is available add to their uncertainty. The sub-themes which emerged from the qualitative data in relation to unfavourable weather conditions are discussed in the sections which follow.

- **Inability to come to sites owing to unfavourable weather conditions**

The participants reported that it was not possible for them to be visible at some hiring sites when the weather was inclement, because they were unprotected, in that there were no structures to provide shade or protection against the rain and extreme weather conditions. One of the interviewees said:

Sometimes it rains and we do not come to the sites. For us that is a loss for the day, because we depend on coming here every day.

Valenzuela Jr. *et al.* (2006) also found that the numbers of day labourers who stood at hiring sites fluctuated with seasonal changes.

- **Health problems, including epilepsy**

According to Alferts *et al.* (2012), informal workers are often exposed to workplaces which are poorly or not regulated, unhealthy, and unsafe, which can severely impair their health. Several of the participants in this study explained that day labourers who suffer from health problems were particularly adversely affected by waiting at the hiring sites for employment when weather conditions were extreme. One interviewee said:

Some of us here are epileptic. When it is too hot, they can't stand the hot temperature. It is difficult for them.

6.2.1.6 Observations

While the researcher was interviewing the participant who has been quoted concerning epileptic day labourers, a man suddenly confronted and insulted him. It appeared that the man objected to his reference to his condition. His explanation concerning epilepsy also underscored the likelihood of people who suffer from illnesses such as epilepsy might not be considered to be fit for formal work and resort to day labour work as the only available means of finding employment.

Some participants reported that they did not have access to healthcare facilities if they fell ill while they stood at hiring sites. In the words of one interviewee:

We get sick sometimes here because of the extreme weather conditions, but the clinics are too far for us to see the nurse.

This finding is indicative of the harsh reality that day labourers effectively have no access to healthcare services. In many instances, they cannot afford to spend a day at clinic to receive treatment, as doing so would necessitate foregoing opportunities for employment. The participants who suffered from epilepsy would need to take medication every day, although many might find it difficult to do so consistently or visit clinics to obtain monthly prescriptions. The finding suggests that the degree of access which informal workers have to healthcare could be a worthy research topic for further investigation.

6.2.1.7 Sub-theme 1.4: The nature of hiring sites

The four categories of hiring sites which Valenzuela Jr. (2003:326) has identified, namely, connected and unconnected and regulated and unregulated sites, have been comprehensively elucidated in Chapters 2 and 3. As it has been noted, all of the sites at which the study was conducted in East London were connected sites.

6.2.1.8 Observations

The hiring sites in East London were located either in residential areas or near businesses. The preponderance of unregulated sites accords with the finding of Blaauw (2010) that unregulated sites appeared to be highly prevalent in South Africa. The unregulated nature of the sites stems from their having been developed informally and not being managed by any specific organisations. Observations revealed that day labourers gathered in search of employment at both connected and unconnected sites in East London.

- **Lack of infrastructure**

Valenzuela Jr. *et al.* (2006) found that the conditions at the hiring sites at which day labourers gathered were either unfavourable or uncomfortable, owing to a lack of essential infrastructure. Consequently, day labourers are vulnerable and have no protection against harsh weather conditions. The participants in this study reported that they had no facilities such as toilets, water, or basic essential services. When they were asked how they coped with a lack of toilets, they replied that they were obliged to make use of the privacy which bushes and shrubs provided, because the owners of local shops had ceased allowing them access to the facilities such as water and toilets because they accused them of stealing. One of the participants said: *You can imagine we struggle even to get water here. We ask around in order to get water. There are no taps.*

Two other participants said:

All of us, we go to the bush. There are no toilets for us here. It's really a struggle.

I make sure I go to the toilet at home before I come here. We do not have even toilets here, which is a pity for us.

6.2.1.9 Observations

It was also evident that day labourers did not have adequate seating accommodation while they waited for employment. The researcher observed some lying on the grass, while others sat on empty boxes or leaned against walls which were adjacent to nearby shops.

6.2.1.10 Sub-theme 1.5: Harassment by the police

Valenzuela Jr. *et al.* (2006) found that day labourers in Washington, D.C. had experienced abuse, harassment and violence at the hands of police officials and security guards while they searched for work. Approximately 16% of those who participated in their study revealed that they had been insulted or arrested, while 16% had been questioned concerning their immigration status, and 16% had been photographed or videotaped by the police. A further 15% had been insulted, harassed, or threatened by security guards, and 17% had been reported by security guards to the police or immigration authorities. In this respect, the findings of this study are similar to those of Valenzuela Jr. *et al.* (2006). The participants reported that the police came to hiring sites when they patrolled nearby residential areas or business zones. According to Sherman and Eck (2002), the ostensible purposes of the regular police patrols are mainly to reduce and stabilise crime rates and keep communities crime-free. By contrast, the findings revealed that police officials who conducted patrols in East London frequently harassed day labourers by demanding to search them for possession of illegal substances such as *dagga* (marijuana). The participants reported that being searched by the police often compromised their opportunities for finding employment, because the police demanded their attention, harassed them, and threatened to take them to local police stations. One of the interviewees said:

We have a problem with some of the policemen here. They usually come to disrupt us when we are waiting for employment here. When they come, they search us, thinking that they will find intsangu (dagga). We do not carry that when we are here to work, not for doing wrong things. They must get that into their heads.

Some of the participants explicitly condemned the actions of the police. One of the interviewees said:

We hate what the police are doing to us. We are not children. We know what we want.

This finding is corroborated by the recently released statistics (Daily Dispatch, 2018) concerning bad policing in the province of the Eastern Cape by the MEC for Provincial Safety and Liaison, Ms Weziwe Tikana. Tikana has revealed in the Eastern Cape Provincial Legislature that the South African Police Service of the Eastern Cape had incurred unnecessary expenditures of to the tune of R73 million for bad police work, a bill which taxpayers were required to foot. Questions to the legislature revealed that during the course of the two financial years from 2016 to 2018, 1150 claims, for which the total was in the region of R73 million, had been awarded against the provincial SAPS for:

- Unlawful arrest and detention
- Assault

- Defamation
- Cases related to illegal searches and seizures

Breaking down the statistics further, Tikana reported that between 2016 and the present in 2018, the provincial police services had been successfully sued in more than 780 cases of wrongful arrest and detention. In addition, several million more Rand needed to be paid out for 44 cases of illegal assault, 44 instances of shots having been negligently fired, and 135 cases of collisions between vehicles, in which the police had been found to have been in the wrong.

6.2.2 Theme 2: Hardships experienced owing to the nature of the work

6.2.2.1 Sub-theme 2.1: Conditions of employment

Blaauw (2010) characterises the conditions which are applied to the employing of day labourers as being haphazard, in the sense that there are no contractual arrangements and there is no formal engagement between day labourers and their employers before, during, and after the work has been done. Several of the interviewees in this study revealed that as they often did not know the names of their employers, it was usually difficult to locate the addresses of employers in instances in which they were not paid. As one of the interviewees explained:

When I report to the police that someone did not pay me, they will ask me the address of the house and their cellphone numbers. When I do the work I do not ask those things...where will I get the chance to ask about the cellphone number...because when a car comes here we push each other because we want to be taken, so I can't have their details and home addresses... so it is difficult for us to answer when police ask.

This finding accords with the assessment of Valenzuela Jr. *et al.* (2006:14) that as the conditions under which informal workers such as day labourers are employed are not regulated, informal hiring sites are, to a certain extent, not conducive to proper employment practices and could encourage exploitation and the theft of wages. They emphasise that the assessment does not imply that all employers do not pay or exploit the day labourers whom they employ.

- **Long working hours**

According to Alferts *et al.* (2012), extended working hours can have severely adverse effects upon both physical and mental health. Almost all of the interviewees claimed that employers often failed to adhere

to the numbers of hours for which they had agreed to work. They maintained that employers often required them to work for long hours, without increasing the amounts which they had agreed to pay them. In the words of one of the interviewees:

We work long hours, but we get peanuts after we have done the work.

Some of the participants complained that some black employers did not permit them to have breaks in long working days. One interviewee said:

You see here you work and work very hard till sunset sometimes, but you will never have a chance to eat because of the cruelty of these (black) guys who come and take us here.

Valenzuela Jr. *et al.* (2006) also emphasised the durations without breaks for which day labourers were often expected to work in their findings concerning the abuse of day labourers by employers. Their findings also revealed instances in which day labourers were not given food during long working days while they were at the same time expected to work to the limits of their endurance.

- **Negotiating with employers**

As the employment of day labourers is not regulated, it is not based upon formal contractual agreements between employers and employees. Prospective employers usually drive to hiring sites in *bakkies* (light trucks or pickup trucks) to collect day labourers, who often rush towards *bakkies* and surround them, jostling one another as they vie for the attention of prospective employers. Some have even been observed trying to open the doors of vehicles or jumping onto the backs of them (Schenck *et al.*, 2014). Negotiations concerning wages are usually conducted in seconds and it was observed during the conducting of this study that no conditions of employment were discussed before the day labourers undertook to accept the employment which was offered to them. One of the interviewees said:

We do not even negotiate with the black employers, but with white employers we can at least negotiate the price.

Similar findings emerged from the responses to the open-ended questions in the questionnaire concerning whether or not the participants negotiated with prospective employers.

- **Low wages, non-payment of wages, and fluctuating incomes**

Although Valenzuela Jr. (2000) found that it was generally tacitly acknowledged between employers and day labourers in the United States that work required financial remuneration, the findings of this study

were significantly different in this respect. They revealed several instances of employers having reneged upon agreements to pay specified sums of money for work and having offered food instead. As one interviewee explained:

These people treat us badly. They do not give us money, they give us food...but I work long hours for them, how can they pay me with food? I want money. Yesterday I worked doing painting in Beacon Bay and my pay was supposed to be R180, because we agreed, but he decided to give me food....I was angry and I did not take their food because I wanted my money.

It also emerged that in some instances employers employed the day labourers for extended periods, in some instances even months, without paying them. One interviewee said:

I worked in Butterworth for a period of one month...I worked for a guy who got a tender to do plumbing in some of the schools there...I worked, I think, for a month, but when the month ended, I was not paid.... he kept on telling me that the money was not in....when it is in he will contact me ...he took my number. Till today I waited...that's why I do not want to work for black people.

Several participants complained that they had been paid less than had been agreed upon in their negotiations with their employers. As one interviewee explained:

The people that we work for, they do not want to pay enough money....they always give us less money.....if when I start working we agreed that he will give me R100, he will give me the half of that... when I refuse to take the half price, they will undermine me, saying that I am nothing and where will I get the R50? They helped me, I had nothing...yhooo, you do not know.

- **Unreliable employers who claim that they are unable to pay day labourers because their banks will not release funds**

The findings also revealed that some employers withheld payment from day labourers by claiming that the banks which held their funds would not release them. One interviewee said:

Our employers here are unreliable. When we work for them, they run and hide. When it is time to get money, they will say a bank is holding it. No bank is holding any money and I believe they are treating us as if we were stupid.

- **Seasonal uncertainty: Peak and off-peak seasons**

Several participants explained that their ability to find employment at hiring sites varied considerably at different times of the year. There appeared to be a pronounced seasonal component in day labouring in

East London, with December usually being the peak month for earnings. During December many potential employers are more affluent than at any other time of the year, owing to having received bonuses. The findings revealed that day labourers often benefited financially from the widespread increased spending during December. As two interviewees explained:

This year I found almost no good jobs, but now we are approaching December, jobs are hunting us up and down. It's good because at least we will have something to send home.

It is hard during the mid-year to get jobs, but during December we get lots of jobs, but it's not full-time jobs, it's still part time.

These findings underscored the precarious nature of day labouring in East London, which appeared to be characterised by a short boom period, which was followed by many lean months until the end of the year began to approach once more.

6.2.2.2 Sub-theme 2.2: Hazardous work

Although work which entails risk is often highly paid in the formal sector, the findings of this study suggested that day labourers in East London were generally poorly paid, irrespective of the levels of risk which the tasks which they were required to perform entailed. One of the interviewees commented in relation to the unwillingness of employers to remunerate day labourers adequately:

We do a lot of work, but we do not get enough money, because our employers do not want to pay.

Several researchers have pointed out that as day labourers work outside of the scope of formal labour laws and regulations, they are often exposed to hazardous working conditions and an abnormally high risk of sustaining work-related injuries (Valenzuela Jr, 2001; Losby, 2002). The findings of a study which was conducted by Mehta and Theodore (2006) of safety practices in the construction industry in Atlanta in the United States revealed that as day labourers were routinely required in hazardous working conditions, rates of work-related injuries were high. From a similar standpoint, one of the participants whom the researcher interviewed said:

Our work is hard and dangerous, but we have no choice but to force ourselves and work hard, because we want money.

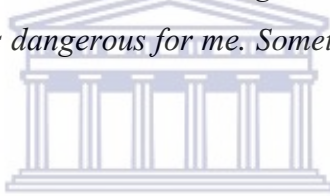
In addition, apart from the high risks of injuries and other negative implications for the health of day labourers, injuries and abuse encourage absenteeism and have severely detrimental effects upon their

social and psychological well-being, as they do in the case of employees who work in other sectors of labour markets.

- **A lack of safety equipment and adequate working tools**

Mehta and Theodore (2006) found that the day labourers in their research sample frequently lacked adequate safety equipment, thereby exposing them to a range of potential hazards. The researcher found that the participants in this study also often worked with substandard equipment or lacked basic protective equipment such as gloves and masks. When they became ill or were injured while they worked, employers generally did not make medical attention available to them. Some of the participants reported that on the occasions on which they did not have access to working tools they usually did not come to work. As one of the interviewees explained:

I come here because I have to be here! I do not have working tools...and most of the jobs that people offer us here are construction jobs, so that's dangerous for me. Sometimes I decide not to come here because it's hard to get jobs without tools.



6.2.2.3 Observations

One day labourer was seen declining construction work because he did not have the protective equipment which he believed that he needed in order to perform a task which he perceived to be difficult and hazardous. He could be heard saying to the employer:

No, sir, you can go. I do not have gumboots.

When he came to sit down, he mumbled to anyone who was within earshot:

Yhooo, I can't do that work without gloves and gumboots: it's very risky for me and it will drain me.

6.2.3 Sub-theme 2.3: Violence and ill treatment

- **Animosity towards day labourers by employers and shop owners**

Several of the participants reported that they had been subjected to violence at the hands of their employers. They explained that if they reported violent incidents to the police, their attempts to lay charges were either dismissed out of hand or they were chased away. In the words of one of the interviewees:

Yhooo, we are in trouble, my man. The people we work for are no good, they are cruel.....the other day I worked for Ghanaian people...and I don't think I will ever work for them again, they are very young,

but because they have money, they treat us badly these boys.....you see, buti, after I finished working, they did not pay me: instead I was kicked out of their home.

- **The abandonment of day labourers at worksites**

The most common form of abuse which the participants reported was being abandoned at worksites. In these instances, the day labourers had been taken to worksites and left, unsupervised, to complete the tasks which had been assigned to them. In the account from which the excerpt which follows was extracted, the employer did not return after the interviewee had completed the task and instead sent someone else to evict him from the site:

Yesterday I worked and it was late in Gonubie....the guy promised to bring me back because it was late already, we agreed on that.....I went there with him in a car.....I said the price for the day will be R 350. He said 'yes' he gave me the material to do it...when I was done someone else came to me to say I must leave....when I asked where is the guy who brought me here....he said 'I don't know.All I know is that you must leave....I was alone there and it was far from home because I stay in Ziphunzane....I did not know what to do, I came back alone and the cars on the road would not stop because it was late.

Several of the participants concluded that employers believed that day labourers could not report their grievances to the police because the police would not listen to them. This finding suggests that employers considered day labourers to have little or no knowledge concerning the legal recourse which is available to them if they are defrauded. One of the interviewees said:

When we go to the police to report that employers have cheated us, they will tell us to go to the CCMA (Commission for Conciliation, Mediation, and Arbitration), but we do not know where the ⁹CCMA is.

Consequently, although day labourers do sometimes report crimes which are committed against them to the police, they are often not investigated, because they are considered to concern the labour laws of the country. Conversely, if they are referred to labour representatives, in many cases it is unlikely that their complaints will receive attention, owing to the informal nature of day labouring and the difficulty which is usually entailed in endeavouring to locate the employers concerned.

⁹ The Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) is the South African statutory body which arbitrates labour disputes and mitigates damages caused by unfair dismissal either by awarding compensation or by calling for reinstatement of the employee.

- **Theft**

Some of the participants revealed that some day labourers stole from their employers, although they also pointed out that doing so would jeopardise their ability to find employment in the future. In the words of one of the interviewees:

There are those who come here for stealing bro....we are not here for the same thing...I am here because I want money so that I can go home with something. There are some of us stealing from the same people that come and take us here for employment....the employers become angry...this really bothers us, my bro, because we are affected also....the rest of us we end up being affected by their actions.

The findings revealed that some day labourers stole tools which made it possible to find employment from one another. As one of the interviewees explained:

Some of us here when we come to work, they take our tools so that we cannot have tools for work. I bought myself this backpack so that I can carry my tools in it when I come to work and no one can take them.

- **Aninmosity towards day labourers by employers and shop owners**

Throughout the conducting of the study, it was evident that the owners and managers of local shops regarded the presence of day labourers as problematic. Several of the interviewees reported that they had been subjected to verbal abuse and accused by owners or managers as being thieves who posed as people who were in search of employment as a legitimate pretext for loitering at or near their premises. As one of the interviewees explained:

We stand outside CTM because the manager does not want us inside the storeyard. He always says that we are here to threaten his customers, we are not here because we came to look for work....not only him, even people passing in the street assume that we are robbers and run away from us.

Some of the participants expressed particular aversion towards Chinese and Ghanaian employers, claiming that they were often not treated fairly by them. One of the participants said:

Ghana guys are small boys, but they are cruel, they have no heart for a person. I do not want to work for them anymore.

6.2.4 Sub-theme 2.4: A lack of education

- **Little ability to attract employers**

Although day labourers gather at hiring sites in East London for the sole purpose of obtaining work, opportunities for doing so can be elusive. Consequently, the men often need to be creative with respect to how they attempt to ‘sell’ themselves as ‘desirable’ workers to potential employers (Turnovsky, 2004). It emerged during the conducting of the study that many South African day labourers were deprived of opportunities to secure employment not only as a consequence of the relationships which they had with employers, but also by a discernible inability to market themselves and their skills to prospective employers by comparison with some of their foreign counterparts. It was often evident to the researcher that foreign day labourers, particularly Zimbabweans, were more entrepreneurial and ambitious (Schenck *et al.*, 2012) than their South African competitors. It was frequently observed that foreign day labourers brought their own tools to hiring sites and displayed them enthusiastically to prospective employers (Schenck *et al.*, 2005).

One of the participants reported that Zimbabweans carried certificates to demonstrate their skills and abilities to prospective employers:

I do not want to work with the Zimbabweans or to stand near where they stand. The white employers like them because they have more papers than us and we do not have papers to show. They must go. They are here to take jobs which are only for us.

When the researcher attempted to probe for additional information concerning how South African day labourers endeavoured to attract prospective employers during the interviews, several participants indicated that they attempted to make employers aware that they had the necessary tools or skills to perform whatever tasks were required of them. In the words of one of the interviewees:

I beg the employers and promise to do the work. I do not have papers to show employers...I write papers to show them that I do painting.

6.2.4.1 Observations

Many day labourers were observed sitting down at the sites, some enthusiastically attracting employers with testimonials and good quality working tools. Prospective employers tended to display more interest employing day labourers who had ‘real’ papers, in the sense of the vocational papers which many of the Zimbabweans appeared to have, than those who proffered the self-written papers which South African day labourers could be seen writing at the sites. The generally low levels of educational attainment and

vocational training which the quantitative data revealed severely limit the opportunities for employment which are available to many day labourers, particularly those who have grown up in South Africa.

6.2.3 Theme 3: The hardships which day labourers endure in their lives with their families

Malinga (2015) found that supporting families represented one of the principal motivations for the day labourers who participated in her study in Cape Town to work in precarious employment. The findings of her study also revealed the extent to which precarious employment affected the relationships which the day labourers had with their children, families, and intimate partners. Most of the day labourers in her research sample did not live with their children because their unemployed status precluded them from earning steady incomes. The findings which this theme generated were similar to those of Blaauw *et al.* (2012), in that in both instances it was evident that the participants were generally acutely aware of their responsibilities towards their families and engaged in day labouring in order to earn incomes to support their families and children. Children were cited as the principal reason for some of the participants to come to East London from as far afield as Mthatha to work as day labourers. The findings of a study which was conducted by Valenzuela Jr. (2006) in the United States were similar to those of this study in this respect, in that they revealed that the day labourers in their research sample supported not only their children, but also contributed to larger households. A large majority of 80% sent money to their families in their home countries to cover family expenses and the education of their children. One of the interviewees at a hiring site in East London said:

When I have money, at least it is possible for me to send it to my wife because she knows how to use money for important things ...she will get my children food and pay some school fees so that they can go to school like other children.

Although it was evident from the findings that the participants were aware of their responsibilities towards their families and extended families, from the findings of both this study and the study which was conducted by Schenck *et al.* (2007) it was apparent that the earnings of day labourers are frequently insufficient to fulfil their responsibilities adequately.

6.2.3.1 Sub-theme 3.1: The responsibilities of day labourers towards their families and extended families

- **Perceptions of day labourers of their responsibilities towards their families and extended families**

All of the day labourers who were interviewed were acutely aware of the need for them to earn money to fulfil their responsibilities towards their families and extended families. As one of the interviewees explained:

I come here every day because for everything they depend on me. My wife is in Centane with my two children and they are still at school...I must send money to them so that they can buy food with the little I have....my mother is still alive and she depends on me too...my father died long ago...but he was not working also....I support everyone at home.

In this respect, the findings accord with those of the study which was conducted by Schenck and Louw (2005), in that both revealed that many of the day labourers who participated in them were the sole supporters of several generations of dependants. All of the day labourers who were interviewed during the conducting of this study cited the need to support their families as their principal motivation for coming to the sites. They explained that as they could not abdicate their responsibilities by doing nothing while their children did not have sufficient food to eat, it was incumbent upon them to earn money to enable them to do so. Some maintained that by coming to the hiring sites every day, they felt that they were at least making sincere attempts to earn money to provide for their extended families and to fulfil their roles as responsible fathers of their children. It was evident that their sense of being father figures in their families instilled a profound sense of responsibility in the participants. The discussion of the quantitative findings in Chapter 5 revealed that 183 day labourers supported 436 dependants, more than half of whom were children below the age of 18 years. As Malinga (2015) explains, the responsibility which they feel has a cultural component, in that paid work is strongly associated with masculinity in traditional black societies in South Africa. As earning incomes validates the manhood of individual men, masculinity could be said to represent a culturally conferred sense of responsibility.

6.2.3.2 Sub-theme 3.2: The nature of relationships between day labourers and their families and extended families

- **A lack of contact between day labourers and their families and extended families**

Despite the levels of commitment which the participants expressed to fulfilling their roles as the breadwinners for their families and extended families, some explained the difficulties which precluded them from visiting their families regularly, as their families resided as far afield as Butterworth and Lusikisiki, of the order of 100 kilometres from the East London metropole. Although Schenck and Louw (2005:89) emphasise the role of long distances in the difficulty which day labourers have in maintaining contact with their families, Malinga (2015) explains that the cultural stereotype of men as providers is so deeply entrenched that for many day labourers it would be preferable to sleep under bridges than return emptyhanded to their homes after being unable to find work. The excerpt which follows and the one in the next section provide eloquent testimony to the adverse effects which working great distances away from their homes and the cultural stereotype of men as providers have upon day labourers:

It is difficult for me to go home so that I can be happy like other people and see my children. It is expensive to take a taxi from here to my home. I wait for December and then I know by then many people go home.

6.2.3.3 Sub-theme 3.3: Food security

The participants appeared to enjoy little food security, both at the hiring sites and when they returned to their homes without money to buy food for their families. One of the participants said:

I have my girlfriend and two children at home. It is very hard for me to go back home with nothing. Sometimes I stay and eat from the dustbin on bad days. Our life is really shit, bro.

The findings of the study which was conducted by Schenck *et al.* (2012) were similar, in that they revealed that 31% of the day labourers in their research sample in the province of the Free State indicated that they had consumed food which had been dumped on the street. It emerged from the findings that in these cases the day labourers either had no access to other sources of food or had not earned sufficient money to buy food. The quantitative findings revealed that 68 (52.31%) of 130 respondents to the questionnaire indicated that there had been days on which there had been no food to eat for a whole day at a time in their homes. The average for those who had experienced hunger on 4 days in a single week during the previous month generated a median value of 3, a minimum value of 1, and a maximum value of 21.

Schenck, Roman, Erasmus, Blaauw, and Ryan (2017:273) have conducted extensive research to determine correlations between homelessness and food insecurity. They maintain that food insecurity is the

inevitable consequence of sleeping on the street and not having a regular income. The definition of the World Health Organisation (WHO) (2014) of food insecurity is simply the inverse of its definition of food security, which is to have access to sufficient safe and nutritious food at all times, in order to maintain a healthy and active life.

6.2.4 Theme 4: Hardships endured owing to personal circumstances

6.2.4.1 Sub-theme 4.1: Loss of dignity

In the assessment of Richard Sennett (1998), a sociological theorist, the casualisation of workforces is corrosive to human character and results in a loss of dignity, diminished social status, and severe marginalisation in societies. The relevance of the assessment is ably borne out by the following excerpt:

We have lost our dignity as men by standing here. We are not respected...people they say what they want, even small boys, they say what they want to us, no respect from the people at all.

Throughout the conducting of the interviews the participants gave expression to the perception that they had forfeited their dignity as men by waiting for employment at hiring sites. They found the disdain which members of the general public expressed towards them as they walked past the hiring sites insulting and disheartening. The participants also revealed that they were treated with disrespect not only by local residents, but also by employers. One of the participants said:

The Ghana guys who come and employ us here are small boys and we are way older than them, but since we are desperate for work, those guys they do not see us as older than them, they treat us as small boys.

The account from this participant was a particularly impassioned one and he went on to explain that the degree of disrespect which was shown to them by Ghanaian employers was matched by that which was shown to them by the 'tender guys', who were young entrepreneurs, either white or black, in the construction sector:

Sometimes we get employment for two weeks from the tender guys, very small boys, bro, who got some money from our municipality to do some construction. They are very young, but they do not respect us, they treat us as garden boys in the houses...even with money they are stingy.

The participants who were interviewed also felt a sense of being undermined and disrespected by employers:

Our employers they undermine us.

6.2.4.2 Sub-theme 4.2: A sense of desperation

The findings revealed the prevalence of a profound sense of desperation in relation to employment in East London. A fieldworker in the study which was conducted by Schenck *et al.* (2012) also assessed that day labourers at all of the hiring sites in Tshwane appeared to be hungrier and more desperate than they had appeared to be in previous studies. A sense of extreme poverty and gloom appears to overshadow the sites. To cite two relevant excerpts from the qualitative data which was generated by the interviews in this study:

Yhooo, bra, I so wish I can get a job every day, so that I can have the money to take it home so that at least we can have something to eat.

I want a permanent job. Could you please find someone to help us get jobs?

In the present economic climate, the opportunities for day labourers to find work are severely limited, an assessment which is reflected in the themes which follow.

6.2.4.3 Sub-theme 4.3: Loss of hope

There was a general consensus among the participants that their circumstances in East London afforded them little reason to hope that their lives would ever improve. In addition, there was also a general perception that the ANC government, which many described as ‘useless’, had failed to fulfil its promises to them and had marginalised them to an even greater extent than they had been marginalised during the apartheid era. The feelings of cynicism which flowed from their perceptions of having been abandoned by their erstwhile liberators are palpable in the excerpt which follows:

Mandela and the ANC promised to give us a good life after 1994, but we do not see that life now. Instead we are suffering....if you read the Bible, bro, in the Bible the Israelites told Moses that the pharaoh was better than his promising God, because even though the pharaoh was cruel, they were eating bread at least, so I am saying it's better the apartheid government than this government, they don't care.

6.2.4.4 Sub-theme 4.4: A lack of accommodation

Some of the day labourers who were interviewed had places to which they referred as ‘home’. In many cases, ‘home’ was in Duncan Village, a township in East London in which there are no clear boundaries between informal areas, as shacks have sprung up on the open spaces between formal houses. In the words of one of the participants:

Most of us, we stay in Duncan Village.

Some of the participants explained that as they often preferred to remain near a particular hiring site than to return home, they often slept under the cover which bushes afforded them near the suburb of Quigney during bad weather conditions and at night:

We cover ourselves under the bushes near Quigney at night, we do not have a place to stay.

The findings of the study which was conducted in Elardus Park in Pretoria revealed that many day labourers lived and slept in the bushes at Wolwespruit, an open area to the east of the city, concealing their possessions in the undergrowth during the day. The findings also revealed that as a consequence of not having formal accommodation, they were often the targets of violence at the hands of criminal elements who are known in local argot as *tsotsis* and raids by the Tshwane Metropolitan Police.

6.2.4.5 Sub-theme 4.5: A lack of food at work

The findings revealed that the participants had limited access to food on the days on which they tried to obtain employment at the sites. In many cases, they could not afford to buy food to consume while they waited for employment and breaks for food, if they were employed, tended to be uncommon. As one participant explained:

From the evening I had nothing to eat.

Several of the participants explained that they were unable to bring food from their homes to hiring sites because it was usually the lack of food in their homes which had prompted them to find employment in order to earn money to buy food. The findings of a study conducted by Schenck *et al.* (2017) revealed that 56% of their research sample, some 2300 respondents, indicated that they often did not have food to eat while they waited for employment at hiring sites. It has been observed that a new variant of informal economic activity has emerged at some connected or permanent hiring sites, in the form of people selling food to the day labourers while they wait for employment.

When the interviewees were asked what they did if they had no food to eat or access to proper food, some replied that they searched for food in dustbins, as the following excerpt confirms:

I eat from the dustbin, just to have something in my stomach.

This finding corresponds with that of the study of homeless people in Observatory in Cape Town which was conducted by Schenck *et al.* (2017), which revealed that 23% of the research sample admitted that they rummaged for food in dustbins on the streets when they had access to no other sources of food.

6.2.4.6 Sub-theme 4.6: Expressions of psychological and emotional distress

- **Feelings of frustration**

The participants in the interviews frequently expressed frustration concerning the continuous lack of opportunities for employment which were available to them at the hiring sites as they waited for employment. In this context, frustration can be understood as an emotional response to the disappointment which they feel owing to their inability to fulfil their responsibilities by meeting the needs of their families and extended families. As one of the participants explained:

Even this coming December holiday I do not think I will be able to be at home because everything needs money and they will look to me to provide it.

It is evident that the participant experienced feelings of both frustration and inadequacy as a result of his inability to provide for his dependants in a manner which would affirm his manhood from a cultural perspective (Malinga, 2015). The following excerpt provides an almost identical assessment:

Now that we are approaching December, my children have already called me. They want clothes for Christmas and I wonder where will I get that money.

Many researchers have found incontrovertible evidence of positive correlations between secure gainful employment and overall well-being (Anderson & Winefield, 2011:15; Gibbons, 2016:38; Frank & Hou, 2017:2). Anderson and Winefield (2011:165) explain that as there is an abundance of evidence in the relevant available literature to suggest that the beneficial effects of employment often include heightened self-identity, self-esteem, and active participation in communities by people whose status is conferred by the professional positions which they hold, it follows that a lack of gainful employment is likely to have correspondingly negative effects upon well-being. According to McKeeRyan and Harvey (2011:984), underemployment is a significant indicator of depression, frustration, hostility, and other psychosomatic symptoms.

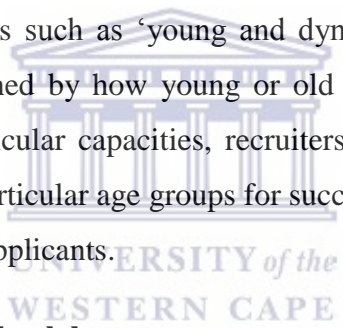
- **Discrimination or rejection owing to age**

The findings of the study also revealed that day labourers in East London are sometimes subjected to discrimination owing to their ages. Although older day labourers were observed in search of employment at the hiring sites, the interviewees maintained that employers usually sought young, energetic, and capable day labourers to hire. The participants complained that they were subjected to discrimination and that being rejected owing to their ages effectively minimised their ability to obtain employment. The

phenomenon of age discrimination is also prevalent within the formal labour market in South Africa. According to the website jobs.co.za (n.d), the most common forms of discrimination which are to be found in advertisements to recruit employees and for specific positions include ageism, sexism, racism, religious and political affiliations, and also discrimination with respect to disabilities, HIV or AIDS status, marital status, family structure, pregnancy, and sexual orientation. In the words of one of the interviewees:

I am 53 years old. They always tell me that I will not be able to complete their jobs, so it's hard for me to find jobs because I am always rejected because I appear very old. Even though I have strength to complete the tasks, but to them I am old.

Ageism entails expressions of prejudice or discrimination against people on account of their ages. Although all positions require specific levels of ability, employers are officially not permitted to discriminate against applicants on the basis of their ages. In order to avoid making specific reference to the age groups into which they require successful applicants to fall, advertisements for positions are often framed by making use of euphemisms such as 'young and dynamic' or 'mature'. As the abilities of individual applicants are not determined by how young or old they may be, but rather by how well equipped they are to function in particular capacities, recruiters and employers who either blatantly stipulate or imply the desirability of particular age groups for successful applicants are nonetheless guilty of using prejudicial criteria to screen applicants.



6.2.5 Theme 5: Coping strategies of day labourers

In order to be able to live under harsh circumstances, appropriate survival strategies need to be developed. As Blaauw (2010) explains, to enter the informal sector of the economy is already an exercise in survival in itself. This section is devoted to a discussion of the themes which emerged from the interviews concerning the factors which alleviated the conditions under which the day labourers endeavoured to survive and the strategies which they adopted in order to do so.

6.2.5.1 Sub-theme 5.1: Sources of support

- **Support from local churches**

The participants explained that local churches in East London provided them with support in the form of food at all six of the sites at which this study was conducted. One interviewee said:

When I do not have something to eat, I go to the Trinity Church. They will give us food and bread.....you see the government, bro, is doing nothing, the government.....church people are the ones that support us

here always...but even they do not come always, they only come on Thursdays to give us food and pray for us so that we can get work while we wait here.

6.2.5.2 Observation

The participant showed the researcher the quarter loaf of brown bread and the soup which he had collected from the church.

- **Formation of groups for mutual support**

Blaauw (2010) emphasises the crucial role which social support among day labourers plays to enable them to cope with everyday hardships, by providing emotional, economic, and social support (Viljoen, 2014). One interviewee said:

We go together with my friends from Duncan Village, sometimes, and have some work and share the money. The findings of Schenck and Louw (2005) were similar in this respect, as they revealed that day labourers in Elardus Park appeared to form groups and gather as groups at different pick-up points on Barnard Street. The men appeared to group themselves according to criteria such as their marital status or their birthplaces. In this study, the researcher found that day labourers in East London tended to group together according to their clan names, which are known as *iziduko* in isiXhosa. As one interviewee explained:

You know what, bhuti, we are one blood here....this one and this one 'ngabamthembu' (clan name), they belong to me, I love them, bhuti, and we are from Gobe together, we stay together every time....you know what, I know their parents they used to stay with my father at home....So we have that relationship since we were young...if I don't have a job or one of us does not have a job, we usually share at least, so that we can help each other...they are my blood mos, so its fine to help them.

Valenzuela Jr. (2000:9) found that the social interactions of day labourers in the United States were often characterised by cooperation in that they found work and did favours for one another and supported one another through companionship and advice, often sharing transport, housing, and food. He maintains that the establishment of a social order through the formation of groups enables day labourers to achieve a measure of social coherence in their search for temporary work (Valenzuela Jr., 2000:14).

- **Pooling earnings with partners or *isandla sesibini***

Although it was revealed in Chapter 5 that women gathered at only one of the sites to wait for employment in capacities such as domestic cleaners, it emerged from the interviews that some were the partners of the male day labourers who gathered at the site. One of the interviewees explained that the reciprocal support which partners provided to each other is known in isiXhosa as *isandla sesibini*, whose literal meaning is to work with a partner. As he explained:

Isandla sesibini is mostly needed, here I work with my girlfriend to make money for ourselves, she is doing house cleaning and I do painting and other tasks...this is helping me because if I couldn't make it for the day she makes it.....so it helps a lot.

- **Developing sound relationships with employers**

Maintaining good relationships with employers enables day labourers to increase the frequency with which they are hired by becoming regular employees of individual employers. The findings of this study revealed that some of the participants maintained close relationships with particular employers by exchanging mobile phone numbers with them to enable them to be reached easily when the employers were in need of the services of day labourers. As one of the interviewees explained:

I have my own people. They always look for me when they come here. That helps me to get more jobs every day.

By contrast, other participants expressed less enthusiasm for close relationships, claiming that they represented a subterfuge which employers used when they did not wish to pay them:

Hey, you know what I hate, it is to be close to them, they will run away, yho...I do not want to be a friend with any of the employers....I used to be a friend with one guy, but he ended up not paying me while claiming to be my friend...always when I meet him and demand my money, he says 'No, my friend, I will pay you.

- **Working for preferred employers**

The findings revealed that the participants had definite preferences with respect to the employers who hired them, owing to the abuse to which they were subjected by some employers. Consequently, they expressed strong preferences for employers who treated them well. In the words of one of the interviewees:

My brother, me, you see, I always run away from working for black employers. They do not want to throw money away...I like white people, sometimes they are nice, they give us even extra money and food when we have finished the work.

When they were questioned further, some of the participants maintained that black employers were cruel, as the following excerpts reveal:

Our own black people, they are the ones that are treating us bad here, they do not want to pay money...when we go to the police they will tell us that it's not their case we should go to [the Department of] Manpower [and Employment].

Black people are cruel, they always say 'No' when we charge.....they say we must charge less, but they give us a lot of work, expecting us to work for them, but no payment....no I rather work for white people, they are good.

One participant explained that he preferred to work for employers who were women after having been employed once by a woman, although women rarely came to the site to hire day labourers. In his own words:

I so wish I can work for women every time when I get a job here. They have mercy.

Although most of the South African day labourers in the research sample preferred to work for white employers, they believed that white employers preferred to hire Zimbabweans, as the following excerpt attests:

We are struggling here, bro....I do not know why our black people treat us bad...I don't like working for them, I rather work for white people because they pay better....but now that we are with makwerekwere, they always take them because they say we charge too much and makwerekwere charge less.

6.2.5.3 Sub-theme 5.3: Flexibility

- **Being willing to travel to other places or sites in search of work**

Both Schenck and Louw (2007) and Valenzuela Jr. (2000) refer to flexibility in terms of mobility, in that day labourers who demonstrate flexibility move from one hiring site to another in search of increased earnings or improved working conditions. For the purposes of this study, the researcher assessed the flexibility of day labourers in terms of their willingness to undertake extra work and to do whatever may

be required to perform particular tasks adequately. The day labourers who participated in this study not only moved from one hiring site to another, but they were also on standby to do extra work for employers if they were needed, even at night or during weekends.

Sennett (1998) explains the concept of flexibility by making use of an analogy of a tree which bends in the wind: as its branches spring back to their original position when the wind abates, the flexibility of the tree is predicated upon its capacity both to yield and recover. He maintains that owing to the casualisation of employment in many sectors, workers need to be flexible and adapt in order to optimise the livings which they are able to earn from their abilities. Sennett (1998) concludes that flexible workers have a sense of tensile strength, in that they are able to adapt to any set of circumstances and to perform a great deal of work.

- **Accepting employment on a standby basis**

Standby can be defined in terms of readiness for duty or immediate deployment (Oxford Dictionary, 2013). According to the guidelines for the administration and management of standby allowances of the Breede Valley Municipality (2010), standby is a written instruction to an employee who can be relied upon to be available when he or she is needed to be available for immediate deployment in the event of unplanned, unforeseen, or emergency work which needs to be undertaken outside normal working hours. Emergency work refers to work which of necessity needs to be done without delay, owing to circumstances for which the employer could not reasonably have been expected to make provision and which cannot be performed by employees during their ordinary hours of work. Emergency work excludes the performance of routine maintenance work outside of normal working hours. The willingness of the participants to accept employment under these conditions is evident in the following excerpt:

He has my number. When he calls me, I do not say 'No, I don't want the job because it is weekend...I take the job because I know it will help me and I will be able to buy food during the weekend and have a Sunday dish meal with my children, yebo....I make cash, bra, yho... I can't just sit.

By contrast, some of the participants regarded being available at all times as a form of abuse by employers, as is evident from the following excerpt:

You know sometimes I used to call them and ask for work....they had my number that way now they are calling me even during weekends to do their work...even at night to come and repair leaking pipes....but now no, I cannot work during weekends anymore....do you know what they do? In the past I have been

available whenever they need me...I used to do almost anything they ask me to do, but they will say after I have done the work I must leave. I cannot sleep and they will never pay me at all.

6.2.5.4 Sub-theme 5.4: Alternative means of obtaining income

- **Selling dagga**

As the following excerpt illustrates, in some instances day labourers who are unable to obtain employment resort to engaging in risky illegal activities such as selling prohibited substances in order to buy food:

I do not have anything else, bra....when I do not have money I sell dagga so that I can have money and buy myself food..... But last week I was in shit...I mean shit, bro.... the police took me and I was caught up.

- **Waste picking**

Despite the hardship which day labourers experience each day, it was evident from the findings that they tend to have a strong sense of independence and to display considerable resourcefulness and resilience. Most of the participants indicated that they engaged in waste picking by collecting iron, copper, and bottles to sell for money to buy food. Nzeadibe, Anyadike, and Njoku-Tony (2010) maintain that waste picking provides significant economic benefits to both urban and rural populations of unemployed youth. One of the interviewees said:

When times are not good for me I collect iron and sell it to the scrapyards so that at least I can have money to buy bread and take that bread home...sometimes it's difficult to get enough money because many of us here are doing the same thing, so we get less money.

- **Going from door to door in search of employment**

Some of the participants explained that when opportunities for employment were particularly scarce at the hiring sites, they went to the townships in which they resided or to residential areas in East London, going from house to house to ask for employment or to perform any tasks in return for small amounts of money. Some of the participants reported that their attempts to obtain employment were often met with hostility, particularly in residential areas. In the words of one participant:

I used to stay here on site the whole day and wait for employers to take me to work....some day I saw my friends going door-to-door asking for employment and they got the employment....I did the same thing,

but it did not work for me. I was chased by the guy accusing that I came for a bad move...I wanted to steal their things.

- **Soliciting loans from Somalians**

Some of the participants explained that they were usually able to obtain loans from Somalian people, to whom they referred as *friends*, when they were in need of money or food. The Somalians upon whom they rely reside mainly in the informal settlements which are home to many day labourers in Duncan Village and some Gqobhasi areas in East London. The implicit trust which the participants appeared to place in their Somalian benefactors is reflected unequivocally in the following excerpt:

If I do not get work here, I just go back in Duncan Village where I stay and borrow money from om-friend, they will never let me down. I even get food from them and they will give me.

The findings also revealed that the participants often lent money to those who were unable to obtain employment:

We give each other money if someone is in need of help, we help each other here because we know that the following day some of us will need help, so that is why we want to learn by helping each other.

This finding also accords with those pertaining to the formation of groups by day labourers in order to provide mutual support. From the findings of the study which was conducted by Blaauw *et al.* (2012), it was evident that Zimbabwean day labourers also provided support to one another, by assisting one another to find employment and also with support in the form of food, loans, transport, shelter, and care when they fell ill.

6.3 Chapter summary

This chapter took the form of a detailed presentation, discussion, and analysis of the findings of the qualitative study. Five principal themes and a number of relevant sub-themes emerged from the thematic analysis of the data. The main findings of the qualitative study are summarised as follows:

- Day labourers in East London are required to endure harsh conditions at the hiring sites at which they stand and wait for prospective employers, owing to a lack of infrastructure to protect them from extreme weather conditions, which, in turn, has severely adverse implications for their health.

- The absence of formal contractual agreements, the risks to which day labourers are often exposed in industries such as construction, and the abuse to which they are frequently subjected at the hands of employers all conspire to ensure that even if they are able to obtain employment, they do so under the worst possible conditions. As the relationship between the day labourers and employers is a grossly unequal one, they are frequently severely exploited and completely reliant upon the largesse of individual employers to have their basic human rights upheld.
- A significant finding of the study was the general awareness of the participants of their responsibilities towards their families and extended families. Most were found to have been born in the rural Transkei and to have been obliged to move to East London to seek employment. Although they were far from their families, they nevertheless prioritised the need to support them and to send money to pay the school fees of their children. As Malinga (2015) explains, their perceptions of their own masculinity would have been informed by traditional upbringings. Consequently, they felt that it was incumbent upon them to support their dependants at home, irrespective of their dire financial circumstances.
- From their personal perspectives, the participants frequently experienced feelings of desperation and frustration which were characterised by loss of hope and loss of dignity. There can be little doubt that the feelings were driven by their unemployed status and the precarious nature of their existences.

The findings also revealed a considerable degree of resilience in the face of adversity among the participants, particularly with respect to the formation of groups to help one another to find employment and to pool food and financial resources. Although the findings of other studies which were conducted in South Africa revealed that day labourers formed mutual support groups on the basis of other criteria, South African-born day labourers in East London appeared to do so on that of their clan names or their places of birth.

The findings of the qualitative study were supported by verbatim quotations from the interviews, which had been translated from isiXhosa to English and contrasted with relevant findings of other studies from the literature review.

The final chapter is devoted to a discussion of the conclusions which were drawn from the findings in relation to the objectives which guided the conducting of the study, which, in turn, is followed by recommendations which are made on the basis of the conclusions and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER 7: SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the sets of quantitative and qualitative findings are summarised and integrated, in order to draw meaningful conclusions from the findings, before proceeding to make recommendations on the basis of them and offering suggestions for future research.

7.2 Summary of the quantitative and qualitative findings and discussion of the conclusions which were drawn from them

Table 7.1 provides a summary of the principal findings of the quantitative and qualitative studies.

Table 7.1: Summary of the findings which were generated by the quantitative and qualitative data

PHASE ONE: QUANTITATIVE DATA	PHASE TWO: QUALITATIVE DATA
<p>1. Dramatically fluctuating wages</p> <p>2. A frequent lack of food security</p> <p>3. Adverse psychosocial effects of working far away from their homes and families</p>	<p>1. Hardships experienced by the participants at the hiring sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Verbal abuse ○ Ethnic tensions among day labourers ○ Extreme weather conditions ○ Problems which arise owing to the unregulated nature of hiring sites ○ Police harassment <p>2. Sources of hardships owing to the nature of day labouring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A lack of appropriate regulations to safeguard and uphold the human rights of day labourers ○ Hazardous work and working conditions ○ Violence at the hands of employers and owing to expressions of racism and xenophobia

<p>4. Low levels of educational attainment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A lack of prospects owing to low levels of educational attainment <p>3. : Hardships experienced by day labourers in their relationships with their families</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pressure to support their families and extended families from their meagre earnings ○ Adverse effects upon their family relationships ○ Inability to provide sufficient food for their households <p>4. Hardships experienced owing to personal circumstances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Loss of dignity ○ Sense of desperation ○ Loss of hope ○ A lack of accommodation ○ A lack of food at work ○ Adverse psychological consequences of precarious employment
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(Source: The researcher)

The profile of the research sample which emerges from the quantitative data depicts the participants as being exclusively male and black, and almost exclusively South African speakers of isiXhosa who came to seek employment in East London from rural areas of the province of the Eastern Cape. Their average age of 40 years places them outside of the age range of the youthful population of South Africa. If this finding is considered against that which revealed that some of the participants had been working as day labourers for as long as 30 years, it would be reasonable to conclude that significant numbers of people in the Eastern Cape, one of the two poorest provinces in South Africa, are effectively condemned to eking out precarious existences in conditions of abject poverty for as long as they are able to continue to work. The findings revealed that their monthly wages fluctuated from pathetically small incomes during bad months to bare subsistence incomes during the best months, while their generally low levels of educational attainment serve to preclude them from ever having access to any other sources of income other than social grants to see them through their old age in conditions of dire poverty. As South Africa has joined most other countries in ratifying the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), it has implicitly acknowledged its responsibility to ensure that it enables all of its citizens to live in accordance with universally accepted minimum standards. Failure to take meaningful steps to ensure that the goals are met would necessarily entail a gross betrayal of those to whom high ranking members of the present government have sanctimoniously referred to as 'the poorest of the poor'.

The qualitative findings revealed that despite their low levels of educational attainment, the inherent irony in the disparities which are to be observed between the fortunes of those who selflessly engaged in a liberation struggle on their behalf and their own has not been lost on them. It could plausibly be concluded that none are more acutely aware of instances of hypocrisy than those who are most adversely affected by them. The hardships which the qualitative findings revealed suggest that at present day labourers are obliged to work under conditions in which even their basic human rights cannot be guaranteed. Consequently, failure to take decisive steps to ensure that their rights are upheld amounts to turning a blind eye to the gross exploitation of one segment of society by another, thereby aiding and abetting the perpetuation of equally gross socioeconomic inequalities and the further marginalisation of those who suffered most under the universally reviled apartheid regime.

7.3 Recommendations based upon the findings of the study

In order to provide a working environment for day labourers in East London which ensures that their rights are upheld and acknowledges the significant role which the informal sector has to play in combating the socioeconomic effects of unemployment, the following recommendations are made:

- **Adequate amenities at hiring sites:** It is recommended that the Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality should equip hiring sites with adequate amenities such as structures to ensure that day labourers are protected from extreme weather conditions, access to clean potable water, and toilets
- **The establishment of an NGO to attend to the needs of day labourers:** In order to safeguard the rights of day labourers, an NGO needs to be established to protect day labourers from abuse at the hands of employers and the general public. According to Meléndez, Visser, Valenzuela, and Theodore (2016), day labour worker centres have emerged as a vital means of regulating the informal economies of large cities in the United States. They explain that the organisations have significantly improved the access which immigrant workers have to employment and the treatment which they receive. In the case of East London in South Africa, the organisation should have two principal sets of functions, namely, to provide day labourers with legal representation and ensuring their well-being. Adequate legal representation would enable day labourers to overcome their present inability to report cases of assault, violence, and non-payment of wages to relevant authorities. Conversely, attending to their needs to ensure their overall well-being would include enabling them to have more regular access to nutritious food than they have at present by relying solely upon charities. Other forms of support would include counselling and enabling them to obtain employment more regularly through the creation of a database to make them easily accessible to potential employers.
- **The establishment of a no-fee technical institution to provide day labourers with training and accreditation:** The participants maintained that the Department of Education should re-open the old Technical College in Mdantsane as a training facility with no restrictions in terms of requirements for admission and no fees for those who do not have the means to pay them, such as day labourers. The need for technical training is underscored by the preferences which the participants observed on the part of prospective employers for hiring *makwerekwere*, owing to their perceived superior vocational skills and their possession of relevant documentation to substantiate their official qualifications. Consequently, an institution which provides formal

training would enable South African day labourers both to increase their vocational skills and to receive appropriate vocational qualifications.

- **Providing day labourers with access to municipal mobile clinics:** The participants suggested that day labourers should be given access to municipal mobile clinics, owing to the medical conditions of several day labourers. The findings of the study revealed that significant numbers of day labourers were epileptic and particularly vulnerable to extreme weather conditions. The risks to which they are exposed are further exacerbated by a reluctance to attend clinics in their communities to obtain medication when they could be at hiring sites obtaining employment. Consequently, they are prone to failing to adhere to their medication regimens and losing control of their health conditions. Having access to mobile clinics would enable them to obtain medication without forfeiting opportunities to obtain employment.
- **Engagement with day labourers by relevant government departments:** Both the Department of Labour and the Eastern Cape Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs, and Tourism should prioritise appropriate engagement with the day labourers of the Eastern Cape in order to formulate and implement effective strategies to combat unemployment and alleviate poverty. It is particularly incumbent upon the Department of Labour to integrate day labourers into all initiatives of the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP), in order to develop intervention strategies which meet the needs of the most socioeconomically marginalised segments of South African society.
- **The implementation of appropriate policies:** The implementation of appropriate policies represents the most effective means of alleviating the plight of day labourers. Efficacious policies should be informed by relevant facts, figures, and analyses, in order to arrive at realistic and equitable minimum wages. Policies should also be formulated in consultation with day labourers. As Samson (2010a) explains, any attempt to recognise and uphold the rights of marginalised groups is likely to be futile if due consideration is not given to listening to the voices of the people on whose behalf the attempts are made.
- **Psychosocial support:** In order to integrate the socioeconomically vulnerable segment of South African society which day labourers and their families and extended families represent into the welfare systems of the country, they need to have adequate access to social services through professionals such as social workers. Mechanisms to provide psychosocial support should be informed by both the goal of social justice and a commitment to the tenets of social development.

7.4 Recommendations for social work practice at the micro and macro levels

7.4.1 Recommendations for social work practice at the micro level

The findings revealed that the range of social services which are provided through social workers to the severely marginalised communities in which day labourers reside in East London is limited. Reflection upon the findings, the conclusions which were drawn from them, and relevant excerpts of the literature which was reviewed served to convince the researcher that advocacy, as it is defined in social work practice, provided the most meaningful basis for social interventions at the micro level. The principle of advocacy in social work distinguishes the profession from all other helping professions. Interventions which stem from advocacy emphasise the need for the voices of vulnerable and marginalised communities concerning matters which have significant implications for their lives to be heard and for their fundamental human rights to be defended and safeguarded. Consequently, it is the duty of social workers to strive to empower severely disadvantaged groups such as day labourers and to enable them to improve their lives, through the implementation of appropriate community-based interventions, by consulting them in order to ascertain their specific needs and aspirations.

7.4.2 Recommendations for social work practice at the macro level

Social workers who function within a social development paradigm to campaign for social justice for disadvantaged communities, of necessity, become social and political activists. They are sometimes referred to as agents of change, as they actively work to influence policies which are implemented in order to end discrimination, combat unemployment and underemployment, and to eradicate poverty. As South African day labourers are representatives of disadvantaged communities whose plight has been allowed to linger for more than two decades after the official demise of the cruel and unjust dispensation which earned the opprobrium of the entire world, it is only through intense activism that the lack of commitment of the present government to social justice can be spurred or shamed into taking meaningful action to reduce the gross inequalities which continue to characterise South African society.

7.5 Recommendations for future research

The findings of this study could make a significant contribution to the existing body of knowledge pertaining to day labourers if they were to be augmented by those of the following types of studies:

- A qualitative study, which is conducted in the community of Duncan Village in which most of the day labourers who participated in this study reside, of the factors which impede day labourers from

having access to the services which are provided by the government, particularly with respect to opportunities for employment.

- An in-depth assessment of the inherent risks to which both day labourers and employers are exposed in transactions pertaining to employment which are not covered by binding formal agreements or contracts.
- A qualitative study to determine how the families and dependants of day labourers are affected by the precarious nature of their work and the frequent necessity for day labourers to work away from their homes for extended periods. Although the findings of the study have revealed that day labourers experience great difficulty in fulfilling their responsibilities to their families and extended families, the circumstances of their dependants need to be investigated before overall conclusions can be drawn.
- From the generally low levels of educational attainment and vocational training which the findings revealed among the day labourers in the research sample, the conclusion that enabling them to develop relevant and necessary skills to increase the likelihood of their obtaining employment was an obvious one. Conversely, future research could be conducted to investigate the extent to which training in vocational skills is able to increase the likelihood of day labourers obtaining employment in poor provinces such as the Eastern Cape, in which other socioeconomic factors are likely to influence the availability of work to people who possess skills. The scope of the research could also be expanded in order to identify potential shortcomings of existing curricula or training techniques of institutions which offer vocational training, in order to accommodate day labourers by successfully integrating them into training programmes.
- The findings revealed conclusively that the good health upon which day labourers depend in order to continue to sustain themselves, their families, and extended families through obtaining employment is frequently severely compromised by the risks to which they are exposed at hiring sites and workplaces. Consequently, future research could take the form of an in-depth investigation of the access to which day labourers have to healthcare services and the extent to which they make use of them.
- A research study should be conducted to analyse the relationships which exist between poverty and inequality in the informal economy, particularly with respect to the day labour market. The findings would provide an accurate socioeconomic profile concerning the levels of poverty which prevail among those who are obliged to participate in the informal economy. In addition, they

would also serve to reify the inequalities between the formal and informal sectors of the economy which continue to marginalise large segments of South African society and preclude them from having access to sustainable means of escaping the poverty trap which is widely acknowledged to cripple socioeconomic development in South Africa.

7.6 Reflection upon the conducting of the study

As the study was conducted in public spaces which the participants shared with local residents, owners of local businesses, and others, several factors contributed to the difficulties which the researcher experienced. Initially it was difficult to gain the trust of potential participants, as they tended to believe that he was a government official who had come to evict them from the sites. Once he had convinced them that he was a student who was conducting research into the lives and experiences of day labourers, they became significantly more amenable to participating in the study. It was personally gratifying to the researcher to overcome their initial reticence and elicit questions such as:

Will this research of yours provide jobs for us?

The researcher was able to tell them that the ultimate purpose of the research was to develop relevant guidelines which could be useful to people who are tasked with the formulation and implementation of policy and enable them to incorporate day labourers into interventions by the government to combat unemployment.

A second source of difficulty which was encountered was the necessity of abandoning the original intention to tape record the interviews, as the ambient noise levels made it impossible to do so. Instead, the researcher was obliged to jot down transcriptions as quickly as possible, on the spot. Although some factors conspired to make the collection of the data more difficult than the researcher had anticipated, the relative ease with which he was subsequently able to move from site to site without having his presence questioned and the rapport which he was able to establish with the participants compensated for the hindrances and credible sets of data were gathered.

7.7 Conclusion

The findings have provided comprehensive answers to the research questions which were framed to guide the conducting of the study, concerning the defining characteristics of the lived experiences of day labourers in East London and the nature of the hardships which they encounter owing to the nature of their work at hiring sites, workplaces, and in their relationships with their families. While the aims of the

study were to answer the research questions, the objectives which they generated were met through the successful integration of the findings of the quantitative and qualitative studies. The quantitative findings permitted a socioeconomic profile of day labourers in East London to be developed, while the qualitative data allowed a richly detailed assessments of the hardships which the participants encountered at hiring sites, at workplaces, in relation to their families, and the coping strategies which they employed to survive in the face of severe adversity. The pioneering studies which have been conducted concerning the phenomenon of day labouring in South Africa provide conclusive evidence that large numbers of South Africans continue to be unfairly marginalised, grossly exploited, and denied social justice. Although the plight of South Africans who were the victims of discrimination was once a rallying cry for social and political activists throughout the world, there seems to be little interest in the plight of those who continue to suffer in the aftermath of the universally perceived reconciliatory miracle which is widely believed to have occurred in South Africa on April 27 of 1994. The eyes of the world have turned away from the voiceless of South Africa and talk of a better life for all has degenerated into empty rhetoric, as some of the participants in the study were acutely aware. While the priorities of the present government assume an increasingly neoliberal character and the marginalised continue to be glossed over with handwringing and pious references to ‘the poorest of the poor’, it appears that ‘never again’ is steadily being replaced with ‘on second thoughts, perhaps a bit longer for some’. Accordingly, the social work profession needs to re-affirm its commitment to standing at the forefront of the fight for social justice for all South Africans, through advocacy and activism, as those who once claimed that they had pledged their lives to doing so appear to have acquired other priorities.

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ANNEXURE A: GUIDE FOR ADMINISTERING THE QUESTIONNAIRE



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
YUNIBESITI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT



DAY LABOURERS' SURVEY IN SOUTH AFRICA, 2015- 2018
Department of Social Work, University of the Western Cape
School of Economics, North-West University

REGION:

Gauteng	
Mpumalanga	
KwaZulu-Natal	
Eastern Cape	
Limpopo	
North West	
Free State	
Northern Cape	
Western Cape	

SURVEY DETAILS

(Can be completed after the interview)

Interviewer: Complete the following questions after the interview.

Date of interview..... Fieldworker's name.....

City/town..... Time of interview.....

If city, mention suburb.....

Questionnaire

Completed	Not Completed
-----------	---------------

Site description:

Address of the site: mention the closest corner e.g. c/o.....str and
..... str

GP coordinatesS.....E

1. Type of site: Mark all applicable

Public space (e.g. park/sidewalk/parking area)	
Residential area	
Related Business/shops e.g. Builders Warehouse	
Unrelated business/shops	
Taxi/bus hub	
Other transport hub	
Open space (e.g. undeveloped veld)	
Road junction	
Dept. of Labour	

Other (specify).....	
----------------------	--

2. Estimated number of people at the hiring site.....



THIS SECTION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE RELATES TO THE RESPONDENT YOU ARE INTERVIEWING.

PERSONAL BACKGROUND

Interviewer: Explain that this next set of questions concerns their personal backgrounds.

3. Respondent's gender:

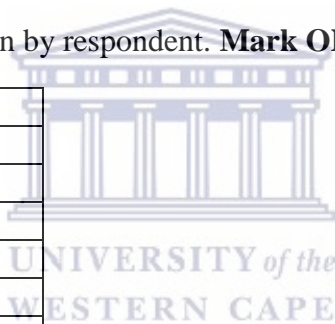
Male	1
Female	2

4. With which racial group do you identify yourself? **Mark ONE only**

Black	1
White	2
Coloured	3
Asian	4
Other (Specify)	5

5. Language predominantly spoken by respondent. **Mark ONE only**

English	1
Sesotho	2
Sepedi	3
isiZulu	4
Isindebele	5
Xhitsonga	6
Afrikaans	7
Setswana	8
isiXhosa	9
Tshivenda	10
SiSwati	11
Other Specify.....	12



6. What is your home country?

South Africa	1
Zimbabwe	2
Namibia	3
Swaziland	4
Mozambique	5
Botswana	6
Lesotho	7
Other Specify.....	8

7. If you are South African, in which province were you born?

Gauteng	1
Mpumalanga	2
KwaZulu-Natal	3
Eastern Cape	4
Limpopo	5
North West	6
Free State	7
Northern Cape	8
Western Cape	9

8. Where do you live now? (Mention suburb / township)

.....

9. How old are you?

	Years
--	--------------

under 20	1
21-25	2
26-30	3
31-35	4
36-40	5
41-45	6
46-50	7
51-55	8
56-60	9
over 60	10
Refused to answer	11
Do not know	12



10. Which of the following describes your present marital status?

Never married / single	1
Separated / divorced	2
Married (Traditional or Western)	3
Widowed	4
Living with a partner	5
Other (Specify).....	6

EDUCATION

11. What is the **highest** school or tertiary qualification you have **passed?** Indicate the qualification:

Grade

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Post School Qualification												13
Post School Qualification. Please mention the qualification												
.....												

12. Ask question 12 only if the waste pickers left school before passing Gr. 12.
Why did you leave school?

.....

13. What other vocational training or courses did you complete?

Bricklaying	1
Painter	2
Plumbing	3
Tiler	4
Electrical work	5
Cabinet maker	6
Carpenter	7
Other	8
Specify.....	



EMPLOYMENT AND EMPLOYMENT-SEEKING HISTORY

Interviewer: Explain that the next set of questions concerns the past working experience of the respondent.

14. The following questions will be about the jobs you did during the last 7 days, hired from street corner hiring sites/labour markets (Ask all questions for each day of the week).

Interviewer: If the respondent did not work, record “no work” in column “Description of job” and continue until the chart is complete. Write in the days of the week according to the present day. If today is Friday, enter the first day as Friday (last week) and continue until yesterday (Thursday).

Day	Description of job	How many hours did you work?	How much were you paid?
Day 1:			
Day 2:			
Day 3:			
Day 4:			
Day 5:			
Day 6:			
Day 7:			



15. How many days did you stand and wait for work as a day labourer during the previous week?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

16. On which days of the week did you stand? (Mark all applicable)

Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
-----	------	-----	-------	-----	-----	-----

17. What is **the lowest wage** you have been paid **for a day** as a day labourer during the past 12 months?

R.....

18. What is **the best wage** you have been paid **for a day** as a day labourer during the past 12 months?

R.....

19. What is **the lowest** wage per day for which you are **willing to work at present** as a day labourer?

R.....

20.a Does this amount stay the same if you are not hired for more than one day in the week before this interview?

Yes	No
1	2

20.b If no, why does it change and by how much?

.....
21. Is your income as a day labourer as good as expected?

BETTER	1
WORSE THAN EXPECTED	2
AS GOOD AS EXPECTED	3

22. Approximately, how much did you earn in wages last month?

R (Round to the nearest Rand)

23. During a **good** month of work, how much do you earn as a day labourer?

R..... (Round off to the nearest Rand)

24. During a **bad** month of work, how much do you earn as a day labourer?

R..... (Round off to the nearest Rand)

25. What kind of jobs have you had as a day labourer in the last month?

Interviewer: Do not read the list. Use the list to mark “yes” for those jobs that are mentioned.

	Yes	No
1. Gardening	1	2
2. Digging/ shovelling	1	2
3. Loading and unloading	1	2
4. Construction (demolition/clean-up)	1	2
5. Bricklaying	1	2
6. Bricklaying assistant	1	2
7. Roofing	1	2
8. Roofing assistant	1	2
9. Carpentry	1	2
10. Carpenter’s assistant	1	2
11. Painting	1	2
12. Painter’s assistant	1	2
13. Plumbing	1	2
14. Plumber’s assistant	1	2
15. Car wash	1	2
16. Farming activities	1	2
17. Electrician	1	2
18. Electrician’s assistant	1	2
19. Domestic work	1	2
20. Plastering	1	2
21. Other: Specify.....	1	2

26. How often are you hired more than three times by the same employer?

Often	1
Sometimes	2
Seldom	3
Never	4

27. Indicate which answer is relevant:

The last time you were employed

	YES	NO
Did you negotiate your wages with the employer before starting the job?	1	2

28. During the last month, have you turned down a job?

Yes	1
No	2

29. If yes, why did you turn down the job?.....

LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY TO BE ABLE TO COMMUNICATE WITH EMPLOYERS

30. How well can you...

Understand English: (fieldworker ask the question in English)

Not at all	1
Somewhat	2
Well	3

31. How well can you speak English?

Not at all	1
Somewhat	2
Well	3

32. Hoe goed kan jy... (Ask the question in Afrikaans)

Afrikaans verstaan:

Not at all	1
Somewhat	2
Well	3



33. Hoe goed kan jy Afrikaans praat?

Not at all	1
Somewhat	2
Well	3

34. Have you ever had a full-time job? (A full-time job for which you received a regular payslip to indicate your income and deductions)

Yes	1
No	2

35. **IF YES**, What was your last full-time job?

Job title:

36. How long did you have your **last** full-time job?

Months..... Years.....

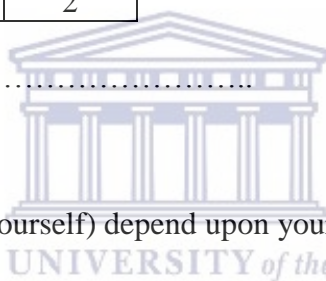
37. Why did you leave your last full-time job? (**Interviewer: Mark only one**)

Laid off: Business/mine/factory closed	1
Laid off: Downsizing of business	2
Laid off: Business moved	3
Disciplinary reasons	4
Quit the job because wages were too low	5
Quit the job for medical reasons	6
Quit the job owing to bad treatment from employer	7
Other Specify.....	8
Refused to answer	9

38. Are you looking for a full-time job at present?

Yes (move to question 40)	1
No (move to question 39)	2

39. If no, why not?.....



DEPENDANTS

40. How many people (excluding yourself) depend upon your income?
.....

If the day labourer has no dependants, you do not have to ask questions 41 - 43

41. Identify the people who are dependent upon your income?

Type of dependant	Number
Parents	
Own / adopted children	
Foster children	
Grandchildren	
Others	

42. How many of your dependants are children under the age of 18 years and your legal dependants? (**Legal dependants are the children of the day labourers, their adopted children, or children whom they have placed in foster care.**)
.....

43. Which other sources of income are available to support them?

Child support grant	1
---------------------	---

Disability grant	2
Old age grant	3
Other person(s) in employment	4
Other specify	5

44. Do you live with your family?

Yes	1
No	2

45. How often do you visit your family (if you do not live with them)?

Daily	1
Weekly	2
Monthly	3
Four times a year	4
Twice a year	5
Once a year	6
Other Specify.....	7
Refused to answer	8

46. How often do you take/send money home?

Each week	1
Each month	2
Four times a year	3
Twice a year	4
Once a year	5
No money to take/send home	6

HOUSING

***Fieldworker: do not read the list. Tick according to the responses of the respondent.**

47. In what type of structure do you usually sleep?

Construction Site	1
Backyard room with sleep-in domestic worker	2
Backyard room	3
Veld/bushes	4
On the street	5
Backyard shack	6
Shack	7
Hostel/shelter	8
House (bricks/reeds etc.)	9
Place of work	10

Other Specify.....	11
--------------------	----

48. Where is this place situated?.....

49. How much per month do you pay to sleep at this place?

Nothing	1
R 1.00 – R49.00	2
R50.00-R99.00	3
R100.00-199.00	4
R200.00-299.00	5
More than R300.00	6

HIRING SITE

Interviewer: Explain that this set of questions concerns the hiring site at which the respondent chooses to stand.

50. In which year did you start standing as a day labourer?

51. How many years and months in TOTAL have you worked as a day labourer?

Years.....

Months.....



***Fieldworker: we want to get an idea of the movement of the day labourer**

52. What motivated you to move to this site?

This is a bigger place	1
I wanted to be closer to my family	2
Someone told me there are better opportunities here	3
Other Specify.....	4

53. Are the job opportunities at this site better, worse, or about as good as you expected?

BETTER	1
WORSE THAN EXPECTED	2
AS GOOD AS EXPECTED	3

54. If the answer is **worse** or **the same** why is he/she still here?

.....

* **Fieldworker:** In the next question try to obtain a single time, e.g. 5:00, and not a time range.

55. At what time in the morning do you usually **leave** the place where you sleep/live to come to this site to look for work?

	AM	PM
--	----	----

56. At what time in the morning do you usually **arrive** at this hiring site?

	AM	PM
--	----	----

57. At what time do you usually leave this site if you did not obtain work for the day?

	AM	PM
--	----	----

58. Where do you obtain water while you stand here?.....

59. Where do you obtain food while you stand at the hiring site?.....

60. Does any person/group/organisation provide food to the day labourers?

Yes	No
1	2

61. If yes, who and how often?.....

62. Where do you go if you need a toilet?.....

63. Where do you wash yourself?.....

64. Where do you wash your clothes?.....

FOOD

The next questions concern the food which the respondents have eaten during the previous week.

65. How many times during the last month was there ever no food to eat of any kind in your house owing to a lack of financial resources to buy food?

.....

66. How many times during the last month did anyone in your house go to bed hungry because there was not enough food?

.....

67. How many times during the last month did anyone in your house go for a whole day and night without eating anything at all because there was no food?

.....

TREATMENT BY THE POLICE

68. How do the police and/or metropolitan police treat you?

.....

69. How does the general public treat you?

.....

70. How do employers treat you?

.....



RELATIONSHIPS AND SOCIAL NETWORKS.

Interviewer: Explain that the following questions concern the social relationships of day labourers and the activities in which they engage to provide support to one another.

71. Are you a member of a group of day labourers who support one another?

Yes	1
No	2

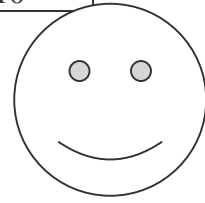
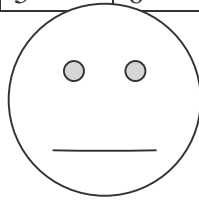
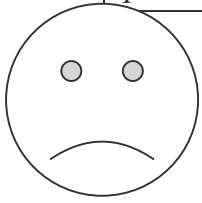
72. In which ways do you help one another?

Mark all applicable

Finding work	1
Transport/obtaining lifts	2
Loans	3
Food	4
Shelter/sleeping quarters/housing	5
Care during illness	6
Other Specify.....	7

73. On a scale of from 1 to 10 (10 being very happy and 1 very unhappy), how happy are you with your life at the moment?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----



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WESTERN CAPE

ANNEXURE B: INTERVIEW GUIDE

- What types of hardships do you encounter while you wait for work at the hiring site?
- What types of hardships do you encounter while you are working?
- What types of difficulties do you experience in supporting those who are dependent on you?
- Which methods do you use to cope during bad days?



ANNEXURE C: INFORMATION SHEET FOR PROSPECTIVE PARTICIPANTS



UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE

Private Bag X 17, Bellville 7535, South Africa

Tel: +27 21 959 900, Fax: 27 21 959 5901

E-mail: admissions@uwc.ac.za

INFORMATION SHEET FOR PROSPECTIVE PARTICIPANTS

Project title: Hardships encountered and lived experiences of day labourers in East London

What is the purpose of this study?

This research project takes the form of a study which is to be conducted by Mr Mzukisi Xweso from the University of the Western Cape. We are inviting you to participate in the project because it concerns the day labour work which you perform every day. Its purpose is to investigate the hardships which day labourers in East London encounter and their lived experiences and also to obtain an overall understanding of the local informal labour market.

What will I be asked to do if I agree to participate?

You will be asked to answer questions concerning your work and experiences as day labourers. The researcher intends to interview day labourers who have been working as day labourers for 6 months or more. The interviews will take from 45 minutes to 1 hour. If you agree to be interviewed, please sign the consent form which is provided. By signing the form, you will have indicated that you consented voluntarily to participate in the project and the publication of the findings of the study, upon the understanding that your anonymity will be preserved.

Would my participation in this study be kept confidential?

The researcher undertakes to protect your identity and the content of your contribution. To ensure your anonymity, your responses will not be identified with you personally in any way. To ensure security, the audio tapes on which the interviews are recorded will be kept in a secure place. They will be destroyed after written transcriptions of the interviews have been made. The resulting data will be stored electronically in a database on a secured server, to which access will be restricted by means of a password

Does this research study entail risks?

Although participating in any research study can entail potential risks, we shall take all reasonable measures to minimise them. As the interviews will be conducted out of doors at street corners, they could be disrupted by unfavourable weather conditions. In the event of bad weather, the researcher will terminate interviews and reschedule them for the following day. If you do not wish to answer any questions which are put to you during the the interviews, you would be within your rights to decline to do so. In the event of the interviews causing you any discomfort or psychological or emotional distress, professional counselling would be made available to you at the Inkwenkwezi Centre, an NGO in East London. The therapists who are employed by the NGO are professionally trained to assist in cases of potential psychological harm and distress and they are fluent in both isiXhosa and English.

What are the potential benefits of this research study?

The potential benefits to you include an increased awareness of the conditions under which day labourers work in East London at present and the implementation of appropriate interventions to improve them. Please note that you will not receive monetary compensation or personal credits of any sort as a result of agreeing to participate in the study. Although the conducting of the study will not provide you with any immediate personal benefits, the findings will be used to make recommendations which could assist community practitioners, labour representatives, and local municipalities to improve expanded public works programmes and make them more inclusive than they are at present.

Am I obliged to participate in this research study and can I withdraw my participation at any time?

Your participation in this research study would be completely voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you decide to participate, you may withdraw at any time, without incurring any penalties whatsoever or losing any benefits to which you are entitled.

What if I have questions?

This research is being conducted by Mzukisi Xweso, a candidate for a Master's degree at the Faculty of Community and Health Sciences at the University of the Western Cape. If you have any questions concerning the research study itself, please contact Mzukisi Xweso @ 0788116767 and/ or email 3717729@myuc.ac.za

Should you have any questions regarding this study and your rights as a research participant or if you wish to report any problems which you have experienced in connection with the study, please contact:

Prof Catherina Schenck

University of the Western Cape

Private Bag X17

Bellville 7535

cschenck@uwc.ac.za

Prof Anthea Rhoda

Dean of the Faculty of Community and Health Sciences

University of the Western Cape

Private Bag X17

Bellville 7535

chs-deansoffice@uwc.ac.za



ANNEXURE D: CONSENT FORM TO BE SIGNED BY PARTICIPANTS



UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE

Private Bag X 17, Bellville 7535, South Africa

Tel: +27 21 959 900, Fax: 27 21 959 5901

E-mail: admissions@uwc.ac.za

CONSENT FORM

Title of research project: The lived experiences of and hardships encountered by day labourers in East London

The nature of the study has been explained to me in language which I understand. My questions concerning the study have been answered. I understand what my participation will entail and I agree to participate of my own choice and free will. I understand that my identity will not be disclosed to anyone. I understand that I may withdraw from the study at any time without providing a reason for doing so and without fear of negative consequences or loss of benefits.

Participant's name.....

Participant's signature.....

Date.....