The Influence of Clientelism on the Informal Sector in Zimbabwe: A Case Study of Glen View 8 Complex, Harare

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ACRONYMS

AAG-Affirmative Action Group

ACR-Africa Consolidated Resources

ANC-African National Congress

BAZ-Bankers Association of Zimbabwe

BSAC-British South African Company

CABS-Central African Building Society

CFU-Commercial Farmers Union

CSC-Cold Storage Commission

CZI-Confederation of Zimbabwe industries

DPO-District Police Officer

DRC-Democratic Republic of Congo

ECOCASH- Econet Cash

ESAP-Economic Structural Adjustment Programme

FDI-Foreign Direct Investments

FTLRP-Fast Track Land Reform Programme

GDP-Gross Domestic Product

GMB -Grain Marketing Board

GNU-Government of National Unity

GOZ-Government of Zimbabwe

HRA-Harare Residents Association

IBDC-Indigenous Business Development Centre

IEEP-Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Policy

ILO-International Labour Organisation

IMF-International Monetary Fund

ISA-Informal Sector Association

ISO-Informal sector Operators

MDC-T-Movement for Democratic Change -Tsvangirai

MDC-M-Movement for Democratic Change-Mutambara

MERP- Millennium Economic Recovery Programme

MSME-Micro-, Small- and Medium- Enterprises

NERP -National Economic Revival Programme

NRZ -National Railways of Zimbabwe

PTC-Post Telecommunication Corporation

SDF-Social Development Fund

SADC-Southern African Development Community

SI-Statutory Instrument

SAPS-Structural Adjustment Program

SMEs- Small to Medium Enterprises

SEDCO-Small Enterprises Development Corporation

STERP 1- Short Term Economic Recovery Programme

STERP 11-Short Term Economic Recovery Programme

UTG -United Transport Group

UN-United Nations

UNDP-United Nations Development Programme

UDI-Unilateral Declaration of Independence

UK-United Kingdom

UN-HABITAT-United Nations

USAID-United States of America Institute of Development

WB-World Bank

ZANU-PF-Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front

ZIMASSET-Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation

ZIMPREST- Zimbabwe Programme for Economic and Social Transformation

ZUPCO-Zimbabwe United Passenger Company

ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the influence of clientelism in the informal sector of Zimbabwe in Glen View 8 (Complex). The study used the case of Glen view 8 (complex) in Harare Province. The study focused on political dynamics in the informal sector; livelihood strategies employed by informal sector operators; manifestation of "Big Men", social networks in the informal sector; and different strategies employed by operators to overcome the problems of political manipulation, clientelism and patronage. It employs a qualitative research methodology to enable a nuanced comprehension of the clientelistic relationships that take place in the informal sector of Zimbabwe. Through in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, narratives and in-depth interviews with key informants, the study explored the clientelistic nature of the informal sector. The major findings of the study are that the informal sector in Zimbabwe is influenced by political patronage. It was established that patronage influences the informal sector in Zimbabwe in general and at Glen View Complex 8 in particular. Some of the operators revealed that patronage negatively affects their business as they are sometimes forced to attend political party meetings either at the complex or at ZANU-PF star rallies in town. The operators experience a plethora of problems such as lack of security, poor sanitation, stiff competition, poor infrastructure, lack of insurance and fire outbreaks. It has been revealed that most of the problems experienced at the complex are a result of the politicisation of the informal sector particularly by the ZANU-PF party. Operators at the complex have described the politicisation of the informal sector as a major drawback to their efforts of realising maximum benefits from their work. Therefore, the thrust of this thesis is premised on the de-politicisation of the informal sector as the starting point in the transformation of the activities of the operators.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCING AND CONTEXTUALISING THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

The central focus of this thesis is to explore the influence of clientelism in the informal sector in Zimbabwe. The study was conducted at Glen View Complex 8 which is regarded as the hub of the informal sector in Zimbabwe. Urban space has become a contested terrain for different informal operators and politics has been at the centre of informal sector administration. This study was informed by a qualitative methodology as it attempted to extract rich and thick data on clientelism on the informal sector in Zimbabwe. It follows that in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and in-depth interviews with key informants were conducted to answer the research questions and objectives. I had a total sample size of 34 participants in this study. Non-probability sampling techniques such as purposive and snowball sampling were used to select the target population. Since this was a qualitative study the sample size was small to avoid situations of reaching the saturation point of data. I managed to extract detailed data that adequately addressed my research questions and objectives.

The study explored the political dynamics surrounding the informal sector of Zimbabwe. It follows that the de-politicisation of the informal sector could be a good starting point for operators to realise their full potential. The political thuggery by the ZANU-PF officials at the complex should be condemned as this negatively affects the production process at the complex. Therefore, de-politicisation of the informal sector is considered as the starting point if the country is to realise a meaningful contribution by the operators to the economy. The study was informed by the Big Man concept and social networks theory. There are

established social networks that are capitalised by the Big Men and their clients in their interactional processes at the complex.

1.2 Background of the Study

This thesis focuses on the influence of the political dynamics in the informal sector of Zimbabwe. The research for this thesis was conducted in Harare, at the Glenview 8 (Complex). Informal sector operators from all walks of life converge at this place, conducting business ranging from carpentry, welding and selling different types of furniture. Since 1980, the informal sector in Zimbabwe has taken many forms as the informal sector players have been forced to adjust in order to evade the restrictions, evictions, and by-laws imposed on their operations. Ndiweni and Verhoeven (2013) estimate that at independence, only a paltry 10% of the workers in Zimbabwe were employed in the informal sector but the number doubled to 20% in 1986-87 and 27 % in 1991, reaching 40% in 2004. They further argue that by June 2005, roughly 3 million people out of a population of 11 million depended on the informal economy for their livelihood. The above scholars attribute informal sector growth in Zimbabwe to post- independence populist government economic policies which resulted in rising unemployment and inflation. The informal sector is now the source of livelihood for the majority of the urban population in Zimbabwe in general, and in Harare in particular (Tandire et.al, 2012). According to an International Monetary Fund study (2018), Zimbabwe has the second largest informal economy in the world. It stands at above 60 % and Bolivia is at number one with 62.3%. The formal sector has been shrinking at unprecedented levels due to a myriad of factors, such as mismanagement of the economy; ill-advised macro-economic policies and corruption (Kanyenze, 2013).

The voluminous research on the informal sector such as Dhemba, (1999), Paradza, (1999) and Brown et al., (2010) has centred on analysing the urban informal sector as an economic entity, yet little is known about the political dynamics within the sector or about the politics of its external relationships with the government and established political parties. It may be sufficient to say not too much is known about the nature of citizen-politician linkages in the informal sector, which in essence, have a strong bearing in giving it shape and direction. This thesis examines strategies that can give the informal sector a new path of growth considering

that it is now the only promising sector in Zimbabwe's economic recovery since the decline of the formal sector. The informal sector now surpasses the formal sector in terms of job creation and actual production (Chimhou et al., 2010). It is worth noting that the informal sector produces goods that remain affordable to the majority of the population, particularly those in urban areas. In this thesis, the researcher does not argue about whether or not the sector is morally pure in terms of its operations or whether or not the sector is not home to 'sweat shops' which exploit workers. Rather, the concern is to focus on the influence of clientelism in informal sector development in Zimbabwe.

1.3 Problem Statement

Clientelism is influencing the informal sector in Zimbabwe yet very little has been done to probe the political dynamics that undermine the operators' activities. Brown et al., (2010) have focused on analysing the urban informal sector as an economic entity, yet little is known about the political dynamics within the sector or about the politics of its external relationships with the government and established political parties. Insight gained from such a study would be useful for the public in that efforts will be made to get rid of this problem and ensure that the sector becomes productive as it is a source of livelihood for the majority of the people in urban areas. De-politicisation of the informal sector is considered as the starting point if the country is to realize a significant contribution of the operators to the national economy. There should be non-partisan allocation of space at all informal sector sites in Zimbabwe.

1.4 This thesis is anchored on the following objectives:

1.4.1 Main Objective

The main goal of this thesis is to explore the nature of clientelism and its influence in the informal sector of Zimbabwe.

1.4.2 Secondary Objectives

These include to:

1) Assess the livelihood strategies employed by informal sector operators in Harare;

2) Examine the nature of political dynamics shaping the informal sector;

3) Identify and explain the manifestation of "Big Men" and social networks in the informal sector; and

4) Analyse different strategies to overcome the problems experienced by informal sector operators as a result of political manipulation, clientelism and patronage.

1.5 Conceptualisation of Terms

The key concepts in this thesis are clientelism and informal sector. I start by explaining clientelism and in chapter two the informal sector is conceptualised. Some scholars use patronage and clientelism as interchangeable terms (Kitschelt et al., 2007), whereas others argue that "clientelism is a much broader phenomenon than patronage, with patronage simply one specific type of clientelistic exchange" perhaps restricted to "the use of resources and benefits that flow from public office" (Hicken, 2011:295). Rogers (2009) posits that informality encourages clientelism. He further argues that clientelistic politics manifests itself through large and inefficient bureaucracies which are characterised by corruption. Corruption is simply defined as abuse of public power for private benefit and takes various forms. Corruption can be thought of as a proxy variable of clientelistic politics (Rojas, 2009). However, it is important to clarify that not all corrupt acts are connected to clientelism. Roniger (2003:20) notes that clientelism threatens informal sector development "through sliding into what could be defined as 'systemic corruption' crippling institutional trust and public confidence in the political system and in projects that otherwise could empower

citizens". Stokes (2007) indicates that much theoretical work and empirical research on clientelism remains to be done in the area of informal sector development.

In addition, clientelism refers to an electoral political strategy whereby a candidate or party offers a reward to an individual voter in exchange for his or her electoral support. For Robinson et al. (2003: 29) clientelism is "a style of redistributive politics". They further note that clientelism tends to be worse in situations where productivity is low and patronage is attractive to poor agents. This exchange is direct and based on benefits such as provision of land, jobs and services to loyalists. Clientelism includes practices such as patronage, vote buying, deliberate omission of law enforcement among others. It is a self-enforced two-sided relationship in which both parties make a cost-benefit analysis when entering into the exchange. Patron and client obtain a reward in the voluntary exchange process. However, problems of commitment are at the heart of the relationship since both the patron and client could find it beneficial to renege on their promises. Clientelism is pervasive in poor countries suggesting that this two-sided relationship is more likely to occur with asymmetrical exchanges (Robinson et al., 2003).

In this thesis I employ the Big Man concept and transactional theory to explain the influence of clientelism in informal sector development. Following Utas (2009), the terms Big Man and network are preferred to patron-client relations or neo-patrimonialism, which are concepts often used to describe aspects of the African political culture. However, in this thesis, these concepts are used to explain clientelism in the informal sector in Zimbabwe. Jorgel et al., (2007: 13) explain the Big Man and network concepts as "relational concepts facilitating fluid descriptions of social settings". The Big Men constitute nodes in the networks. Clients in these networks belong to different networks and therefore have several Big Men, who in

turn have their own Big Men. The Big Men dominate other networks because of their privileged access to resources (Utas, 2009).

In urban areas, urban space and capital are the resources that the Big Men distribute to clients. Clients are informal sector operators. Both Big Men and followers thus have reciprocal obligations to each other. The Big Men have to channel resources to their followers and in return, followers are to be loyal and to perform demanded services for the Big Men (Jorgel and Utas, 2007). The Big Men have the ability to command and to instigate mass action, but this is based on the Big Man's ability to create a following and, to a large extent, dependent on his informal abilities to assist people privately. The building of power is based on amassing wealth and redistributing it with 'astutely calculated generosity' (Godelier 1986: 163).

As noted above, the Big Man concept is rooted in the transactional theory where the relationship between patrons and clients is revealed. Simone (2004b: 42), defines networks as systems of both 'politics and resource provision'. Social networking was used to explain the patron-client relationship in the informal sector (Jorgel et al., 2007). Bailey (1988), in his transactional theory, argues that leaders of political parties are partisan, and this is a quality that is necessary to command devotion from subordinates. By virtue of this, a leader of a political party has to control his or her followers. The leader deploys and redeploys resources: material and moral, that is, by rewards and by propagating an ideology in-order to strike a credit balance with his/her followers. This enables a leader to recruit and maintain allegiance of his/her political supporters. Social life is a transaction where people calculate the cost and benefit before taking any course of action. This theory compliments the Big Man concept in explaining the strategies that are used by politicians to gain allegiance in the informal sector

in Zimbabwe. In light of the above, politicisation of the informal sector in Zimbabwe is considered as a big problem and de-politicisation of the sector is proposed as a panacea.

1.6 Thesis Structure

Chapter One

This Chapter states the central focus of the thesis and the justification for conducting the study. The Chapter gives the context as well as the background of the thesis. The research problem, questions, objectives and key terms were explained.

Chapter Two

In this chapter I provide definitions of the informal sector and go on to focus on the dynamics of the informal sector in Africa. In doing this, I also look at the development of the informal sector during the colonial and post post-colonial era in African countries. Lastly, I focus on the relationship between the informal sector and the Big Man syndrome.

Chapter Three

In this chapter, I track the development of the informal sector in Zimbabwe from the colonial era to post-independent Zimbabwe. I explore the factors that led to the development of the informal sector in Zimbabwe that is from the colonial and post-colonial era. In analysing the evolution of the informal sector, I focus on the socio-political, legal and economic contexts in which it thrived.

Chapter Four

In this chapter I unpack the role of the Big Man concept in explaining the Zimbabwean informal sector. The Big Man concept borrows a lot from the transactional theory. There are strong linkages between the Big Man concept and social networks and, as such, the two were employed in explaining the relationship of the informal sector operators at Glenview Complex. The Big Man concept is embedded in the social network theory. Social networks are one of the key components of the big man concept as explored in this chapter.

Chapter Five

In this chapter, I trace the history of patronage in Africa. Patronage has been explored in Africa in countries such as Tanzania, Nigeria and Zimbabwe. It has been noted that even in Zimbabwe patrimonialism has been a common phenomenon in both the formal and informal sector. Patronage and clientelism are used as synonymous terms in this thesis. I traced this phenomenon of patronage from independence to the year 2000 and beyond in Zimbabwe.

Chapter Six

In this chapter I briefly explain the study site, Glenview Complex 8, which is regarded as the hub of the informal activities in Zimbabwe. The map of the complex is also provided. The thesis employs a qualitative methodology. In line with this methodology, qualitative research methods such as in-depth interviews and focus group discussions were used in gathering data on the influence of clientelism in the informal sector of Zimbabwe. I also used purposive and snowball sampling techniques in selecting the research respondents. All ethical considerations were observed through-out the research process. As I was collecting data, I also captured all the methodological challenges I encountered. I also explain the measures that I employed to navigate the challenges.

Chapter Seven

In this chapter I explore the livelihood strategies that are employed by operators in Zimbabwe in general and at Glen View 8 Complex in particular. I look at the nature of businesses performed by informal operators at the complex. I also look at the types of premises in which operators conduct their business and the factors that lead them to choose their areas of specialisation. I tracked the operators work history before they started their own businesses at the complex. The problems that affect the informal sector operators are also unpacked.

Chapter Eight

In this chapter I presented and analysed the findings on the political dynamics in the informal sector. Thereafter, I looked at the role of the government in informal sector activities. As the chapter progresses, I looked at the implications of party politics on informal sector operations at the complex. The complex as a ZANU-PF project is controlled by a management committee who are alleged to be aligned to the party. The distribution of the stalls has been noted to be biased in favour of ZANU-PF sympathisers and those who are anti-ZANU-PF risk losing their stalls. However, it has been noted that there are some who pretend to be ZANU-PF cadres as a strategy to access stalls but in their heart, they belong to other opposition political parties. The findings are discussed in the context of the existing literature and conceptual framework.

Chapter Nine

In this chapter I explore the manifestation of 'Big Men' and Social networks in the Informal Sector. The Big Men have been identified as ZANU-PF politicians who are responsible for the management of the complex at Glenview. They are the 'patrons' as they control and distribute the stalls and land to the 'clients', that is, the carpenters or informal operators. The

relationship that exists between these actors will be explained so as to understand the working dynamics that take place at the complex. This chapter also, focuses on the composition and the functions of the big men and their relationship with other party members at national level where they have to pay allegiance.

Chapter 10

Conclusion

In this chapter, I provide the conclusion to the thesis. The informal sector in Zimbabwe is influenced by party politics. Several informal operators use their political connections to secure working space at the complex. The Big Men 'mashefu' 'Big Men' use their political capital to distribute land to their 'clients'. In this study the ZANU-PF supporters were found to be the beneficiaries of space at the Glenview complex. The carpenters who are anti-ZANU-PF are restricted from accessing space at the complex. Work at the complex is sustained through the manipulation of the entrenched social networks that exist between the patrons and the clients. These relationships should be voluntary but there is the use of coercion by the patrons to wield political support. However, data has revealed that use of intimidation has not yielded results to the ZANU-PF Big Men as the political party have been losing elections in the Constituency since 2000 to the opposition party MDC.

CHAPTER 2: THE INFORMAL SECTOR IN AFRICA

2.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I introduced the major focus of the thesis and the context in which it is rooted. Attention was also given to the key concepts that underpin this thesis and they were defined. The objectives of the thesis were also highlighted and lastly the structure of the thesis was provided from the first chapter up to the last chapter. In this chapter, I provide definitions of the informal sector and go on to focus on the dynamics of the informal sector in Africa. In doing this, I also look at the development of the informal sector during the colonial and post-colonial era in African countries.

2.2 Conceptualising the informal sector

The informal sector has generated employment opportunities for the majority of the people. It directly employs an estimated 3-4 million people while the formal sector accounts for about 1.3 million people (Tibaijuka, 2005 and Coltart, 2008). The definition of the informal sector varies from time to time from scholar to scholar as will be shown below.

The concept of the informal sector was first coined in an International Labour Organisation (ILO) study of urban markets in Ghana (Hart, 1973). In this study the informal sector includes those enterprises and activities that may not comply with standard business practices, taxation, regulation and business reporting requirements but are otherwise not engaged in overtly criminal activity. Therefore, various labels have been used by scholars to refer to the informal sector or economy. It has been called the irregular economy (Ferman and Ferman, 1973), the underground economy (Simon and Witte, 1982) and the black economy (Dilnot and Morris, 1981). Moser (1978) views the informal sector as a homogenous form of "petty commodity production". However, Brand (1986) seems to differ with Mosers' (1978)

definition in that in his conceptualisation of the informal sector there is an appreciation of the existence of differentiation mainly linked to gender, between operators in different branches.

The informal economy cuts across different occupations: primary, secondary and tertiary, but in all cases, working conditions of labour are harsh (Potts, 2007). The distinction between the formal and informal economy is not always sharp, since the two complement each other. Some people may work in both sectors at the same time or different times (Tragers, 1987). Some scholars such as Maliyamkono et al., (1990) refer to the informal sector as the second economy. The impression that one gets from this definition is that there is a first economy. One may argue that the second economy is not that important compared to the first economy. On the other hand, one may also argue that the fact that the informal sector is treated as the second economy may imply that it is there to complement the first economy. Castells and Portes (1989) conceptualise the informal sector as a single "underground economy" pushed out of regulation by the adoption of sub-contracting processes on a mass scale. The fact that this sector is treated as an underground economy implies that it is associated with social vices or sinister dealings. Therefore, this makes it impossible for the operators to regularise their activities. Paradza (1999) defines informal sector operators (ISO) as all enterprises not registered under the Companies Act or the Cooperatives Act and those which are not accessed for taxation by central government. Legally speaking, no tax payments are made to the local authorities by the informal sector (The Independent Paper, 2017). However, in the context of Zimbabwe, the government has been putting mechanisms in place to expand their tax base. So far, the 2% tax for every transaction has affected everyone including the informal sector operators and, in a way, they are now paying tax to the government.

The urban informal sector, despite its title of a "sector", is not limited to any one type of activity, such as petty trading, but covers a heterogeneous set of activities, including repair work, light manufacturing, transport services and house building, undertaken by an equally heterogeneous set of actors (Sethuraman, 1983). The only commonality among these diverse activities is that, in the urban informal sector context, they are not legally established and hence are not subject to state regulation. Some vilify the informal sector, charging that there are illegal activities such as drug dealing, selling of stolen goods, gambling, smuggling, poor working conditions, lack of social protection and tax evasion that occur therein (Smith, 1994, Luebker, 2008). The vilification to some extent is justified as this is the nature of the problems that are experienced by the informal sector operators. However, apart from these problems, others see the potential of the informal sector to provide employment and incomes to millions of people who lack the means of survival (Hansenne, 1991; Chirisa, 2009). However, this thesis is not concerned with the positive and negative side of this sector but attempts to understand and explain the influence of clientelism on the informal sector in Zimbabwe.

Perera (1992) argues that the informal sector literature has been dominated by two views. One view sees the sector as a refuge of the unemployed. The second view sees the sector as a dynamic, fringe sector which is buoyant, adaptable and even enjoys certain advantages which the formal sector lacks (Perera, 1992). In this case, the major advantage is that of not paying tax to either the central government or the local authorities. However, from another angle, this perceived advantage exposes the informal sector to the state's restrictive policies that thwart its growth. From the above definitions, there seems to be an agreement on the difficult working conditions in the informal sector such as lack of social protection for the workers, poor sanitation and harassment from law enforcers. However, the government should

consider the fact that, given an option, no one wants to eke out a living through informal means but through formal means. There is high dignity and security for people who work in the formal sector as they have access to benefits such as medical aid, funeral policies, bonuses, pensions and protection by the labour laws. Informal sector operators enjoy none of the aforementioned benefits. They live a life of uncertainty as they are exposed to harassment by law enforcement agencies as they ply their trade in undesignated places. All this is perceived as an impediment to the growth of the informal sector.

Hansenne, (1991:1) succinctly points out that there are many different viewpoints from which one can observe the informal sector. It can be viewed in a positive way as a provider of employment and incomes to millions of people who would otherwise lack the means of survival. It can, however, be viewed more negatively as a whole segment of society that escaped regulation and protection. It can be romanticised as a breeding ground of entrepreneurship which could flourish if only it were not encumbered with a network of unnecessary regulation and bureaucracy. It can also be condemned as a vast sea of backwardness, poverty, crime and unsanitary conditions. Or, it can be simply ignored. Despite these various negative views and attitudes on the informal sector, it is playing a pivotal role in the mainstream economy of mostly developing African countries as it generates employment opportunities as has been alluded to.

Contrary, to Hansenne (1991), Rogerson (1995) posits that there are two distinct types of informal enterprises. The first, are those survivalist enterprises and these are dominated by people who are unable to secure regular wage employment. These people also get meagre earnings and the majority of these survivalist informal enterprises are run by women. They are characterised by little capital investment, no skills training and constrained opportunities

for expansion into a viable business. The second category consists of micro-enterprises which are very small businesses, with a few workers between one to four paid employees excluding the owner, and some immediate family members. The second category of informal enterprises differs from the survivalist informal enterprises in that they have the potential to flourish into large-scale formal business enterprises. The two strands are important if one is to understand the informal sector and of much interest is the fact that people are making a living through their participation in this sector.

The labour market has been changing so rapidly that the 1993 ILO definition of the informal sector has been gradually overtaken by a broader concept of the informal economy (ILO 2002a). In this new approach, the informal economy comprises informal employment (without secure contracts, worker benefits, or social protection). This concurs with Stallings and Peres (2000) who defined the informal sector as the sector of the economy that does not comply with labour market legislation and does not provide worker benefits. These definitions seem to expose the problems experienced by informal workers. However, in African developing economies, even people in the formal sector are experiencing the same difficult working conditions. Therefore, what matters most is the fact that at least the informal sector has proved beyond doubt that it is a major source of livelihood to millions of people who were pushed out of the formal sector through retrenchments at a time some African countries experienced economic recession in their backyards.

Following De Soto's (1989) research in Kenya, the conceptualisation of the informal sector took on a new dimension. It can be noted that the legal status was the basis of distinguishing informal from formal activities following De Soto's research. The informal sector is virtually ignored by the formal body of laws and regulation. It suggests, thus, that the deregulation of

the market and the greatly reduced state intervention in informal sector activities are key issues. De Soto concurs with Brand in that he believes that the aspect of differentiation in the informal sector is widespread. The two scholars move away from Moser's definition that overemphasises the homogenous character of the informal sector. Therefore, for ILO, (1972), informality is largely characterised by the avoidance of government regulations and taxes. The ILO (1972) considered the chief aim of the informal sector to be the provision of livelihood to families. Papola (1981:20) argues that, there is no such unique and universal criterion upon whose basis the informal sector can be defined. He notes that the following could be taken as characteristics commonly observed in the informal sector:

a) Small size of operation,

b) Informal structure and family ownership,

c) Non-modern technology,

d) Lack of access to government favours,

e) Competition and protected product market and

f) Unprotected labour market.

Papola' s (1981) definition follows that of Moser (1978:30) which viewed the informal sector as a homogeneous phenomenon. However, it should be noted that these characteristics are not consistent with each other or universally applicable in different empirical settings. Even if these characteristics can be critiqued, they still stand the test of time for those who want to understand the dynamics of the informal sector. It has been noted that many scholars, as explained earlier, and the International Labour Organisation define the informal sector in various ways; some view it as an underground economy characterised with unregulated activities by the state. However, this study uses the legalistic definition of the informal sector where it is perceived not to be regulated by the state since the participants do not pay taxes.

Of much interest is the fact that in the context of Zimbabwe, the state institutions such as the Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises try as much as possible to interfere with the affairs of this unregulated economy yet very little if not nothing in the form of taxes is being obtained by them. In this case, in as much as the informal sector is not legitimately recognised by the state, there seems to be an appreciation of its employment generation capacity, since it is the major employer in Zimbabwe. In Africa, as a whole, the informal sector cannot be overlooked since it has become a widespread phenomenon.

2.3 The informal Sector in Africa

Informal sector activities are prevalent in most African countries. As Bhalla (1998) shows, in East African Countries such as Tanzania and Kenya, small scale businesses operate at a low level of technological development and innovation and they tend to use traditional technologies that need improvement and replacement. This is also the case with informal sector operators in most African countries.

2.3.1 Impact of Restrictive Regulations on the African Informal Sector

Despite the ingenuity exhibited in creating jobs in the informal sector, the institutional framework for informal activities in most African states has generally been hostile. It should be noted that most policies, by-laws, and regulations in most African states have been inimical to the sustainable growth of the informal sector (Mutillah, 2005). Out-dated restrictive policies, by-laws and regulations originally intended to control and regulate the growth of indigenous enterprises are in place in most African states (Mutillah, 2005 Shinder, 1997, Ndoro, 1996, Mhone, 1996, Dhemba, 1991, Mupedziswa, 1991). Informal sector activities such as vending are rendered illegal, and most activities are seen as responsible for making cities dirty, obstructing traffic and therefore a public nuisance. Most post-colonial

cities in Africa placed the obligation for informal sector activities in wrong departments, with many of them managing street traders through the Traffic and Enforcement Departments (Mutillah, 2005). Mutillah (2005) notes that this has created a situation whereby informal sector activities such as vending are viewed as a problem that has to be controlled rather than as productive units that contribute to the urban economy's expansion.

It has been noted that, where regulation is particularly burdensome, levels of informality are higher (World Bank, 2009). Sub-Saharan Africa ranks highest in the number of procedures and days required to establish a new business. The World Bank (2009) notes that, of all the world's regions, sub-Saharan Africa ranks last on the World Bank's Most Friendly Business Regulations list and this has been the impetus behind high levels of informality. The World Bank (2009) notes that, the sub-Saharan region lags far behind the rest of the world in providing a business-friendly enabling environment. However, a number of African countries such as South Africa and Zimbabwe have recently made strides in enacting more friendly business regulations. In Zimbabwe, it now takes 13 days to register a company compared to the previous 90 days. In South Africa, it takes less than 10 days to register a company. Rwanda is in the leading position and it takes only 3 days to register a company. Therefore, the World Bank assessment confirms that these restrictions on registration of businesses have contributed to the growth of the informal sector.

There has been relaxation of policies in South Africa to promote the informal sector. South Africa has introduced processes that have the potential to improve the informal sector, through providing services to communities and promoting economic and social development. In South Africa, avenues aimed at creating an enabling environment for small informal economic activities at Local Provincial and National Levels, were put in place. The Business

Act of 1991 in South Africa acknowledges the fact that the informal sector contributes to the mainstream economy. The Act creates ample room intended for informal sector activities such as vending to flourish and only gives the local government the powers of regulating but not criminalising petty trading among other informal sector activities. The route that was taken by the South African government should be emulated by other African countries if the informal sector is to thrive in their backyards.

In Ghana, the inability of urban authorities to craft vibrant and reliable policies and regulations has been inhibiting the effective development of the informal sector. In such a poorly organised environment, women informal sector players in Ghana end up offering sexual favours to law enforcement officers in order to continue operating (Mutillah, 2005).
In addition, in Ghana the state has been accused of using what was called the "machoistic" approach when dealing with workers in the informal economy (Mensah, 2009). Here, the state employs an aggressive, combative and impulsive stance against workers in the informal economy. The stalls of street traders with valuable wares were burnt and the traders evicted using brutal force (Mayson, 2009). The local authority is even harsh on its treatment of the workers in the informal economy (Ellison, 2002). The government actions had turned informal traders into "refugees in their own country" (Essel, 2009). The informal workers are accused of making the cities ugly and causing congestion. Therefore, these attacks are aimed at "beautifying" the city (Devas et al., 2000).

In the face of these challenges, victims of forced evictions in Ghana used various strategies including demonstrations to register their displeasure to the government. The market women and youths sometimes threw stones at the demolition team (Danso, 2009). The informal traders justify their violent actions basing them on the argument that the government should

provide alternative jobs so that they could leave the streets (Gadugah, 2006). They also accuse the city authorities of taking bribes and confiscating their assets illegally and they are frustrated by that "thuggery" (Daabu, 2009). Despite these problems, many people in the informal economy in Ghana carry out the indispensable task of keeping the wheels of urban economic growth turning through the provision of food, labour and market for activities in the more formal sectors of the city economy (UN-HABITAT, 2003). Interestingly, unlikely interdependence between these two sectors is exhibited. In addition, the Ministry of Employment and Social Welfare has noted that the informal economy contributes about 40 per cent of national income in Ghana (Ghana News Agency, 2010).

Policies and regulations seem not to be appropriate for the flourishing and recognition of informal sector activities in African countries such as Kenya, Uganda, Ghana, Zimbabwe and Cote D'Ivoire (Mutillah, 2005). Mutillah (2005), notes that informal sector players in these countries are ignorant of the by-laws applicable to their operations. In these countries, the lack of active associations aimed at exposing informal sector players such as vendors to policies and regulations and agitating for the review of policies, by-laws and integration of the informal sector activities in urban development is making the situation of the informal sector even worse. In the aforementioned countries, most informal sector players view the policies as incongruous; informal sector players complain about expensive daily charges, poor and insecure working locations, inappropriate hours of business, poor locations for business, constant harassment, confiscation and loss of goods by urban authorities and poor enforcement approaches by urban authorities (Mutillah, 2005). Ineffective communication between informal sector players and urban authorities, favouritism, nepotism and corrupt practices are some of the factors inimical to the flourishing of the informal sector in most African countries.

Moreover, licensing is the chief problem contributing to poor relations between informal sector players and the authorities in Kenya. This is despite the fact that the country has one of the largest informal sectors in East Africa (Hart, 1973). Though informal sector players are recognised in Kenya, according to Mutillah (2005) most informal sector players in Kenya are doing their business without licences. It is reported that the license application process is cumbersome and in most of the cases, very few licenses are issued because of the negative attitude towards informal sector activities such as vending. In Kenya, those who get a licence have to either pay a bribe or are well connected to urban authorities or influential personalities (Mutillah, 2005). In both Kenya and Uganda, harassment of informal sector players characterised by inhuman treatment and gender insensitivity has been rampant. This then creates a springboard for the informal sector players especially vendors to respond to this situation by resorting to corruption, while many enforcement officers openly ask for bribes (Mutillah, 2005).

In Kenya, as in other African countries, notably East Africa, ethnicity plays a role in influencing benefits and costs in the informal sector. In Kenya, Africans are less susceptible to official attention when they operate without licenses, whereas Asians are more prone to harassment from the law enforcement authorities (Bigsten et al., 2004). It is also noted that violations of the law by African entrepreneurs are likely to be more tolerated than those by their Asian counterparts (Bigsten et al., 2004). Hence, even if the choice of informality were desirable from a cost-benefit point of view, it might be grimmer for non-Africans to operate informally. The growth of the informal sector in some African countries cannot be divorced from clientelism where the operators are given sites to operate on but, in return, are expected to provide political support to ruling political parties.

A major problem is the fact that in many of these African countries, the informal sector is classified as illegal. It is accused of doing more harm than good by promoting corruption because they do not benefit from law enforcement services. This may tempt informal traders to resort to bribery in order to avoid costly retribution or to obtain exceptional treatment. As for corruption, Sakuhuni (2014), notes that, it is not only prevalent among the informal traders but also among those who give services to them due to their vulnerability.

It is worth noting that despite the restrictive laws that characterise the informal sector, it produces goods that remain affordable to the majority of the population, particularly those in urban areas. In this study, the researcher does not argue about whether or not the sector is morally pure in terms of its operations or whether or not the sector is not home to 'sweat shops' which exploit workers. Rather, the concern is to focus on the influence of clientelism in the informal sector in Zimbabwe.

2.4 SAPS and Informal Sector Growth in Africa

The growth of the informal sector has therefore been attributed to the adoption of Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) in many Southern African countries in the 1980s and 1990s. According to Obwona et al., (2007), in Zambia any of the retrenched or retired workers had no opportunity and business diligence to profitably invest their resources in the formal sector and at the same time were afraid of being taxed their meagre packages, opting to join the informal sector. This has been a trend in many African countries that adopted SAPs.

SAPs have led to the informalisation of the economy due to de-industrialisation particularly in southern African countries such as Zambia and Malawi, among others. A huge number of

workers lost their jobs through retrenchments and company closures. These were the people who ended up participating in informal sector activities to earn a living (Mkandawire, 1984, Bond, 1998). Consequently, this led to the expansion of the informal sector at a time the formal sector was shrinking. Furthermore, the existence of political discord and economic crises also contributed to the development of a poor business culture and petty business mentality among the people. As a result of economic and political uncertainty, many people became averse to investing in long term formal businesses and to the associated problems they would have faced.

There is growing literature on the relationship between SAPS in the 1980s and 1990s and the growth of the informal sector in Sub-Saharan African Countries (Lee and Viuvarelli, 2004). Since the inception of Structural Adjustment Programmes under the auspices of the Bretton Woods Institutions (World Bank and the International Monetary Fund), the public sector and the formal private sector has been unable to provide adequate jobs for its expanding labour force hence creating a platform for the growth of the informal sector employment (Sachikonye, 1992). The advent of Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) and liberalisation policies emphasising the role of the formal private sector and market-determined policies in most African countries. The changing of policies due to the adoption of SAPs in most African countries which depended on agriculture exposed African agricultural labourers to foreign competition. It should be noted that most private economic agents were un-prepared to assume roles performed by the public sector hitherto. This meant the private sector economic agents in the commodity sector production chain were out-competed, hence the mass unemployment. According to Ikiara et al., (1999), the SAPs caused the employment rate in the informal sector to increase from about four per cent in the 1970s to about 12 per cent by 1994 in Kenya.

According to Dada (1998) with the massive devaluation of the Nigerian currency, following the inauguration of SAP in 1987, most Nigerians found it tough to purchase new vehicles. This created avenues for informal entrepreneurs who had to take up the job of servicing the aging vehicles. Thus, because of the upsurge of employment in the informal sector in Nigeria as in most countries SAPs were adopted as a direct measure of the failure of the neo-liberal economic programme to deliver.

In Nigeria, as in most African countries, SAPs were adopted, the down-sizing in both the public and private sectors led to the dramatic rise in the number of graduates from primary, secondary and tertiary institutions. As employment opportunities in the formal sector diminished, many of these new graduates looked to the informal sector for jobs (Dada, 1998; ILO World Employment Report, 1995:92). Thus, the informal sector has since served as a source of subsistence for most people during recessions ushered in by SAPs in most African countries.

2.4.1 Colonialism and the informal sector in Africa

Informal workers in most parts of sub-Saharan Africa find themselves on the peripheries of the law and most of these by-laws and regulations date back to the colonial period (Madhuku, 1996) Most by-laws and restrictions were introduced by settler governments in a calculated attempt to suffocate independent African economic empowerment and to protect white-owned businesses (Gwisai, 1991) The colonial law, much the same as the post-colonial law, erected and still erects a range of barriers to those who lack the skills, the capital and most importantly, the personal connections to evade them. It should be noted that colonial regulations in sub-Saharan African countries were systematically used to benefit settlers' interests as opposed to the interests of the African majority (Mhone, 1996). Therefore, the

informal sector was quite invisible compared to the formal sector. As a result, it operated as an underground economy (Simon et al., 1982).

In the case of Zimbabwe, beer-brewing, blacksmithing and mining or iron-working were established as authentic activities long before colonisation (Ndoro, 1996). These activities were vilified as inadequate, backward and inefficient by the colonisers and were first made illegal then progressively stifled, and finally displaced (Ndoro, 1996). For instance, traditional beer brewing went from being a formal activity of the indigenous Africans, to an activity accepted in the early urban settlement due to the lack of a modern alternative, to a proscribed, highly illegal activity when the modern breweries and beer-halls were set up, surviving as a bootleg activity under the hardest of conditions in the urban areas even up to today (Ndoro, 1996). The prohibition of urban agriculture and street vending are other examples. Thus, by depriving the African populace of alternative sources of income made them dependent on wage employment thereby working for the advantage of white settlers. All economic activities outside the 'white economy' were discouraged or prohibited in a bid to force the African population into wage employment in the mines and farms (Mkandawire, 1985). In as much as Africans were discouraged from participating in the informal activities, at least formal jobs were available (Maposa, 1993). However, one can argue that many of these were dead end jobs, where Africans were paid starvation wages. Therefore, by engaging in informal activities, they wanted to supplement their meagre salaries earned from the so-called formal jobs.

The status of the informal sector was not the same everywhere in Africa. In West Africa, for example, colonial rule was mainly focused on the extraction of cash crops rather than due to the need of direct employment of labour. Few restrictions aimed at strangling the indigenous

activities were put in place, hence Africans successfully engaged in small enterprises, creating a springboard for the creation of a far larger informal sector, even under colonial rule. Therefore, in West African countries informal sector activities thrived during the colonial era compared to Southern African countries (Shinder, 1997).

Contrarily, in Southern African countries such as Zambia, South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe, the informal sector became conspicuous in the post-colonial era, that is, after these countries repealed colonial regulations and introduced new by-laws, notably those which restricted the freedom of movement (Peters-Berries, 1993, Ndoro, 1996, Mhone, 1996, Dhemba, 1999, Daniels, 2003, Kanyenze, 2004). However, this did not amount to a full reversal of the bias against activities that had been made "informal" under the colonial government. During the colonial era, a number of Acts and Chapters hindered the informal sector, such as hawking and street vending. Other obstacles to the development of informal sector activities included the legislative prohibitions on home-based industries, prohibition of retail activities on residential properties, and the complexity of regulations such as the Company Act and the Private Business Corporation Act (Kapoor et al., 1997). The city councils had discretionary powers in controlling informal activities. Therefore, the informal sector was quite invisible in the mainstream economy due to the restrictive laws that restrained the movement of people into the urban areas.

In Nigeria, during colonisation, informal activities in the form of street vending, retail trade and unregistered businesses were widespread (Dike, 1997). The areas of informality in the cities are very extensive up to date (Meagher and Yamura, 1991). However, the British regime in Nigeria did not support the informal sector. The policies and institutions for urban development, where they existed, were restrictive and short sighted especially in the critical

areas of land use control, planning and provision of infrastructural services (Nwaka, 1996). Urban planning and housing policies were used as instruments of segregation and social policy to ensure that the small community of Europeans were protected in segregated high-quality residential areas. Sadly, these discriminatory policies were inherited in post-colonial Nigeria and subsequently undermined informal sector growth.

In South Africa, towards the end of the 1980s, at least 30% of the total population were engaged in some form of informal work (Kirsten, 1991). There were high levels of poverty among the black population and the state had recognised the potential of the small-scale enterprises and the informal economy in addressing this challenge (Rogerson, 1995). During the colonial era the informal sector was dominated by the Black Africans and the participation of whites and coloureds was quite marginal (World Bank, 1993). In 1990, an official survey showed that the Pretoria Witwatersrand region was second of the two major national concentrations of informal sector employment, the most important being found in Kwazulu-Natal (Republic of South Africa, 1990). However, just like in any southern-African countries, the impact of repressive legislation on the underdevelopment of black enterprises should not be underestimated (Rogerson, 1985). This was seen as the single most important factor that had limited black entrepreneurial growth and development (Davies, 1987). While the colonial period set the basis of informal sector development, the post-colonial era witnessed the phenomenal growth of the sector in terms of size.

2.5 Post-colonial African states and the development of the informal sector

It should be noted that around the world, about two-thirds of all employees work in the informal sector (World Bank, 2009). The informal sector provides between 50-75% of employment, 72% of non-agricultural employment and 78% if South Africa is excluded

(Haan, 2006, Verick, 2008). In most post-colonial African states, informal employment has been a source of livelihoods for many people (Chirisa, 2009). These African Countries have been grappling with a myriad of economic challenges and this has contributed to the dwindling employment opportunities in the formal sector (Sachikonye, 1992). Many people in most post-colonial African states have demonstrated great creativity in creating jobs as street-vendors, cross-border traders, carpenters, sculptors, brick-moulders among other activities (Muponda, 2014). This has kept many people in employment, and thus has helped to avoid high open unemployment despite adverse economic conditions (Dumba, 2012).

In South Africa, just like in any other African Countries, the informal sector has been expanding as a result of the demise of the formal economy, the mushrooming of survivalist enterprises and a linked decline in the profitability of certain formerly promising spheres of informal work. The wake of retrenchments due to the severe economic recession forced many of the formerly employed to seek out casual and temporary existence in the local informal economy (Manning, 1993). Therefore, the downturn and low absorptive capacity of the formal economy subsequently led to the expansion of the informal sector in South Africa (Manning, 1993).

2.6 Impact of Urban Bias and urbanisation on the Growth of the Informal Sector

Urban bias has played an important role in the growth of the informal sector in African countries. Most African leaders adopted development policies that had at their heart an urban bias, as the city was where the development lay (Lipton, 1977). These leaders invested vast resources toward urban development, thereby neglecting the rural areas. It is argued that most international development agencies and international financial institutions tended to favour financially supporting projects in urban areas, as they were easier to monitor and

strengthened political goodwill to the political elite. According to Lipton's "Bright Light Theory", the rural dwellers would migrate to urban areas in anticipation of improved health, education and employment opportunities. Unfortunately, cities were unable to offer adequate jobs to satisfy the huge numbers vying to enter into the formal sector. However, Lipton was quite casual in his writing in that he was not particular on the African countries that employed the so-called urban biased development policies. Therefore, in the 1980s, in African countries such as Zambia, Mozambique and Zimbabwe the International Development Agencies shifted its focus of development from urban to rural areas but this has not stopped rural-urban migration. When these people arrive in town to look for jobs, they will get none and will end up eking a living from the informal sector activities.

Urbanisation has also contributed to the expansion of the informal sector in Africa. The development of the informal sector in Nigeria has been characterised by official prejudice and neglect and this has constrained the sector from time immemorial (White, 1989). In Nigeria, urbanisation has been cited as the main cause of the mushrooming of informal sector activities. The extremely rapid rate of urbanisation in Africa has been occurring in the context of widespread poverty, with little industrialisation to provide jobs and ahead of the development of the requisite institutions for managing and providing adequately for the people (UN-HABITAT, 2010). This was rightly captured in the following extract:

> *A new process of urbanisation unleashed by the masses of relatively low-income earners who have flocked into the cities since independence and are seeking to solve their problems of accommodation and employment informally and on their own term, the urban poor are dominant and in most cases are transforming the city to meet their own needs often in conflict with official laws and plans (Mabogunje, 1992: 50).*

It is quite evident from the above extract that urbanisation played an instrumental role in the growth of the informal sector in Nigeria. The migration of people from rural to urban areas

increased and these people could not be absorbed in the formal sector; hence, they found themselves in the informal sector. Just as in Nigeria, other African countries experienced urbanisation at different rates and this had a strong bearing on the genesis and expansion of the informal sector. Urbanisation is a key factor in exploring the development of the informal sector in Africa. Critics dismiss the informal sector as a chaotic jumble of unproductive activities and an obstacle to the development of a modern economy, the reality is that the sector has proved to be a vital source of employment opportunities, entrepreneurship and income for the poor and a way to alleviate poverty and strengthen social protection (Population Reports, 2002).

The proportion of people worldwide living in urban areas passed the 50% mark for the first time in history in 2007 (UN-HABITAT, 2007). The pace of urbanisation in sub-Saharan Africa is twice the global average, making it the highest in the world. Urban populations in southern Africa are particularly rising rapidly, with South Africa and Botswana having urban populations of more than 60% (Crush and Frayne, 2010), and Zimbabwe at 33% (ZIMSTAT, 2013b). Unfortunately, rapid urbanisation in southern Africa is not associated with increased incomes and better standards of living as it is in some other developing regions (Ravillon et al., 2007). This rapid increase in the urbanites also entrenched poverty in urban areas in most parts of southern African countries and this had a bearing on the expansion of the informal sector. When employment opportunities are scarce in the formal sector, people will seek refuge in the informal sector for survival.

Kenya, just like some other African countries, is rapidly urbanising, with 50% of the population expected to live in urban centres by 2020 (UN-HABITAT, 2011). While the perception of 'urban advantage' has been characterised by a belief of better access to

opportunities for employment and social services, for many, urban living is not necessarily better living. More than half of Kenya's urban residents live in poverty; they dwell on the peripheries of urban areas, living on meagre incomes, in unsanitary and overcrowded conditions. Nairobi alone is home to 45% of the country's urban population, of which 60% live in slums on 4% of the city's land (UN-HABITAT, 2011). The high levels of poverty in urban areas are conducive for the growth of the informal sector as a survival strategy.

Schneider and Klinhmair (2004) notes that in most African countries, urban labour laws have been a stumbling block to the growth of the informal sector. For instance, out-dated by-laws enacted during colonialism have been inimical to the booming of the formal sector as procedures to apply for the registration of firms were cumbersome, hence prompting informality.

2.6.1 Rural-Urban Migration and Informal Sector Growth

Rural-urban migration has been alluded to as a catalyst to the development of the informal sector in Ghana as in other African countries (Austin, 2005, Amanor, 2006). People in the rural areas after the attainment of independence perceived life in the cities to be more attractive than in the countryside (Caldwell, 1969). Benjamin (2007) argues that development in Ghana had an urban bias and economic liberalisation made it possible for investment to be poured into already developed parts of cities of Accra. Therefore, a combination of rural push factors and urban pull factors lubricated the migration of people to cities in search of jobs (CHF International, 2004). Despite positive economic growth in Ghana over the last decade, the informal economy has continued to expand at a rate of about 5.6 per annum compared to less than 1 per cent in the formal sector (Barwa, 1995). It was noted that nearly 90% of the labour force in Ghana comes from the informal sector (African Union, 2008).

2.6.2 Poverty and Informal Sector Growth

In addition, the growth of the informal sector in Africa in general and in Zimbabwe in particular can be attributed to the perennial problem of poverty. According to Ngundu (2010), participation in the informal sector is not by choice for many but a survivalist strategy in order to reduce poverty. Some of the households in urban areas have fallen into poverty due ill-advised economic policies that have led to job losses and closure of firms. Brand (1986), in a survey carried out in Mbare, a township in Harare, argues that the prevailing poverty and the need to support families through the provision of supplementary income was the main reason why people opted to join the informal sector.

In light of the above arguments, African governments need to unequivocally recognise and admit the importance of the informal sector and find ways to encourage its growth. They also need at the same time to decide how to strengthen the formal sector and extend benefits to those in the informal sector, while removing the barriers to the formal sector to allow more to participate. Governments need to foster complementary links between the informal and formal sectors (De Soto, 2000). Despite these positive recommendations, most of the African countries still have regulations that stifle informal sector growth.

2.7 Relationship between the informal sector and the Big Man syndrome

Robinson (2013) notes that politicians in Nigeria, whether in an incumbent government or the opposition, often offer services and policies to groups of citizens in exchange for political support. However, Robinson's findings are applicable to many Sub-Saharan African Countries. Therefore, citizens must deliver their support, and politicians, once in power, must pay for the support with the policies that they promised. For example, open land in urban areas can be given to supporters and withheld from opponents. In India, Weiner (1967:34) showed that the Congress Party became "a means of obtaining jobs for friends and relatives

and of gaining access to many services and material benefits which government at all levels can bestow" as evidence of clientelism. I will deal with this in another chapter as the thesis unfolds.

The number of people in the informal economy in most African countries is surging, at a time governments and political elites rarely remain unresponsive. Mitlin (2004) notes that most politicians have come to regard this growing potential constituency as 'vote banks' and this has worked in their favour during elections. Concomitantly, due to the transition to multiparty democracy, the urban informal economy in most African countries and even beyond has become a terrain of intense political rivalry between different political parties.

2.8 Clientelism in the informal sector in Africa

Clientelism has been pervasive in most African countries in the informal sector. Debates however, on the politics shaping the informal sector in Africa and other developing country contexts, have been juxtaposed into two opposing positions. Numerous studies show that, in various African contexts and beyond, the state is a main source of anxiety for many people in the informal economy (Brown 2006a, Roy 2004a, Amis 2004, Clark 1988). Evictions, crackdowns, and confiscations driven by the government militating against the informal sector operators on groups, seem to be intensifying in many African cities over the past decades (Potts 2008, Hansen 2004, Lindell and Kamete 2008). This has prompted some to view the politics of informality in terms of a natural, clear-cut and binary opposition between informal actors and the government. It should be noted that this standpoint is deeply embedded in the view that the informal sector is state free, 'non-state' or 'against-the-state'. From this standpoint, the informal sector players have mainly been viewed as eluding state regulations, extricating from the state, resisting state power and systematically coercing it into evacuation. Informal sector players are thus viewed as being essentially sovereign from and opposed to the government.

Diverging views reject the aforementioned ideas on informal players as being anti-state or autonomous from it but rather emphasise that informal economies are at the epicentre of the existing reconstitution of state power (Roitman, 2004). The informal sector operators are rather dragged into vertical clientelist networks of personalistic power relations that reach into the legal institutions of the state and through which the state extends its power into society (Lindell, 2010). This therefore means that bankrupt governments gradually engage in rent-seeking practices in the informal sector. The growth of such 'unregulated' economies, driven by the needs of predatory states, is seen as leading to the emergence of 'shadow states' and to the so-called criminalization of the state (Bayart et al. 1999; Reno, 2000).

As Muller (2008) notes, concealed dealings occur in this sector: favouritism, bribery, mutual favours, and other forms of exchange are as much a part of the picture in most African informal sector. Lomnitz, (1988) observes that particular types of informal activities within the formal sector are characterised by 'informal exchange networks'. It can be noted that these networks mostly encapsulate bureaucratic favours, clientelism, diverse forms of corruption and rent-seeking arrangements meant to acquire material goods and benefits (Lomnitz, 1988). The patron-client relationship, whether termed clientelism, neo-patrimonialism, or "Big Man" rule, is understood to be the principal mechanism regulating both political and economic systems in African countries (Bratton and van de Walle, 1997). Power in both the formal and the informal sectors of most African countries is usually exhibited through "a system of relations linking rulers not with the 'public' or even with the ruled (at least not directly), but with patrons, associates, clients, supporters, and rivals, who constitute the 'system'" (Jackson and Rosberg, 1982:19). It can therefore be noted that patrons offer resources to their clients thereby gaining their loyalty in return, and clients support their patrons to acquire resources

which cannot be readily attained in a weak formal economy and ultimately the informal economy. In a milieu characterised by scarcity especially of jobs, the state is seen as an avenue where actors bargain over the allocation of resources and secure their consumption (Hyden, 2006; Lemarchand and Legg, 1972). In such a scenario, Lemarchand (1992) argues that the informal economy fails to provide sustainable resistance to the state due to its surreptitious nature, close affiliations and networking with the formal sector.

2.9 Conclusion

In this chapter I defined the concept 'informal sector'. It was realised that there is no agreed definition of the informal sector and various scholars have made attempts to explain it. However, scholars have characterised the informal sector as a sector which has businesses which are small in size, informal structured, has non-modern technology, lack of government favours and unprotected labour market. I also assessed the growth of the informal sector in Africa during the colonial era. I have observed that most African governments enacted laws that did not support the growth of the informal sector and this was done as a way of encouraging people to participate in wage employment in the formal sector. The inhibitive laws also led to the harassment of the informal sector operators under colonial rule. The sector was classified as illegal hence its treatment with scepticism. During the post-colonial era the informal sector remained integral to the lives of people by creating employment opportunities. Various factors such as urban bias, rural-urban migration, poverty, economic crisis, urbanisation and restrictive legislations all have contributed to the growth of the informal sector. The problems experienced by the informal sector operators were also unpacked. In the next chapter I track the development of the informal sector in Zimbabwe from the colonial era to post-independent Zimbabwe.

CHAPTER 3: INFORMAL SECTOR DEVELOPMENT IN ZIMBABWE

3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I defined the concept of the 'informal sector'. I also assessed the growth of the informal sector in Africa during the colonial and post-colonial eras. The problems experienced by the informal sector operators were also unpacked. In this chapter, I track the development of the informal sector in Zimbabwe from the colonial era to post-independent Zimbabwe. Furthermore, I also explain factors that led to the development of the informal sector in Zimbabwe, from the colonial to the post-colonial era. The main thrust of my argument is that some ill-advised government policies which led to the decline of the formal sector, gave rise to the growth of the informal sector. As the informal sector became the mainstay of the economy it started to experience a share of its problems. The genesis of the informal sector in Zimbabwe is traced from the colonial era in the next sub-section.

3.2 Colonialism and the informal sector in Zimbabwe

Historically, vending in Zimbabwe can be traced back to the colonial era wherein the white population restricted the majority blacks from taking part in the formal sector thus relegating them to be labourers and performers of menial jobs and tasks. The colonial regime in Zimbabwe, as in most southern African countries, was determined to stifle the informal sector. The Zimbabwean economic development, like that of its neighbour South Africa, was influenced by settler racism and domination guided by inward-looking economic policies mainly aimed at delinking the colony from the metropole in London during the early day of colonialism when the governing mandate was in the hands of the British South Africa Company (BSAC). After the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) in 1965, the settlers sought greater autonomy from London and enacted stiffer laws against the surge of

the African informal sector in a bid to squeeze as much cheap labour from Africans as they could. The former legacy of racist domination had facilitated the development of a formal sector dominated by primary production and mining based on the exploitation of cheap African labour and the expropriation of African land (Mhone, 1996).

The capitalist class was united in the need for the state to actively intervene in the economy and polity to ensure that such cheap labour would be forthcoming as a long term structural and secular phenomenon (Mhone, 1996). The latter legacy, based on settler nationalism and isolationism, had resulted in the growth of a manufacturing and service sector based on easy import substitution that, by independence in 1980, had exhausted its growth potential (Mhone, 1996). Therefore, the idea that was projected by the colonialists was that of providing jobs for the Africans but, in return, Africans realised little. As if this was not enough, the Africans were discouraged from adding to their meagre earnings from informal activities.

In order to promote self-sustenance among Africans, beer-brewing, blacksmithing and mining or iron-working were established as authentic activities long before colonisation (Ndoro, 1996). These were, however, vilified as “inadequate”, “backward” and “inefficient” by the colonisers and “was first made illegal then progressively stifled, and finally displaced” (Ndoro, 1996:23). For instance, traditional beer brewing went “from being a formal activity of the indigenous Africans, to an activity accepted in the early urban settlement due to the lack of a ‘modern’ alternative, to a proscribed, highly illegal activity when the modern breweries and beer-halls were set up, surviving as a bootleg activity under the hardest of conditions in the urban areas even up to today. The prohibition of urban agriculture and street vending are other examples. Thus, by depriving the African populace of alternative

sources of income, the settler government made them dependent on wage employment. Therefore, racial and oppressive policies were put in place to ensure total subjugation of the indigenous people (Mazingi et al., 1999).

However, Africans had an interest in eking out a living through informal means. After tracing the history of the informal sector in Zimbabwe one is left with a true picture of harsh colonial legislation (Brown, 2006), that restricted the indigenous people's ability to supplement their livelihoods within urban areas. It suffices to say, the colonial regime employed restrictive measures that undermined autonomous African market-oriented activities and the African informal sector while promoting the settler-dominated formal sector.

All economic activities outside the 'white economy' were discouraged or prohibited to force the African population into wage employment in the mines and farms' (Mkandawire, 1985: 16). A number of statutes and by-laws were enacted by the settler government to stifle African ingenuity and to coerce them into looking for formal jobs in farms and industries owned by the settlers. A myriad of entanglements of structural, legal and spatial arrangements evolved to ensure the subjugation and exploitation of African labour. These restraining legislations were, among others, the Vagrancy Act (1960), the Pass Laws (1902), the provision of single accommodation for workers, the Town and Country Planning Act (1946), the Urban Councils Act, the Urban Registration and Accommodation Act (1954), the Vendors and Hawkers by Laws (1973) and the controlled lodger system. These pieces of legislation were enacted to frustrate the growth of the informal sector activities. This whole structure was capped, further, by legal and structural arrangements designed to protect the interests of the white working class. The ensuing apartheid-type structural and legal features of cheap labour utilisation and exploitation indelibly defined the economic and labour market

relations inherited by post-independence Zimbabwe (Mhone, 1996: 9). Therefore, it should be noted that the African entrepreneurial spirit was stifled by the structural, legal and spatial arrangements that made Africans workers. In addition, these laws were systematically used to benefit settlers' interests at the expense of the African majority.

The indigenous Africans during the colonial era in Zimbabwe were regarded as temporary residents in urban areas (Dhemba, 1999). Permanent urban settlement was for the white settlers. Consequently, Africans who were destitute or had been made redundant in the formal sector were repatriated to their rural homes where it was conveniently believed they had a piece of land and relatives who could meet their social security needs. This was done so as to ensure that Africans could not engage in other informal means of survival in urban areas. As such, this had the effect of making it a 'hidden' feature of the economy. Therefore, it should be pointed out that the colonial government did not have sound policy measures and strategies that supported the informal sector. It viewed it as a menace, notwithstanding, that it provided livelihoods to blacks and structural interdependency with the formal sector. Despite efforts to stifle its growth, the informal sector emerged to become a 'major employer' by the late 1970's (Davies, 1978). It should be stressed that the majority of those who found sanctuary in the informal sector were black people.

Land alienation was the first and major deathblow to African self-sustenance. Africans were driven to rockier and less-fertile land under the Land Apportionment Act of (1930). Other statutes aimed at stifling Africans into submitting to the provision of cheap labour to the settler capitalists included the Maize Control Act 1931, 1934, Land Husbandry Act, 1951, the Master and Servant Act 1891, the Industrial Conciliation Act 1934, 1945, 1959, the African Juvenile Employment Act, the African Labour Regulation Act and the Foreign Migratory Act

among others (Gwisai, 1996). These laws saw Africans unable to produce enough for their basic consumption and ultimately unable to resist providing cheap labour to the settler capitalists. Africans were then relegated to formal wage labourers who were prohibited to engage into any forms of informal employment. As Mhone (1996:10) argues:

> *The consequence of the colonial legacy for the labour market was such that African labour was acutely deprived of its asset and income entitlements. This deprivation was reinforced and exacerbated by the increasing African population, increasing environmental degradation, and the inequitable provision of economic and social infrastructure. As the colonial period came to an end, the increased economic isolation of the Rhodesian economy as a consequence of international sanctions triggered an economic recession characterised by low capacity utilisation due to foreign exchange shortages and low demand, labour redundancy and a general shortage of consumer, intermediate, and capital goods. Thus, on the eve of the Zimbabwean independence the economic system was characterised by allocative, technical and redistributive inefficiencies. Most fundamentally, the labour market underpinned the foregoing inefficiencies as reflected in the gross underemployment and social deprivation of African labour. The elimination of those very same inefficiencies was the motive force of the liberation war which culminated in the birth of the new majority ruled nation of Zimbabwe in 1980.*

Therefore, it is worth noting that all the economic problems that beset the country towards the eve of independence had a negative bearing on the livelihoods of black people in urban areas. The working and non-working black people were squeezed into poverty and had to look for other means of survival outside of the formal sector.

The government, in its bid to curtail urbanisation, had to direct municipalities to keep registers of all new arrivals in town and those looking for employment. There were also restrictions on the movement of people from the rural areas to towns through the pass laws (Brand et al., 1993). This was a clever way of controlling overpopulation in towns and

ultimately, unemployment levels were very low. Therefore, the informal sector played a marginal role during the colonial era. This was systematically done to weed out illegal immigrants.

During the colonial era poverty was also a pervasive problem since black people were paid low wages. By December 1976 about 80% of the urban workers received wages below the poverty datum line then of Z$76 (Riddell, 1976). The economy was also characterised by chronic unemployment and underemployment. In the face of this, black people had no option except to engage in informal activities for survival. The participation of Africans in informal activities involved a cat and mouse game with the law enforcers in urban areas as they were subjected to on-going police harassment. This brutality against informal operators in urban areas was adopted at independence and those in vending are the major victims. What now follows is an exploration of the growth of the informal sector in post independent Zimbabwe.

3.4 The post-independent Zimbabwe and the growth of the informal sector

3.4.1 Size of the informal sector at independence

It has been noted that the colonial regime was characterised by punitive legislation that stifled informal sector growth in Zimbabwe. This was followed by the removal of such restrictions at independence in 1980 and this development opened the flood gates of informal activities in Harare (Tibaijuka 2005; Chirisa 2007). In spite of this, the informal sector, in the context of the overall economy, remained insignificant as it only employed 10 per cent of the population. The small size of the informal sector could be attributed to the various laws and by-laws that prohibited the free movement of indigenous people, especially from rural to urban areas. By 1986/7, the share of employment in the informal sector grew to 20 per cent. By 1991, it rose to 27 per cent, 40 per cent in 2000 and by 2016, around 90 per cent (UN-

HABITAT, 2003). The informal sector had effectively become the mainstay for the majority of the people who had been unable to find employment in the formal sector in Zimbabwe, particularly in urban areas. In addition, the growth of the informal sector in Zimbabwe can be attributed to a myriad of factors. For instance, rural-urban migration increased at independence due to the lifting of restrictions on the right to the city. Those in the rural areas moved to urban areas aiming to improve their livelihoods. However, with the collapse of the formal economy, some people returned to the rural areas as life in urban areas became unbearable.

It is worth noting that in 1980, the government embarked on an 'education for all policy'. This resulted in the enrolment of thousands of Zimbabweans into primary and secondary education which they had been denied by the Rhodesian government (Martin et al., 1981). As a result, the number of those who graduated from secondary education and tertiary education increased according to the Nziramasanga report (1999). The change in the socio-economic environment resulted in a reduction in the number of those who could be absorbed into the industries of the formal sector, thereby resulting in increasing unemployment. To alleviate the problem, most of the school leavers found alternative means of survival in the informal sector.

3.4.2 The Socialist Phase

At independence in 1980, the new government took over an advanced economy. Zimbabwe as an independent state adopted the USSR socialist model in a bid to transform the colonial legacy through creating a milieu conducive for economic efficiency and equity, thereby refraining from divorcing social policy from economic policy (Gwisai, 1996). This unfortunately was not to be for the ten years the socialist ideology was the guiding principle

of the government as the government was unsuccessful in promoting the much-needed economic growth encapsulating efficiency and equity. Despite the gains achieved in providing social services, the gains proved unsustainable in the long term, having been primarily financed through government deficits (Mhone, 1996). It should be noted that the populist policies that were adopted in the 1980's turned what had been referred to as the 'jewel of Africa' at independence into a begging country. In the 1980's the government introduced free education and health. Apart from this, there was the introduction of subsidies in order to cushion the general populace. However, the government accumulated huge debts as a result of its populist policies. This miscalculation by the political leaders ultimately led to a plethora of problems such as low capacity utilisation, high foreign debt, high unemployment and erosion of incomes. These problems had a strong bearing on the expansion of the informal sector in Zimbabwe.

Government intervention under the socialist phase was through parastatals such as the Zimbabwe United Passenger Company (ZUPCO) inherited from the United Transport Group (UTG) and the Grain Marketing Board (GMB) among other examples, the aim being to both influence the market as well as to participate in the economy. In this respect, the policy orientation of the new government represented continuity with that of the previous regime in that state intervention in the economy through state enterprises and the manipulation and regulation of trade, fiscal, monetary, price and wage regimes were dominant (Mhone, 1996: 10). It is clear that although the model of the government's operation was influenced by the socialist ideology, the role of the state at both macro and micro levels of the economy were basically ad-hoc and often contradictory. The model of governance and economic intervention were by and large a replica of the policies enunciated by Smith's government after its Unilateral Declaration of Independence in 1965. The government's intervention in

the economy during the socialist phase stretched as far as refining the web of price controls and cross-subsidies aimed at protecting urban workers and subsidizing inputs to peasant farmers, expanding the role of various service parastatals in the process.

Finally, the state expanded the provision of health, education and public-sector services phenomenally (Mhone, 1996: 10-11). This meant a surge in numbers of public workers hence a large wage bill which ultimately resulted in the need to adopt austerity measures such as those bedevilling the Greek economy today. These austerity measures had a bearing on the expansion of the informal sector. The deindustrialisation process that took place from the late 1980s and intensified in the 1990s led to the phenomenal growth of the informal sector in Zimbabwe. I now turn to the drivers of the de-industrialisation process in Zimbabwe.

Table 2.1 Drivers of Deindustrialisation in Zimbabwe 2013-2015 (%)

	2013	2014	2015
Low local demand	17.6	28.8	28.4
Capital constraints	40.2	26.5	18.6
Antiquated machinery and machine breakdowns	9.8	7.3	12.3
Competition from imports	12.5	14.2	10.3
High cost of doing business	5.2	6.2	8.3
Cost/shortage of raw materials	5.9	6.2	6.9
Power and water shortages	--	3.8	6.4
Drawbacks from current economic environment	8.8	7.0	2.0
Other	--	--	--
Total	100	100	100

Source: CZI (2015) Manufacturing Sector Survey Report, pp., 13-14

The above table 2.1 highlights factors that have led to the contraction of the formal sector characterised by company closures. Many people lost their jobs through retrenchments as firms that were affected by the above problems closed down. Therefore, deindustrialisation led to the informalisation of the economy in Zimbabwe. This phenomenon started way back in the early 1990s when the country adopted ESAP. This neo-liberal economic policy was adopted with the assumption that it could stimulate economic growth in the country. Before the adoption of this policy, the country experienced economic stagnation characterised by low capacity utilisation, high unemployment and an increase in cost of living. There was trade liberalisation which led to the opening of the borders to external industrial players. This subjected the local infant firms to stiff competition from the giant firms and this led to their closure. The people who lost their jobs had no other options for survival except to take part in informal activities.

The share of informal employment in total unemployment increased from 80% in 2004 to 84.2% in 2011 and 94.5% in 2014. The most affected were the youth, who had little labour market experience. The 2014 Labour Force Survey reveals that as many as 98% of the currently employed youth 15-24 years and 96% of currently employed people aged 15-34 years were in the informal employment. In terms of enterprises, the Finscope Survey of 2012 highlights that 85% of the 3,5 million Micro-, Small- and Medium- Enterprises (MSMEs) were unregistered. Such levels of informalisation are profound considering that 5, 7 million people were working in MSMEs in 2012, 2, 8 million were business owners while 2, 9 million were employees. This evidence seeks to confirm that, with the persistent destruction of formal jobs due to the economic meltdown, more and more people look to the informal sector for survival since this sector has expanded at an astronomical rate as the Government

is far from providing a permanent solution for the ailing economy. As will be shown, the growing trajectory of the informal sector spilled over into the post-ESAP era.

3.5 The Post-ESAP era and the burgeoning informal sector in Zimbabwe

Political agitation heightened at the dawn of the new millennium, with grave financial constraints ensuing from the failed adjustment policies, which tended to make the ZANU-(PF) government unpopular. This saw the formation of a seemingly worker-driven opposition political outfit called the Movement for Democratic change in 1999. The party became very popular as its campaigning manifesto was driven by the need to revitalise the economy which was blamed on the government's incoherent domestic and foreign policies. The costly involvement of Zimbabwe in the conflict in the DR Congo; high pay-outs to veterans of the liberation war that had inflationary consequences; the often chaotic implementation of the country's land reform programme; the decline of export revenue from the agricultural sector; high budget deficits that were financed through money creation, and subsequently high inflation; economic distortions caused by price regulations and the misalignments of the foreign exchange rate; erosion of property rights and entrepreneurial freedom; international sanctions such as travel restrictions on the country's elite; declining FDI inflows and lack of access to credit and balance of payment support from agencies such as the IMF and the World Bank (Richardson, 2005; Clemens and Moss, 2005; Richardson, 2007; Coorey et al., 2007; Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe, 2008) were significantly influential in this regard. The above events had a strong bearing on the growing of the informal sector in Zimbabwe. This then puts the informal sector at the centre of people's livelihoods in Zimbabwe.

3.6 Informal sector as a livelihood strategy in Zimbabwe

The unprecedented politico-economic and social challenge that has bedevilled Africa has not spared Zimbabwe (Bratton and Masunungure, 2006). Regardless of the Zimbabwean experience being unique in a certain way, sub-Saharan African countries have faced challenges which have tested the resilience of the citizens of most countries, most notably, the urban poor (Ndoro, 1996). In most post-colonial African states, informal employment has been a source of livelihoods for many people (Mutillah, 2005. Due to dwindling employment opportunities in the formal sector, many people in most post-colonial African states have demonstrated great creativity to create jobs as street-vendors, cross-border traders, carpenters, sculptors, brick-moulders among other activities (Peters-Berries, 1993; Shinder, 1997; Ndoro, 1996; Mhone, 1996; Dhemba, 1999; Daniels, 2003; Kanyenze, 2004). This has kept many people in employment, and has thus helped to avoid high unemployment despite adverse economic conditions.

The sector has been providing refuge for the army of workers laid off from the formal sector by providing employment and income thereby ameliorating their declining living standards (Dada, 2000). The informal economy in Zimbabwe is a viable sector in terms of absorbing many urban people failing to find what is referred to as decent work in the formal sector. It is against this backdrop that one can argue that Zimbabwe has been turned into an informal economy. According to Chidoko et al., (2012), Zimbabwe's economy has been in the doldrums for a long period now with the unemployment rate growing above 80 percent due to massive retrenchments. Zimbabweans had no choice but to create some jobs for themselves in local residential areas and in the central business districts of the towns and cities. Chirisa et al. (2012), argue that Zimbabweans have found an alternative way to keep their heads above the water. As in most developing countries, informal employment is a crucial source of the livelihoods of many people in Zimbabwe (Luebker, 2008). On a similar note, Gukurume and

Nyanga (2011) note that the informal sector also attracts children who reconcile school and work endeavours geared towards livelihood sustenance. The informal sector also constitutes a huge "labour reserve" on which the formal sector can draw in times of expansion, or to which labour can be returned in times of contraction (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2002). However, in the case of Zimbabwe, chances of the formal sector expanding are very slim under the current circumstances and as such many urban unemployed people sustain themselves through informal sector activities.

According to Xaba et al. (2002), the informal sector in Zimbabwe is expanding in terms of employment and enterprises. Without the informal economy, it was going to be difficult for the majority to earn a living especially in urban areas. The informal sector is playing a pivotal role in the provision of jobs for the urban people. Informal traders use a number of strategies to keep operating. The nature of the sector makes it easier for individuals to move from one activity to another if they feel that the current operation is not sufficient to their survival. Luebker (2008) notes that informal workers in Glenview Harare work long hours even if their returns are insufficient to meet their most basic needs. In Zimbabwe, the importation of cheap goods from Asia and South Africa has given informal operators opportunities to expand their operations (Chirisa et al., 2012). These types of traders are common in almost every town and city of the country. They create employment for themselves in different activities and earn a living out of hard work.

In the survey carried out by Luebker (2008), in Glenview, new jobs created in the informal economy include carpentry, street vending, cross-border trading, sculpting and brick moulding. The entry into the sector is easy since there are no strict regulations and registration processes that take place. According to Mhone (1996), ease of entry has been a

major trend resulting in a saturation of the informal economy. Street vending barriers to the entry are low and the capital generated is relatively low (Luebker, 2008). People are able to create jobs on their own and to sustain themselves and their dependants. The sector becomes crucial in providing employment and income and is therefore important in helping to alleviate the symptoms of poverty.

3.7 Informality and poverty reduction

As the informal sector in Zimbabwe contributed to the creation of livelihoods, so it assisted people to escape the worst ravages of poverty. The Zimbabwean situation with regard to issues of poverty is not that different from that faced by other developing countries. Urban poverty has brought problems that include poor housing, lack of basic necessities such as piped water and electricity, as well as insufficient food. Policies formulated since independence also aimed at poverty reduction by promoting employment opportunities to the Zimbabweans but many of these were a fiasco and had pushed people into the informal sector as a livelihood strategy (Chidoko and Makuyana, 2012).

There has been an increase in poverty since the onset of the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme in the early 1990s culminating in the economic crisis of 2004-8. National statistics did not capture the poverty situation during that period. However, by the time the crisis reached its peak in November 2008, it was estimated that up to 80% of the population was surviving on less than US$2 per day (UNDP, 2008, Chimhowu et al., 2010). Although poverty was far worse in rural areas than in urban areas of Zimbabwe, poverty in urban areas is increasing at a faster rate than in rural areas (Government of Zimbabwe, 2006). Urbanisation and development have not managed to eliminate poverty; on the contrary, in some cases, it has even intensified. The current prevalence of poverty in Zimbabwe has its

roots in historical colonial policies as discussed earlier, consisting of a dualistic model of development where black men were taken to serve in urban industry and mines as cheap labour while women remained in rural areas (Chipika, 2009). The situation has been exacerbated by the deindustrialisation process that has made the Zimbabwean economy stagnant.

Many of the urban informal operators remain poor because of the constraints they face in the informal economy. Mupedziswa (1991) notes some of the problems, such as the lack of capital, lack of tools and machinery, inadequate skills, lack of premises, too much competition and negative by-laws which lead to harassment. Informal enterprises lack proof of ownership which makes it difficult for them to get loans and credit facilities. Therefore, government initiatives formulated under the Ministry of Youth, Development, Gender and Employment Creation do not benefit them. The informal sector enterprises remain constrained since those who benefit from government initiatives are medium informal enterprises recognised by the government. Kanyenze et al., (2003), argue that the medium enterprises have been assisted by government under programmes such as the people's market initiative under which corner shops; flea and street markets were promoted through capital injection. The problem with these programmes was lack of coordination and donors withdrawing from the programmes as a result of lack of transparency and accountability on funds (Kanyenze, et al., 2003). Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) operating in the informal sector in Zimbabwe are still facing a number of problems. Access to finance is very limited as the majority of SMEs are self-capitalized, have weak business structures, have poorly defined legal and regulatory frameworks, and have poor marketing channels, difficulties in adapting to environment changes and absence of supportive institutional support (Gono, 2009).

Another problem is the relationship that exists between the informal economy and the formal economy. The United Nations (2005), points out that besides vending stalls and home-based service industries in the cities and towns of Zimbabwe, there is a growing phenomenon of street hawkers that supply the same range of goods sold by the stores in front of which they operate, thereby violating the rights of the formal sector which pay taxes. Because of this, many informal traders have been harassed by local authorities. In spite of this, there have been attempts by the state to boost the development of the informal sector. In the next sub-section focus is on exploring the strategies that are employed to address the problems faced in the informal sector in Zimbabwe.

3.8 Addressing problems faced by the informal sector operators in Zimbabwe

I have shown that the informal sector in Zimbabwe is an important sector that provides employment opportunities to jobless people and it makes an important contribution to the gross domestic product. According to Chidoko et al. (2011), the government of Zimbabwe is doing its part by catering for this sector through the activities of the Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and organs such as Small Enterprises Development Corporation (SEDCO). However, in order to be a prospective borrower, traders' need a certificate of incorporation and informal sector operations are not incorporated (Luebker, 2008). These and other institutions that seek to support the informal sector must be configured into tangible activities in support of the SMEs (Gono, 2009). Therefore, this rigidity on the part of government departments set an obstacle for the informal operators to regularise their papers for them to operate within the confines of the existing laws. As long as there is no relaxation of policies, more and more informal sectors will continue to shun the government efforts aimed at formalising their operations.

The activities of the informal economy in Zimbabwe and much of the research carried out tend to be general without looking at particular activity such as contributing to the sustenance of livelihoods in Zimbabwe. A survey carried out by Luebker (2008), shows several activities and the nature of enterprises and jobs of the informal economy. It has been noted that the Government of Zimbabwe has made strides in promoting the funding of the informal sector through the setting up of SEDCO. I will now turn to the impact of the informal activities in the Zimbabwean furniture making industry.

3.9 The impact of informal activities in the Zimbabwean furniture Industry

The activities of the informal sector vary and their contribution to the sustenance of people's lives may also differ depending on the size, market and type of goods on trade. The activities of the informal economy are not different from those that are found in the formal economy. The difference may be that activities are not registered, most of them operate in places and areas that are not suitable and they are small. Furniture making is an activity that is performed in the informal economy in urban areas as well as in rural areas. In Chitungwiza there is no specific site but furniture making is done along the streets and main roads of the town. According to Billing (2011), informal furniture manufacturing in Harare has its biggest sites concentrated in Glenview and in Bulawayo; active production of furniture is common in Kelvin North, where there is mixed trade as well. The two areas are well-known to be areas where furniture-making is done intensively.

According to Ndoro in Mhone (1996), the manufacturing of furniture constitutes 20% of the manufacturing in the informal sector. Much of the research done on informal activities are generalised; therefore there is less information about the manufacturing of furniture in the

informal sector. Chidoko (2011) argues that intensive manufacturing takes place in the informal sector and major players are flea market operators, furniture manufacturers, suppliers and producers of agricultural products and food vendors. The making of furniture in the sector is also recognised since there is a link between formal traders and the informal manufacturers. The United Nations (2005) notes that there are formal relations that exist between the informal and formal economies including sub-contracting in furniture making, wood and metal working industries. The makers of furniture are given orders to make products by certain companies in the formal sector which they sell in their shops. Billing (2011), notes that most apprenticeship students are recruited in furniture making as a trade. The constraints as noted by Billing (2011), are that a number of new wood producers harvesting small stands of timber on former farms are producing sub-standard goods using uncured wood which is often split or warps. Commercial sales outlets require standardized products in terms of dimensions, design and materials. Some of the manufacturers may not get the contracts because their goods which are sub-standard. Some of the carpenters can be chastised for producing sub-standard wares; however, this cannot be generalised as there are some that are being sub-contracted by well-established furniture shops to supply them. While a lot has been written about the informal sector in Zimbabwe; little has been done in providing a critical analysis of how government policies influenced the growth of the sector.

3.10 Impact of Government Policies on the Informal Sector Growth in Zimbabwe

The government of Zimbabwe has been concerned with the declining economic situation in the country. Several economic recovery programmes have been initiated and the informal economy is not an exception. From the growth with equity of 1981 to the Short-Term Economic Recovery Programme II (STERP II) the government's effort on the improvement of the living standards of the majority was addressed. In 1981 the growth with equity policy

provided a clear enunciation in that it provided the sector with the necessary infrastructure and assistance to promote productive employment and the transitional development plan provided some recommendations on the way forward (Kanyenze et al., 2003). However, it should be noted that this policy never yielded good results. In the late 1980's, the country had a plethora of economic problems such as huge foreign debt, low capacity utilisation, erosion of incomes and a rise in unemployment rate (Government of Zimbabwe, 1990). Also of concern was the rapid growth in the number of educated people who were unable to penetrate the formal sector and had no other options except to fend for themselves through informal activities. According to Ndoro in Mhone (1996), the Structural Adjustment Programme was a key player to productive activity, remunerative employment creation and significant value addition. It is during this period that a number of informal businesses were growing due to urban population growth and they were developing into small and medium enterprises.

The adoption of the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) in Zimbabwe in 1990 accelerated the growth of the informal economy. This economic policy was implemented from 1991 to 1995 (Davies, 2000). In the context of Zimbabwe, a myriad of factors has led to the progression of the informal economy at a time the formal sector was waning. The ESAP period was characterised by severe job cuts in both the private and public sectors culminating in multitudes of the urban populace joining the informal sector. These job cuts were necessitated by the need to restructure the work processes as advised by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. In the public service over 20 000 employees lost their jobs and in the private sector, almost 25 000 were left jobless. There was destruction of permanent jobs and this led to the casualization of labour. The most affected were semi-skilled and unskilled workers, shunted out of formal employment and left only with the

option of informal placement. Today, more and more urbanites are resorting to the informal sector as a source of livelihood (Nyamwanza and Mandizadza, 2014).

The government adopted yet another economic blueprint called the Zimbabwe Programme for Economic and Social Transformation (ZIMPREST) in 1996 after it had abandoned ESAP (Sachikonye, 2002). In as much as this economic blueprint was adopted to correct the wrongs of ESAP, it had a plethora of challenges, starting with late implementation of the programme. The programme was launched in 1998, two years behind schedule as it was supposed to have been launched in 1996 running through to 2000 (Tarisai, 2008). The programme also stood accused of having ignored the inputs of other key stakeholders with the government choosing to design and implement it single-handedly. Just like ESAP, ZIMPREST fell short of meeting its targets. Hence it also worsened the suffering of the general populace in Zimbabwe. Just like ESAP, it led to an increase in the informalisation of the economy.

As if this was not enough, the government adopted yet another economic blueprint, the Millennium Economic Recovery Programme (MERP) which was designed to continue with the vision of ZIMPREST and was expected to run from year 2000 to 2003 (GOZ, 2009). Regrettably, like its predecessors, the policy failed to turn around the country's economic fortunes. A variety of intervening factors in the country's socio-political and economic circumstances were accountable for the limited success of this economic blueprint (GOZ,2012). These economic policies, like their predecessor, had calamitous consequences to the urban population. Formal sector retrenchments and layoffs were triggered by the afore-mentioned ill-advised economic policies adopted by the government. This again had the overall effect of increasing the participation of people in the informal sector in Zimbabwe.

Zimbabwe had other programs which are the Millennium Economic Recovery Programme which operated from 2001 up to 2002 (MERP). The National Economic Revival Programme (NERP) of 2003 was enacted. During this period the country was facing economic and political problems. The ILO (2006) on its program for Zimbabwe, states that MERP was launched to address the problems and it was then followed by NERP. The Macroeconomic Policy Framework was then formed in 2005 and it lasted up to 2006. This is the period where most informal activities were affected by a clean-up campaign to do away with illegal structures and illegal business operations which most of them fall under in the informal economy (Brandon and Masunungure, 2006).

In 2007 the National Economic Development Priority Programme was launched. The following programme was the Short-Term Economic Recovery Programme (STERP I) of 2009 and STERP II of 2010 up to 2012. The National Trade Policy, (GOZ) (2012), notes that the introduction of STERP and the multicurrency regime in 2009 has led to the GDP growth of 5.7 in 2009, 8.1 in 2010 and 9.3 in 2011. According to STERP (GOZ) (2009), small and medium enterprises are essential in employment creation and growth as well as consolidation of the indigenous ownership of resources in the economy. The activities of the enterprises are a solution to problems such as poverty and declining household incomes. The objectives of STERP were to provide financial support and capacity building and to promote industrial clusters and development linkages with other established companies. However, the policy was a fiasco and it further worsened the plight of the urban people. In the face of this, people could not just fold their hands but had to find ways of surviving in the informal sector. In Zimbabwe, apart from the discussed macro-economic policies, it was also noted that the Fast Track Land Reform Programme in 2000 also had a bearing on the growth of the informal sector. This will be explored in detail in the next sub-section.

3.10.1 Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) 2000

The FTLRP impacted on the livelihoods of farm workers and this augmented their participation in informal activities to eke out a living. However, there is need to unpack the land ownership patterns before the FTLRP. The structure of land ownership and use was clearly inequitable at independence (Sachikonye, 2002). About 6 000 white commercial farmers owned 15.5 million hectares while 8 500 small-scale farmers possessed 1.4 million hectares. The remaining indigenous communal farmers about 700 000 households subsisted on 16.4 million hectares.

With regard to land, the government tried to solve both rural poverty and racial inequality in land ownership between blacks and whites by introducing a gradual land resettlement programme targeting peasant farmers in congested communal areas. The ZANU-PF led government was accused of practising patronage in the allocation of land after independence (Alexander, 2006, Tendi, 2010). Despite these mixed feelings, those who benefited from the land were empowered since land is an extremely valuable asset. The programme was meaningful only to those who have knowledge and skills, the inputs, and access to markets. However, the issue of transparency in that exercise cannot be underestimated. The Government of Zimbabwe, in pursuit of the policy of empowering its people, embarked on the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) in 2000 which resulted in Britain and her allies imposing economic sanctions under the pretext that the country had violated the rule of law in 2001. The resultant sanctions brought about poor economic performance and untold suffering to the general populace in Zimbabwe. The previously disadvantaged individuals, such as women and youths were the hardest hit by these sanctions and because of that they became jobless and hopeless (Financial Gazette, 2002). It was against this background that

the government in 2000 resorted to FTLRP with the major objective of reducing the extent and intensity of poverty among rural families and farm workers by providing them with adequate land for agricultural and pastoral use (Government of Zimbabwe, 1998). However, it should be noted that farm workers were largely ignored in the land reform exercise, hence the resultant depletion of their livelihoods. This thesis is not much concerned about the general contentious issues about the FTLRP but on its implications on the commercial farm workers in Zimbabwe.

In the year 2000, the FTLRP in Zimbabwe encapsulated its own socio-economic and political trends which had various impacts on the urban poor (Mutangi, 2010). The land reform meant more layoffs hence the increase of misemployment, underemployment and unemployment as some people were employed indirectly or directly through agriculture (Mutangi, 2010). It was conducted against the background of a long-standing dispute between the Zimbabwean Government and the white commercial farmers over the land question. The British government had promised to fund the willing-buyer willing-seller program but unfortunately, this remained a pipe dream. The government passed the fast track land reform programme to legitimise the farm invasion that took place in 2000 (Moyo, 2001). These farm invasions were led by war veterans who reclaimed their heritage (Sadomba, 2009). Over 300 000 families were resettled and over 6 000 white commercial farmers were evicted from the farms. Those who lost out in the land reform programme include the white commercial farmers whose land was acquired and farm workers who lost their jobs and were not allocated land. Land historically did not belong to the white farmers but they got it through illegitimate means as they expropriated it from the Zimbabweans by force.

The FTLRP is said to have compromised production output in the large-scale commercial farms (Moyo, 2004). There were significant declines in the output of maize (from 800 000 tonnes in 2000 to about 80 000 tonnes in 2003), wheat (from 225 000 tonnes in 2000 to less than 100 000 tonnes in 2003), soya beans (from 145 000 tonne in 2000 to 30 000 tonnes in 2003) and tobacco (from 230 million kg in 2000 to 70 million kg in 2003) (CFU, 2003). The declines had profoundly negative consequences for the sector, gross domestic product (GDP) and foreign exchange earnings. The contraction of the agricultural sector also saw the manufacturing sector and the whole economy declining by 15 per cent by 2003 (Richardson, 2004). Therefore, this led to the skyrocketing of the unemployment rate in the country due to loss of livelihoods for the former farm workers among others (Sachikonye, 2003; Waterloos and Rutherford, 2004, Marengawe, 2007).

While the majority of scholars attacked the FTLRP left, right and centre, there are some who believed that the programme has benefited the local people. Scoones (2008), argues that the change of land tenure has created five myths, namely: that land reform was a total failure, that the beneficiaries of land reform have largely been political cronies, that there was no investment in the resettlement areas, that agriculture was in complete ruins and that the rural economy had collapsed. He contends that, whilst there are some truths to these popular views of the FTLRP, there is little acknowledgement of the extension of land to some beneficiaries who were absolutely landless. There were also some ordinary unemployed people from towns and communal areas that accessed land and this had expanded their livelihood options. In this sub-section it has been noted that there was polarisation of views on the Fast Track Land Reform Programme in Zimbabwe where some scholars are in defence of the programme while others attacked the programme. In as much as these scholars have differences, their ideas converge on one issue that the programme affected people differently. This will be

explored in the next sub-section but with particular focus on the impact of the programme on the informal sector.

3.10.2 Impact of FTLRP on the informal sector

The FTLR program was celebrated as a success story by ZANU-PF supporters in terms of redressing the land ownership imbalances in the country then. The political patronage in land redistribution where cronies received large farms was detected in some areas of Zimbabwe. Marongwe (2009) stresses the party-political bias favouring those ZANU-PF members and those who were the clients of the party, notably the privileged. It is worth noting that the white commercial farmers employed a huge number of farm workers. Therefore, their eviction from the land meant that a huge number of them lost their source of livelihood. It is estimated that about 70 per cent of the farm workers were affected (Sachikonye, 2003). Commercial farmers employed a significant number of workers before the FTLRP in Zimbabwe in the 1980s and 1990s; their numbers fluctuated between 300 000 and 350 000, or between 20 and 25 per cent of the national workforce. The farm workforce supported an even larger population of about 2 million people (Moyo, 2004). This was also coupled with the loss of permanent worker status towards contract or piece work arrangements. Both the newly resettled small-scale farmers and new large-scale commercial farmers lacked the financial resources and production capacity to absorb the former permanent farm workers previously employed by the minority white commercial farmers. The female farm workers were the major casualties compared to their male counterparts (Mandizadza, 2009).

In sum, the loss of a regular income had undermined the livelihoods of most farm workers' households. Therefore, farm workers' livelihoods were depleted as a result of the increased unemployment that had been triggered by the FTLRP (Moyo, 2004). All this happened

against a background where agriculture was regarded as the 'engine' of the economy. Moreover, downstream industries such as the manufacturing sector derived about 60 per cent of its inputs from agriculture. Therefore, the demise of industry can also be attributed to the shrinkage of the gross domestic product (GDP) which stemmed from poor performance of the manufacturing industry. These ex-farm workers struggled to put food on the table because they were rendered jobless. In face of this situation, these ex-farm workers were left with no option except to participate in informal sector activities to make ends meet. The FTLRP destabilised the agricultural sector and destroyed some of the industries that depended on it for raw materials and inputs. Therefore, the people who were employed in those industries lost their jobs as these firms faced stiff operational challenges. Table 1, shows the pattern of farm workers' job losses in 2002 in four provinces.

Table 2.2: The pattern of farm workers' job losses in 2002 in four provinces

Province	Estimated number of workers affected
Mashonaland West	18 300
Mashonaland East	11 260
Mashonaland Central	15 000
Manicaland	2 260
Total	46 820

Source FCTZ, 2002c

There were massive job losses which would appear to surpass the 50 per cent originally estimated. The layoffs became more intense with the exodus of 90 per cent of commercial farmers in the last quarter of 2002. There is no consensus on the total number of farm

workers who lost their jobs between 2000 and 2003 but the commercial farmers themselves estimated them at over 200 000 (CFU, 2003). This could be as a result of the weaker capacity of new farmers under the A2 model to employ permanent labour. It was at this time that the labour relations were reshaped which ultimately led to the casualization of farm workers.

While the intention behind the land reform programme may have been noble, in addition to the farmworkers, the majority of the youths and women have absolutely nothing to show (Moyo, 1995). In other words, the youths and women were marginalised in the whole process. On the 2000 FTLRP one may ask a question: if the government was serious about the empowerment process, why did it take close to a decade to distribute land to the majority? However, it can be argued that it is better late than never; so the government has to be applauded for finally distributing land to the landless people although the ex-farm workers were marginalised in the process, hence worsening their livelihood options. It has been established that the FTLRP led to huge job losses for the commercial farm workers and these had no other option except to partake in informal sector activities. While the FTLRP played a huge role in rendering many people jobless, the other policy that led to the ballooning of the informal sector, however, is the Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Act as will be explored in the next sub-section.

3.10.3 The Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Act 2008

On April 17, 2008, the government enacted the Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Act which was meant to correct the perceived imbalances in economic advancement among indigenous Zimbabweans compared to their privileged compatriots prior to independence in 1980. The law provided for all companies with a share capital above US$500 000 operating in Zimbabwe to arrange for 51% of their shares or interests therein to be owned by

indigenous Zimbabweans (Munyedza, 2011). However, this Act grossly affected the operations of foreign owned businesses. The implications of the chaotic indigenisation policy were reflected in the grim foreign direct investment inflows as revealed by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development World Investment Report of 2015. According to this report Zimbabwe in 2014, recorded foreign direct investments of US$ 545 million and this was far lower compared to other neighbouring countries in the SADC region such as Mozambique which received US$4,9 billion, South Africa US$5,7 billion and Zambia US$2,4 billion (Zimbabwe Independent, April 8, 2016). According to the CZI Manufacturing Sector Survey of 2015, 87% of the respondents in 2014 and 90% in 2015 indicated that the environment in Zimbabwe was a deterrent to FDI, with the percentage of firms that made capital investment using FDI very low at 5%. The report cites lack of clarity on the Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Policy (IEEP) as an example. This policy further scared away foreign investors at a time when they were needed the most. To some extent, one may attribute the low FDI inflows to the punitive Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Act. Some of the firms closed shop in the process and others downsized their operations. This Act aggravated the number of people who lost jobs.

In addition, this Act also scared away investment in a country facing a plethora of economic challenges such as a debilitating liquidity crunch, low capacity utilisation, company closures and massive job losses (Zimbabwe Independent, April 8, 2016). This was an ill-timed Act considering that Zimbabwe was experiencing one of its worst economic crises. The government was supposed to enact laws that would attract foreign direct investment inflows so as to create employment opportunities. In light of the above, the jobless people had no option except to engage in informal activities to fend for their families.

Since independence in 1980, Zimbabwe has implemented no less than 17 economic blueprints, but these yielded next to nothing in improving the plight of the general populace. Of note is that, when the crisis began to emerge in 1997, the country abandoned medium-term planning and resorted to knee-jerk measures encompassing price controls, policy inconsistency, reversals and contradictions (GOZ, 2009). While the period of crisis (1997-2008) typifies this approach as highlighted above, this has continued to characterise how Government does business to this day. The last attempt at medium-term planning was with ZIMPREST (1996-2000) as noted above. Since ZIMPREST, the programmes have become medium-term as Government was grappling with the emerging crisis. Medium-Term Planning (2011-2015) represents a return to the medium-term planning. However, the programme was abandoned too in midstream following the end of the Government of National Unity (GNU) post the July 2013 elections. Experience suggests that Government has been long on planning and short of implementation, with regular changes to the programmes, policy inconsistency and incoherence and even reversals. Medium-Term Planning was replaced by ZimAsset, which is a broad framework without an explicit implementation strategy. Hence, the main objective of Zim-Asset including an average GDP growth of 7.3% per annum and the creation of two million jobs, amongst others, have remained elusive (Kanyenze et al., 2015). In an overview of these economic blueprints, one can argue that there has always been lack of Government commitment to the implementation of its policies. This has worsened the economic crisis in the country and efforts to stimulate economic growth have been futile. Therefore, economic crisis has a strong impact on the rise of the informal sector in the country.

The problems that are retarding economic growth require radical economic reforms that attract FDI and foreign investors that can go a long way in stimulating economic

transformation in the country. However, given the absence of reforms, the political and economic system is in a crisis again because the reforms that are needed are not implemented. Instead, the system is caught in factional fights within the ruling party that spill into Government, political and economic uncertainty, policy inconsistencies and contradictions, endemic corruption, informalisation and widespread poverty (Kanyenze et al., 2015). All this is doing harm to the growth of the formal sector in the country.

3.10.4 Inclusive Government Era 2009-2013 and the Informal Sector

Prior to the inclusive government, the year 2008 is one of the most memorable years in the Zimbabwean economic history. This was the year when the country experienced one of its worst economic crises that was characterised by a skyrocketing hyperinflation rate of 89, 7 sextillion percent by the end of 2008 (Hanke, 2008). The Zimbabwean Dollar became valueless as a legal tender. There was also an acute shortage of basic commodities in shops. Most of the basic commodities were found in the black market. The economic crises provided a fertile ground for the booming of the informal sector. The macro-economic environment was not conducive to the formal sector thriving. A number of companies closed shop and others rationalised their staff. In the process, a huge number of people were rendered jobless. Some of the workers just stopped going to work as it was no longer worth working due to the high inflation experienced then.

As if this was not enough, this was the year Zimbabwe conducted one of the much-disputed national elections in March 2008 (The Guardian, 21 June, 2008). The tension in the election results culminated in a runoff in June. However, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), one of the major opposition parties in the country pulled out of the elections and it became a one man band for ZANU-PF. This was followed by political talks that were headed by the then South African President, Thabo Mbeki. These talks were fruitful, and they

culminated in the formation of an inclusive government towards the end of 2008 (Sachikonye, 2009). In early 2009, the inclusive government embraced the multicurrency system that brought a semblance of normalcy on the economic front. The moment dollarization was adopted, the inflation rate came down to 6,9% by end of 2009, 4,7% in 2010 and 7,8% 2011 (GOZ, 2012).

Inflation remained in the one-digit region up to 2016. This macro-economic environment gave an impetus to foreign direct investments as investors had regained confidence. Companies started paying their employees in United States Dollars and capacity utilisation started to improve as there was now production in industries. The country registered a positive economic growth of 5%. However, this was not adequate to address the problem of unemployment which stood at 60% in 2011 and six years later was at 80% and now at over 90% (Daily News, 2017). Therefore, it is worth noting that the informal sector remained the major livelihood option for the majority of the urban population. In the next sub-section, it is worth noting that the July 15 2015 Supreme Court ruling in Zimbabwe contributed significantly to the further expansion of the informal sector as many workers lost their jobs through a three-month notice. Permanent employees were given the notice and the next thing would be losing their jobs.

3.10.5 The Impact of the July 2015 Supreme Court Ruling to the Informal Sector

Zimbabwe went through a process of job cuts after the July 17, 2015 Supreme Court ruled that companies could retrench and fire workers after a three-month notice (Herald, 22 July, 2015). This ruling came out as a result of the firing of two ZUVA petroleum company managers. These managers were given a three-month notice before they were fired and they contested their dismissal in the courts. The case was brought before six Supreme Court

judges and they ruled in favour of the employer. The judges raised the argument that according to the common law, both the employer and the employee have equal powers when it comes to termination of contract of employment. Therefore, the ruling confirmed that, what was done by the company was in line with the existing labour laws in the country. This landmark ruling opened flood gates to other companies that wanted to retrench their employees. Thousands of employees lost their jobs and had no other formal ways of eking out a living except to join the informal sector. As this was not enough the Statutory Instrument 64 of 2016 delivered another blow to the informal operators as explored below (Kasuso et. al., 2015).

3.10.6 Statutory Instrument 64 of 2016

Trade liberalisation was embraced in Zimbabwe at a time the government adopted ESAP in 1990. Social hardships and poverty increased, more firms closed than those that opened; unemployment increased; the income gap between the rich and the poor widened; standards of living fell and corruption became chronic (GOZ, 1990). The government opened up the economy by slashing high tariffs to low levels to attract foreign investment. Before liberalising the economy, importation of foreign commodities was made difficult through high tariffs charged by the Zimbabwe Revenue Authority at the borders. When the economy was opened up, local industries faced stiff competition from big firms across the world.

In addition, the major causalities were the textile and clothing sectors as evidenced by the closure of David Whitehead, a cloth-manufacturing concern. After the closure of such big firms, over 20 000 employees were laid off (Tekere, 2001). The closure of these companies can be attributed to low capacity utilisation that had troubled the local firms for so many years. However, the 1990 economic blunder was corrected in June 2016 through the adoption

of Statutory Instrument 64 of 2016. This was meant to protect the local industries from external competition and, in the process, boost capacity utilisation. There was a lot of noise from different sections of the society and even from some other African States when the Statutory Instrument was passed. Zimbabwe is not the first country to adopt this import substitution policy. However, the government, through the Ministry of Industry and International Trade, remained focused and implemented the SI. This SI restricted some of the goods imported from outside the country (www.rbz.co.zw). This was meant to boost capacity utilisation for the local firms and, in the process, create more employment opportunities.

The SI had started to bear fruits since there are some manufacturing companies that are now operating at 100%, for example, those in the cooking oil industries (Herald, 15 June, 2017). However, this SI had stifled the operations of some informal sector players who relied on products from South Africa, hence worsening their plight. The above sub-sections have demonstrated the various ways in which people were pushed to join the informal sector in Zimbabwe. However, these informal sector operators find it very difficult to eke out a living as they grapple with numerous problems as will be explored in this sub-section.

3. 11 Problems Faced by the Informal Sector in Zimbabwe

As government policies led to the demise of the formal sector, the informal sector expanded. The informal sector experienced a fair share of its problems such as poor environmental conditions, capital constraints, poor infrastructure, negative by-laws, poor sanitation, poor marketing facilities, lack of social protection services and destruction of informal sector facilities.

3.11.1 Poor Environment Facilities

Informal sector environments are seen as a threat to the health and well-being of the operators themselves and the generality of people in urban areas. Dhemba (1999) evinces that the major

constraints of the informal sector in Zimbabwe include legal and regulatory impediments and difficulties in accessing capital. Mupedziswa (1991) suggests that some of the problems faced by the informal sector include lack of capital and premises to operate from, negative by-laws which lead to harassment of operators by law enforcers, poor marketing facilities and stiff competition, spiralling prices and sometimes unavailability of raw materials. Equally problematic are inadequate skills and lack of facilities to upgrade skills, as well as lack of machinery. The problems that are experienced by informal sector operators are explained in detail in the next sub-section.

3.11.2 Capital constraints

For Dhamba (1999), the most serious problems in the informal sector are lack of capital, restrictive by-laws and legislation. Informal sector players face serious financial constraints in their operations. Since their small businesses are not registered, they run the risk of failing to access loans from the banks. Mupedziswa (1991) reports that 41% of the informal sector operators in her study had been negatively affected by lack of capital, mainly due to the fact that financial institutions view the informal sector with condescension. Lack of collateral security among informal operators is cited as the major stumbling block in their endeavour to access credit. It is difficult to obtain credit from the formal financial sector such as commercial banks, merchant banks, finance houses, development banks or other financial institutions due to the lack of enough collateral and traceable banking history.

As a result, the informal traders are forced to resort to costly informal sources of credit such as money lenders or ‘loan sharks’ who charge them prohibitive interest rates that they cannot easily repay or cannot afford to repay at all (Adisu, 2006). Therefore, lack of finance compounds lack of raw materials, tools and other equipment thus militating against the

technological advancement of small businesses. Players in the informal sector are considered as high flight risk and some of their activities are perceived as illegal in nature. According to ZEPARU and BAZ (2014) the notion that informal sector activities are illegal and that the players are of dubious character with criminal tendencies discourages the banking sector from availing financial support to the sector. At the same time, players in the informal sector enterprises lack marketable assets that could be used as worthwhile collateral security. Furthermore, policies governing the financial sector are also not friendly to the informal sector. For example, to open bank accounts, the banks require too much documentation in the form of proof of residence or pay slips which informal sector players may fail to produce, even if they might have the money to bank.

3.11.3 Poor infrastructure

In Zimbabwe, informal sector sites are characterised by poor infrastructure. In most cases their wares are vulnerable to the rain, the sun, the wind and dust as they often toil on unsheltered workplaces (Brand, 1986). Therefore, lack of proper shelter culminates in storage shortages as a matter of security risk for their products and tools. This partly suggests that theft maybe a frequent issue. For example, in a study carried out by Brand (1986) at Mupedzanhamo, another hub of informal trade activities located in Mbare, a high density suburb in Harare, the majority of stallholders blamed the municipal authorities who collect rentals for not doing enough in providing them with lockers or security guards to improve the security of the wares. On a sad note, the same informal sector traders are blamed for doing more harm than good to the environment as their products are said to deface the streets and clog the water drains.

3.11.4 Negative by-laws and Legislation

Dhemba (1999) evinces that the major constraints of the informal sector in Zimbabwe include legal and regulatory impediments. In Zimbabwe urban by-laws militate against informal sector growth and expansion. The informal sector usually encounters relentless opposition and frustration from the intolerant town planning system that does not want to see it grow. Chigwenya et al., (2013) argue that, town planners are still rooted on very old and archaic planning practices driven by city order at the expense of dealing with more substantive and pressing issues such as economic development that addresses the bread and butter issues and sustainability of the city. Therefore, operations of the informal sector are viewed with suspicion and treated with contempt. Urban councils suppress the sector through demolition of structures and chasing of operators away from their sites of operation.

3.11.5 Poor Sanitation

Furthermore, the informal sector workers are also badly affected by occupational hazards in the form of poor sanitation. According to Diko (2014), inadequate access to running water and toilet facilities in their working areas present negative health risks on workers including vulnerability to many waterborne diseases (Shekede, 2016). At the same time dearth of protective clothing exposes workers to serious work-related injuries and deaths due to chemicals, dust and heat that are harmful to their health whilst women are prone to sexual abuse. Diko (2014) advanced that informal workers are often ignorant and not concerned of a need to demand legal protection because of illiteracy, poverty and the fear of losing their source of livelihoods.

3.11.6 Poor Marketing Facilities

In addition, informal sector traders sustain many trade restrictions when trying to export their products or even when taking them to the local markets for sale. These trade restrictions manifest in the form of clearance certificates, quality requirements, packaging and labelling designs. Luiz (2000) asserts that lack of refined and marketing skills is an obstacle towards informal sector traders' bid to access proper profitable markets since it requires them to 'pay through the nose' in order to access these markets. The marketing aspect of small businesses is affected by the lack of adequate finance and information which makes it very difficult for them to take their products to the most viable marketplaces (Tshuma et al., 2013). High transport cost also obstructs growth for the informal businesses located either too far from their sources of raw materials or the markets to dispose of their finished products. Equally challenging are inadequate skills and lack of facilities to upgrade skills, as well as lack of tools and machinery (Mupedziswa, 1991). This problem militates against the informal sector operators' productivity.

3.11.7 Lack of Social Protection Services

The informal sector players in Africa in general and in Zimbabwe face a common problem of lack of social protection services. According to Diko (2014), supporting schemes that provide some form of social and economic valve for informal workers are critical for fulfilling the rights of urban informal workers to a decent standard of living. In addition, it also goes a long way in poverty reduction and protecting informal sector players from the economic and social impact of economic recessions, thereby improving on their coping abilities. Sadly, these insurance schemes do not exist in the informal sector to protect business activities and assets making these businesses susceptible to hazards such as fire. On July 29, 2015 the Glen-view home industry famed for making household furniture was razed by a fire outbreak and

hundreds of dollars were lost in that inferno, thereby destroying livelihoods. This was the third time following similar events in September 2011 and 2012. The Herald of 30 July 2015 reported that many informal sector workers were left broke at the Furniture Complex as they had no insurance cover openly admitting that the situation could have been better with insurance cover. In Zimbabwe, it is mainly those who are or have been formally employed at one point in their lives and have contributed to the schemes like NSSA for a specified period of time that enjoy the benefits of social insurance. According to Chikova (2013) Zimbabwe, like most developing nations especially in Africa, faces an arduous task in providing universal access to social security schemes for all its citizens especially those in the informal sector as the country does not have the financial capacity to roll out public social protection. This environment is not conducive for informal sector development in the country. There is need for awareness campaigns so that the informal operators' can be sensitized to embrace social protection facilities. This will cushion them in times of disasters such as fire outbreak.

3.11.8 Destruction of informal sector facilities

In 2005, the state demolished business premises and vending sites in an operation code named "Murambatsvina" or "Restore Order". The operation involved the destruction of flea markets and housing used for many years by the informal traders and vendors. About 700 000 people were affected by the demolitions (Tibaijuka, 2005). Even if motivated by a desire to ensure a semblance of order in the chaotic manifestations of rapid urbanisation and rising poverty characteristic of African cities, none the less "Operation Restore Order" turned out to be a disastrous venture based on a set of colonial era laws and policies that were a tool of segregation and social exclusion. The government justified its action based on the need to prevent disorderly urbanisation and stop illegal market transactions in the informal economic sector (International Crisis Group Report, 2005). However, one may argue that the

government was trying to hide behind its finger; the issue at stake was to destroy the informal sector in Zimbabwe since the operators were perceived to be sympathisers of the opposition party, Movement for Democratic Change (Masunungure, 2006).

3.12 Conclusion

In this chapter I tracked the development of the informal sector in Zimbabwe from the colonial era to post-independent Zimbabwe. With regard to the local context, I also focused on the factors that led to the development of the informal sector in Zimbabwe from the colonial and post-colonial era. It was noted that neo-liberal economic policies led to the decline in the manufacturing sector and this rendered many people jobless. During this period there was a surge in the informalisation of the economy to the extent that informality became the major source of livelihood for the majority of people. It was also noted that informal operators faced a number of problems and the government did little to address these problems. In the post-ESAP era, the government adopted a number of economic policies to turn the economy around, but this did not address the problems faced by the informal sector operators in the country. On another note, the FTLRP and the Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Act of 2000 and 2008 respectively also contributed to the rise of informal sector activities in Zimbabwe. It was necessary in this chapter to explore the historical development of the informal sector as this forms the basis of understanding how clientelism influences this sector. In the next chapter, I explain clientelism and patronage in the African informal sector.

CHAPTER 4: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

4.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter I tracked the development of the informal sector in Zimbabwe from the colonial era to post-independent Zimbabwe. This was followed by an interrogation of the factors that led to the development of the informal sector in Zimbabwe, during the colonial and post-colonial era. Also discussed, was the fact that neo-liberal economic policies such as ESAP led to the rise of the informal sector. Industry was affected as many people lost their jobs as firms collapsed. The government also adopted economic policies from 1990 to the late 2000s which were expected to turn around the economy, but these dismally failed in addressing the economic problems experienced then. With the decline of the formal economy and the rise of the informal sector, there has been a concomitant attempt by the political elite to control this sector and benefit from it. This has led to patron-client networks that have inhibited the growth of the informal economy.

In this chapter I explain the utility of the Big Man concept in understanding the Zimbabwean informal sector. There are strong linkages between the Big Man concept and social networks and as such, these complemented each other in assisting in unpacking the relationships of the informal sector operators in this thesis. The Big Man concept is embedded in the social network theory.

4.2 Conceptualisation of Big Man

In Sociology, the Big Man concept is rooted in transactional theory. Transactionalism can be substituted in colloquial language by the principle of "you scratch my back and I will scratch yours". Transactional theory borrows much from Malinowski and also from Marx. Malinowski's ideas in transactional theory are found in the emphasis by transactional

theorists in individuals' predisposition to manipulate and think in the pursuit of advantages in the interaction process. This shows that there is a reciprocal relationship between the actors. Just like in the Big Men concept, in transactional theory, there are patrons and clients'. Following Utas (2009) 'Big Man' and 'network' are concepts often used to describe aspects of the African political culture. The concept of Big Men in general refers to men because of the patriarchal nature of societies, but can include women in certain cases.

In this thesis, these concepts are used to explain the clientelist nature of the informal sector in Zimbabwe. Jorgel et al. (2007: 13) explains the Big Man and network concepts as "relational concepts facilitating fluid descriptions of social settings". The Big Men constitute nodes in the networks. Clients in these networks belong to different networks and therefore have several Big Men, who, in turn, have their own Big Men. The Big Men dominate other networks because of their privileged access to resources (Utas, 2009). As I will show, social space (land) and economic capital (finance) are the resources that the Big Men distribute to clients. In Zimbabwe, nodes are the politicians, council officials and government officials. Clients are informal sector operators. Both Big Men and followers thus have reciprocal obligations to each other. The Big Men have to channel resources to their followers and in return, followers are to be loyal and to perform demanded services for the Big Men (Jorgel and Utas, 2007). The Big Man has the ability to command, to instigate mass action, where authority is not structurally ascribed or socio-historically motivated but based on the Big Man's ability to create a following and to a large extent, dependent on his informal abilities to assist people privately. The building of power is based on amassing wealth and redistributing it with 'astutely calculated generosity' (Godelier, 1986: 163).

4.2.1 History of the Big Man Concept

The history of the Big Man concept can be traced to a Papua New Guinea study on leadership with the concept being a notable feature of the political life in this region (Sahlins, 1963). This history is important because it gives the context and the conditions in which the Big Man concept was successfully used. Sahlins (1963), argues that Big Men are exemplary charismatic leaders. Drawing on studies of Bougainville and Papua New Guinean political systems, Sahlins describes the Big Man as:

> *reminiscent of the free-enterprising rugged individual of our own heritage. He combines with an ostensible interest in the general welfare a more profound measure of self-interested cunning and economic calculation (Sahlins, 1963: 289).*

In addition, Sahlins makes three further interesting points about Big Man political systems.

Firstly, they are naturally unstable. The 'shifting disposition and magnetisms of ambitious men in a region may bring fluctuations in factions', while the death of a Big Man can result in the dissolution of the entire group. Of importance here is the fact that the position of the Big Man is not permanent but fluid. The clients on the other hand have a ready replacement when the Big Man dies or fails to deliver.

Secondly, he also notes that because Big Men acquire influence through economic production and exchange, political ambition results in the production of surpluses within Melanesian horticultural and cash economies. Competitive politicking encourages people to produce goods beyond local needs and to participate in trade networks that circulate these goods throughout extensive regions. In parts of Melanesia, this has inflated customary brideprice payments; young women in Vanuatu, for example, are sometimes called 'Toyotas' after the sort of good their families demand (Lindstrom 1996: 65). What is important in this description are networks that are considered to be key defining the Big Men's survival in different political contexts.

Thirdly, they act as a brake on development. By pursuing status, Big Men must encourage followers to produce more pigs, yams, taro, and so on, but that in turn encourages defection. A Big Man who underperforms risks being pushed out by his competitors and abandoned by his followers.

The Big Man concept is used to explain the political dynamics in the informal sector in Africa in general. In the informal sector, there are politicians who are referred to as the big man "patrons" and the informal sector operators who are referred to as the "clients". This concept is useful in understanding the way the two groups interact in their daily activities in the informal sector. In this sector, particularly in Glenview, the site of the case study for this PhD, there was a management committee (Big Men) 'Mashefu' that was more inclined to the ruling party ZANU-PF whose influence was perceived to have an effect in the growth of the informal sector. However, when I conducted the research, I found that

there is an acting standing management committee. The Big Men in this study use social networks and social capital to achieve their personal interests and political power. Conceptualising social capital is a very difficult task. This is because, as Coleman (1988, 1990) points out, social capital exists between actors; it is not attributable to an actor like human and economic capital are. Inaba (2007, 2011) a leading scholar in the study of social capital in Japan, adds externality of mind to the three elements of Putnam's (1993) definition. Externality of mind, according to Inaba, means that the good will of a person has positive effects on other people. One may argue that social networks are at the core of social capital. Social capital refers to the stable social relations one holds and is able to mobilise in order to obtain other kinds of capital. It has been noted that there is an interwoven relationship between social networks and social capital. In this thesis, the various operators and the Big Men forge relations that help them to do their business at the complex.

Therefore, the people in the informal sector have power and agency that is reflected in their day to day activities. The Big Man concept is a concept that is used world-wide and is useful in understanding the patron-client relationships (Hyden, 2006). The Big Men at the Glenview Complex in Harare are perceived to possess political power and they use this power to distribute the stalls to their 'clients' which are the informal sector operators. The beneficiaries of the stalls must show allegiance to the Big Man by paying rentals and attending political party related activities. In cases where the beneficiaries refuse to take orders from the Big Men the stalls are repossessed and allocated to the prospective loyal informal sector operator 'clients'.

The concept 'Big Man' is the Anglicisation of a descriptive phrase 'bikpela man' meaning 'prominent man' common in the Melanesian language (Strathern, 1971). According to Sahlins, Big Men epitomize many of the qualities of Western capitalists, their authority being based on personal powers and entrepreneurship. To attain Big Man status they must rely on

skills of oratory, leading by example, haranguing, or through sheer force of personality. The term was adopted widely in post-World War II Melanesian ethnography to refer to male leaders whose political influence is achieved by means of public oratory, informal persuasion, and the skilful conduct of both private and public wealth exchange (Oliver 1955, Read 1959, Strathern, 1971). This description points to the fact that the Big Man did not draw from coercive measures at all times as is sometimes the case in Zimbabwe. The carpenters are sometimes forced to submit themselves to the political wishes of the ZANU-PF Big Men or 'Mashefu'.

Sahlins (1963:289) attaches a number of characteristics to the Big Man. The indicative quality of Big Man authority is everywhere the same: it is personal power. Historically, the Big Men do not come to office; they do not succeed to, nor are they installed in existing positions of leadership over political groups. The attainment of Big Man status is rather the outcome of a series of acts which elevate a person above the common herd and attract him a coterie of loyal lesser men 'clients' (Sahlins 1963:289). The Big Man's creation of his own faction is completely crucial for his power and standing (Sahlins 1963: 290), and upward mobility occurs when he connects other men and their families to his faction, 'harnessing their production to his ambition (Sahlins 1963:163). The Big Men in weak factions do not last long at the helm of complex leadership as there is political contestation over power from strong factions. The Big Men relations are quite complex as they change any time depending with the political dynamics at the complex. The maintenance of the Big Men status depends on the social networks that build over time and these have to be nourished by providing largesse to the followers.

In spite of differences in usage, 'bigmanity' holds a number of chief characteristics. The following characteristics have relevance to this study in that they are used to explain the clientelistic nature of the informal sector at the Complex. Bigmanity is based on social relations. A Big Man is someone who can create and use social relations which give him leverage over others' (Sahlins 1963:292). A Big Man transforms social relations into strategic power and control (Medard 1992). Bigmanity forms loose social webs based on the ability to gather followers. In some instances, this form of gathering is more important than economic wealth, access to land or formal political power (Guyer, 1993; Kopytoff and Miers, 1977; Bledsoe, 1990; Utas, 2008a). This is useful to this study since the Big Man has political power that helps them control the affairs of the Glenview Complex in Harare. This political power is also used by the Big Man to distribute economic wealth that comes in the form of land for stalls in the complex. In the end they will be able gain power to mobilise the informal operators to achieve their political ambitions.

It should be noted that Big Men do not generally control followers. Rather, it is in the interest of followers to maintain ties with a Big Man because the Big Man provides economic possibilities as well as protection and social security. Therefore, for the Big Men to remain in their position they should maintain strong social networks with their followers. Some of the carpenters at the complex forge ties with the Big Men to get favours such as protection and security when doing their work. Thus, bigmanity is far from mere wealth gathering. Gathering of power and its maintenance are built on forms of reciprocity, and if the Big Man does not distribute enough largesse, he will eventually lose his supporters. The ZANU-PF Big Men 'Mashefu' try as much as possible to cater for the needs of their clients. Bigmanity is unfixed and multiple, it is not a matter of inherited patron-client structures, but rather fluid and ever-changeable webs of relations. Followers may discard Big Man when they do not

deliver. Further, a follower is not just loyal to just one Big Man, but typically enjoys different relationships with various Big Men. Big Men as shown above provides protection to the clients. This characteristic has relevance in this study in that clients always get protection from the Big Man especially on the issue of stall dispossession. However, on the issue of social security, in the context of the complex the type of the Big Men found there did not have adequate economic wealth to provide social security to their clients say in times of crisis. There are also situations where the Big Man can lose support if he does not distribute enough largesse (space) to the clients. In such situations the followers can discard the Big Man and forge commitment and relationships with other Big Men. However, the other Big Men will be from the same political party.

Bigmanity is a response to a lack of formal structures. Typically, Big Men wield a great deal of social power in situations where there is a structural void (Utas 2010). Big Man power should be seen as an alternative form of governance, where the government does not reach, or where local forms of formal governance do not have sufficient sovereign power. Big Man ought not to be seen as an opposing system to that of the state. Politicians as well as civil servants use their positions within the state to engage business and cultivate relationships based on their role in tendering contracts, issuing licenses, approving land use plans (Simone, 2004b:81). The fewer functioning checks and balances there are, the more room there is for the Big Man to manoeuvre. The Big Men are only known by the operators as influential political players. However, they have significant influence in the management of the complex. The proceeds that they generate are for their own use since the local council has no control over this place. What these Big Men do is that they have strong allegiance to the ruling party ZANU-PF. The local authority officials in Zimbabwe have no say in the running of the Glen View Complex as this was turned into a political zone.

Being a Big Man is not a fixed label but rather a term that highlights a relational state within social relations. It implies that a Big Man may well have his own Big Man. Furthermore, 'small' systems of Big Man and followers also occur at the grassroots level of a society (even the small boy has his boy). There is a structural tension between the Big Man and 'the small boys', coming to the fore in studies such as Richards (1996) and Jackson (2004), where Big Man aim at controlling the production of their followers and this tension gives rise to the desire of underlings to slip the leash, as well as radicalising discourses and in some instances sparking revolutionary engagements. Violent conflicts open up possibilities for underlings to contest power and climb the social ladder (Utas 2008a, 2009). In the informal sector the Big Man concept has its basis in the political dynamics in this sector.

4.3 SOCIAL NETWORKS

Social networks are social relationships, ascribed or achieved, among individuals, families, households, villages, communities or regions and each of them can play dual roles, acting both as a unit or node of a social network as well as a social actor (Laumann and Pappi, 1976). Social networks can also be regarded as a category of actors bound by a process of interaction among them. However, a social network or its parts are endowed with the potential of being transformed into a social group in a realist sense provided that there is enough interaction (Laumann and Pappi 1976). Social networks have a central place in the study of informal sector activities. In this case, the social network theory will help me in assessing the livelihood strategies employed by informal sector operators in Harare. It suffices to argue that the informal sector thrives as a result of closely-knit social networks among the operators. When it comes to the purchasing and selling of goods, all this will be hinged on a web of social networks.

According to Utas (2010), the success of a social network project does not depend entirely upon the number of Big Men involved but rather also on the degree that individual Big Man invest and the resources such as human resources (followers) they possess. Weight and density of a network are thus, critical to how efficient the outcome will be (Duffield 2002:155; Kapferer 1973:84), although it is vital to note that a potential network of relations is maintained that need not be activated right away but that exists in some immanent state for future mobilisation when necessary (Simone 2004b: 227). It should be noted that networks are unstable, fluid and constantly adaptable, that being the case, social networks are in its double meanings nervous systems (Taussing 1992).

Social network theories do not consider individuals as forming a mechanical aggregate but as an organic whole where the constituent elements are connected among themselves as well as with the others through a mosaic of ties based on interactions, directly or indirectly, at various domains such as social, economic, political, and the like (Coleman, 1990). This enables a social network to be quite flexible to include the ties of the relationship of a social actor, which exist in ground reality even if those fall outside the boundaries of traditional social categories and derive appropriate ways to incorporate them in theoretical and methodological structure befitting the dynamics in social reality (Coleman, 1990). In this context, it will be explained that social networks cuts across the political, cultural and economic domains of the informal sector operators. It suffices to argue that, the informal sector in Africa in general and in Zimbabwe have stood the test of time through the intricate social networks that are being employed by the operators.

Kapferer (1973: 84) defines social networks as a set of points (individuals) defined in relation to personality/character and linked by lines (relationships) either directly or indirectly. Social

networks can be seen as a 'moral community' guided by joint ethics where each member of the network feels a sense of obligation to the other party or parties rather than a desire to take advantage of any trust that may have been established (Podolny and Page 1998: 60-61). Powell (1990) points out that in a network, individuals are more social than others, thus, more dependent on relationships, mutual interests, and reputation as well as less guided by formal structure of authority. Networks consist of reciprocal patterns of communications and exchange with networks shapes being based on 'lateral or horizontal patterns of exchange, interdependent flows of resources, and reciprocal lines of communication (Powell 1990: 295-296). Thus, networks notably social networks can be described as an 'intricate latticework of collaborative ventures with others most of whom are ostensibly competitors' (Powell 1990:303). It should therefore be noted that, networks are thus not only horizontal, and patron-client relations are not just vertical, a combination of both gives Big Man networks (Utas 2010: 12). There are strong linkages between the Big Man concept and social networks and they play a big role in understanding the political dynamics in the informal sector.

From the foregoing argument it is quite evident that social networks play an instrumental role in accessing resources and this applies even in the informal sector in Zimbabwe in Glenview Complex where the demand for land 'space' to sell and manufacture goods is too high. The Big Men manipulate these networks to their advantage by distributing the stalls to their clients. The politicians are the patrons in these networks whereas the operators are the clients. The networks are set up at the ZANU-PF district offices and the operators who support ZANU-PF are part of these networks. However, there are also some situations when the Big Man is manipulated by the clients for example in politics the Big Man can distribute land or food to the clients with the expectation of getting votes but may lose the elections. Some

clients may take the Big Man for a ride and dump them during election time. Therefore, the manipulation can go either way.

4.3.1 Social networks and social capital

Social networks and social capital seem to be inextricably linked, thus, the existence of another facilitate the presence of the other. Social capital can be defined "in the form of norms of reciprocity and networks of civic engagement", and that it refers to "features of social organisation, such as trust, norms and networks that can improve the efficiency of a society by facilitating coordinated actions" (Putnam 1993a:167). The World Bank has defined social capital as "the informal rules, norms and long-term relationships" (World Bank 1997a:114) which can explain differences in the nature and intensity of popular collective activity in different communities or nations.

It has been argued that societies endowed with strong social networks hence large stocks of social capital are more efficient and equitable, in the sense that they have a greater capability of resolving problems through collective action, relying on the reciprocal commitments that their members are willing to make on the base of the trust they place in each other (de Renzio, 2000). Strong social networks and huge stocks of social capital may contribute to the explanation of development success stories by defining the ways in which "economic actors interact and organise themselves to generate growth and development" (World Bank 1997b:77).

It should be noted that if social capital is a resource available through social networks, the resources that some individuals claim come at the expense of others (Portes and Landolt 1996), which means that social capital may be available to individuals on a very unequal

basis. In this sense, social exclusion may occur even in societies characterised by apparently high stocks of social capital. Government, in some instances, may therefore work effectively in favour of elite groups with better access to social networks, while at the same time marginalising groups with little "voice" (de Renzio 2000). Social capital and social networks can be equated with local level organisations, which include associations, civic groups, and informal networks that nurture the norms of trust and reciprocity facilitating mutually beneficial collective action.

Simone (2004b: 42) defines networks as systems of both 'politics and resource provision'. Social networking is a concept that is employed in this thesis. Bailey (1988), in his transactional theory, argues that leaders of political parties are partisan, and this is a quality that is necessary to command devotion from subordinates. By virtue of this, a leader of a political party will be able to control his or her followers. The leader deploys and redeploys resources: material and moral, that is, by rewards and by propagating an ideology in-order to strike a credit balance with his/her follower's. This enables a leader to recruit and maintain allegiance of his/her political supporters. Social life is a transaction where people calculate the cost and benefit before taking any course of action. This theory will help the researcher in explaining the strategies that are used by Big Men to gain allegiance in the informal sector in Zimbabwe. Social networks and transactional theory are complimentary in understanding the political dynamics of accessing social space as the case in Glen View 8 Complex.

Social capital is defined as resources embedded in one's social networks, resources that can be accessed or mobilised through ties in the networks (Lin, 2001a). Through such social relations or through social networks in general, an actor may borrow, or capture other actor's resources e.g., their wealth, power or reputation. The social networks can then generate a

return for the actor. The general premise that social capital is network-based is acknowledged by all scholars who have contributed to the discussion (Bourdieu, 1980, 1983, 1986, Lin, 1982, Coleman, 1988, 1990, Flap, 1994, Burt, 1992, Putman, 1993, 1995, 2000, Erickson, 1995, 1996). Therefore, networks provide the necessary condition for access to and use of embedded resources. Without networks it would be impossible to capture the embedded resources. Yet networks and network features by themselves are not identical with resources. Variations in networks and network features may increase or decrease the likelihood of having a certain quantity or quality of resources embedded. Thus, network features should be seen as important and necessary antecedents exogenous to social capital. For example, for a given network, density of closure of networks may increase the sharing of resources among participants as individuals and or as a group (Bourdieu, 1986, Coleman, 1990). On the other hand, sparse or open networks may facilitate access to better or more valued resources or information, control or influence (Lin, 1999a; Burt, 2001).

The network-based theory of social capital recognises important patterns of social relations. They vary in terms of the intensity and reciprocity of relations among the ties. Lin (1986) delineates three layers of social relations that differentiate such intensity and reciprocity. The inner most layer is characterised by intimate and confiding relations: ties that share sentiment and provide mutual support. Typically, the ties engage in reciprocal and intense interactions-strong ties in a dense network (e.g. kin and confidants). The intermediary layer is characterised by ties that generally share information and resources, but not all members necessarily having direct interaction with one another or maintaining equally strong and reciprocal relations with each and everyone else. These relations, typifying most social networks with a mixture of stronger and weaker ties or direct and indirect ties, nevertheless are said to be bonding. Sharing certain interests and characteristics keeps the ties in a “social

circle". The outer layer is characterised by shared membership and identity, even though the members may or may not interact among themselves. However, these relations, mediated through collectivity, provide members with a sense of belonging.

According to Bourdieu, individuals accumulate and mobilise different kinds of capital. The most prominent kinds of capital in his writings are economic capital, cultural capital and symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1998). Economic capital refers to the monetary wealth that one is able to mobilise and spend. The cultural capital refers to the titles and certifications one received from accredited institutions. Social capital refers to the stable social relations one holds and is able to mobilise in order to obtain other kinds of capital. Finally, symbolic capital refers to awards, recognition, and status one receives throughout their trajectory in the field (Bourdieu, 1986). Individuals with little capital have fewer resources available in comparison to their capital-rich colleagues. For Bourdieu the field is the space where power is exercised as the collocated actors are able to mobilise different quantities and kinds of capital. Actors who control larger amounts of a given resource are able to impose their dominance over those actors with less capital. Bourdieu envisions that the closed networks of powerful actors impose dominance over less powerful actors. Such dominance is translated in the rules of the field. The rules entail how a given capital circulates and is exchanged by other kinds of capital. With Bourdieu's theory, social networks play a very limited role. The reason being that social capital constitutes one kind of capital, where stable social networks are mobilised in order to attain other kinds of capital. However, social networks could help when one wants to understand broadly the social space or the clientelistic nature of the informal sector in Zimbabwe.

Bourdieu's idea of social capital is inspired by the Weberian concept of closure. For Bourdieu, powerful actors are able to close a social space to outsiders by imposing high exchange rates to different types of capital. As a consequence, only the mobilisation of strong and durable social ties yields access to resources. In addition, for Bourdieu, the study of social networks as explanatory device has its tradition in the Durkheim's teachings on community cohesion (Bourdieu, 1998). As such, it doesn't take into account, from Bourdieu's perspective, that the most important relationships in a field are not those of direct interaction, but those governed by the power logics that govern the game between different strata.

4.4 Conclusion

It has been established that the Big Man Concept has been traced from Melanesia and it has spread to African countries. It was noted that the Big Man concept borrows from transactional theory as two give reference to the interaction between the two actors' patrons and clients. Patron and client obtain a reward in the voluntary exchange process. The patron-client relationship has been observed in the informal sector in Africa and in Zimbabwe. The Big Men survives on the networks they create with their followers. These networks have to be strong enough if the Big Men are to maintain their positions. Social networks are one of the key components of the Big Man. There are strong linkages between the Big Man concept and social networks and as such these complimented each other in unpacking the clientelistic nature of the informal sector of Zimbabwe. In the next chapter I focus on the methodology used in the collection of data that answered the research objectives and questions

CHAPTER 5: THE NATURE AND INFLUENCE OF CLIENTELISM IN THE AFRICAN INFORMAL SECTOR

5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I looked at the historical development of the informal sector during the colonial and post-colonial era. I also explored the problems that were experienced by the informal sector operators during this period. It was also noted that legislation restricted the growth of the informal sector. A number of factors that contributed to the growth of the informal sector during the post-colonial era were explored. In this chapter I trace the history of clientelism in Africa. Clientelism has been explored in Africa in countries such as Tanzania, Nigeria and Zimbabwe. It has been noted that even in Zimbabwe clientelism has been a common phenomenon in both the formal and informal sector. I traced this phenomenon of clientelism from independence to the year 2000 and beyond in Zimbabwe.

5.2 Clientelism in the Tanzanian Informal Sector

Clientelism has been evident in the African informal sector. Muller (2008) notes that most vendors in Tanzania who attempted to purchase licenses are usually unsuccessful or are obliged to wait for several months in order to acquire licenses. To acquire the licences, most vendors are subjected to paying fines, harassment and having to pay bribes to council officials having links with the state, as they have not obtained the actual physical license yet. Muller (2008), notes that the Inspection Committee of the City Council's Manpower Department in Tanzania hired a militia whose aim was to detain any person operating without a license. It was noted that the militia, was ostensibly meant to control the vendors but in actual fact was not. In reality, the militia saw the vendors as an income generating project

operating on a random basis; however, they never attempted to control the wealthier informal entrepreneurs. Tripp (1997), notes that both the militia and the City Council aimed to keep "various patronage networks lubricated by extracting bribes from vendors." The militia and the council officials worked hand in hand in engaging in corrupt activities where they milked the informal sector operators.

In addition, it was noted that continued harassment of low-income informal operators especially low-income vendors, compromised the legitimacy of both the City Council and the political elite, due to the fact that people realised that the political elite and their clients were given unofficial immunity in the issue of licenses. Tripp (1997) contends that, cell leaders tended to be more accommodative of the demands of their clients who were their subjects, rather than submitting to the dictates of the upper level leadership. Tripp (1997), states that there were numerous instances in which a cell leader would protect an individual operating without a license in the face of the marauding militia. Cell leaders thus became patrons for informal operators who were not part of the political elite to circumvent bribes and harassment. These cell leaders would lend people money and organise business deals amongst other things. The sole mechanism of power that the City Council controlled was that of force, while local leaders had created an undoubtedly firm power base of widespread support and legitimacy because communities became dependent on these cell leaders for both social and economic protection. Thus, patronage networks and clientelistic relations play an important role in the informal sector of Tanzania.

In most African countries, as the numbers of people in the informal economy surge, governments and political elites rarely remain unresponsive. Mitlin (2004) affirms that most politicians have come to regard these growing crowds as 'vote banks'. Concomitantly, due to

the transition to multiparty democracy, the urban informal economy in most African countries and even beyond has become a terrain of intense political rivalry.

Meagher (2010) asserts that the shoe and cosmetics associations in Nigeria, while showing significant occupational commitment, turned to more local cliental connections in their efforts to represent cluster interests. Meagher (2010) avers that the criminalised status of informal cosmetics producers, due to their lack of NAFDAC registration, made formal institutional channels difficult. The core plan of the associational leadership was to formally register the association in order to gain recognition from the District Police Officer (DPO). Having been formally recognised, associational leaders pay the police to arrest cosmetics producers outside their association, thus forcing them to join, whilst providing protection for their own members and this clearly depicts the manifestation of clientelism. In the context of the Zimbabwean informal sector, clientelism breeds corruption particularly on the distribution of space for the operators.

The case of the Bakassi Boys vigilante group in Nigeria, which was formed by Aba's informal shoemakers in 1998, can be used to fully illustrate the issue of clientelism and patrimonialism in the African informal sector. Run jointly by the informal shoe associations, the Bakassi Boys instituted a popular, though brutish force for the restoration of security in a milieu in which police corruption and rampant criminality had become a grim threat to business activities, as well as to physical safety (Meagher 2007; Ukiwo 2002). Meagher (2010) avows that the success and pervasive fame of the Bakassi Boys brought the shoe associations considerable state attention, although in ways that channelled efforts and resources into the development of the vigilante group, further starving the shoe clusters of resources and attention. Once the vigilante group was well established, Igbo state governors

seized control from the shoe producers, turning the vigilante group into a source of murder and mayhem across south-eastern Nigeria in the run-up to the 2003 elections (with a further revival in the run-up to the 2007 elections) showing the extent to which clientelism and patrimonialism determine the African informal sector (Meagher 2010:61). Therefore, one can argue that the informal sector operators are sometimes manipulated by the political parties to advance their interests. This is also quite evident in the Zimbabwean informal sector where the operators are forced to close shop when there are big ZANU-PF rallies in and around Harare. This is normally done as the ruling party tries to extend its influence on the informal sector operators in urban areas.

Mostly, organised informal sector players engaged with political elites in various, multifarious ways through the combination and use of multiple as well as contradictory modes of engagement in a bid to exert influence on the state through both formal and informal means (Fernández-Kelly 2006; Lindell 2008a; Pieterse 2008;). At times, informal sector players may be pitted against some political elites while playing along with others and may in some instances be able to advance their positions by taking advantage of inconsistencies and contradictions within the state (Pieterse 2008; Cross 1998a; Lindell 2008a). This encapsulates the exploitation of divisions and rigidities between various governmental actors, at a time when relations between these are being reconfigured. Lindell (2010) argues that, in the context of multiparty politics in most African countries, where the large pool of the informal sector players are seen as 'vote banks', informal sector players can gain some leverage by playing off politicians against each other. Conversely, in urban contexts where ruling parties often lose local elections to the opposition, increased political competition tends to deepen urban tensions and generate turmoil among informal workers, as was seen in Kampala a few years ago and Harare from 2000 to the present. The political

character of networks and associations in the informal economy is shaped by the particular milieu in which they exist. The nature of the clientelist relations in the informal sector cannot be universalised as they tend to be different from one country to another (Meagher, 2009). This phenomenon takes various forms as explained by Lindell (2010). Others have shown how periods of state tolerance and sympathy for informal sector players gave way to periods of intolerance and repression, as seen in Zambia and Malawi and in Zimbabwe with the 'Murambatsvina' (Operation Restore Order) 2005, (Lindell, 2010).

5.3 Nature of clientelism in Zimbabwe

A clear-cut understanding of clientelism in the Zimbabwean informal sector demands a thorough investigation of its influence in shaping the 'formal' sectors of the country. Since the attainment of independence in 1980, Zimbabwe has experienced various historical changes which have seen the adoption of various stances by the ZANU-PF government which had a bearing on the configurations of patronage and clientelist politics in both the formal and informal sectors of the country. From the onset, the Zimbabwean political elite were deeply involved in the politics of clientelism given the ethnic diversity characterising the country. As Ekeh (1975) maintains, the state and society cannot be seen as two independent institutions, but rather two spheres enmeshed within each other, where one type of action (informal networks) is considered to be in solidarity, and other types of actions (formal regulations) are seen as alien, and unsocial. Thus, the state and the society in Zimbabwe are intrinsically linked, and this relationship between the society and the state is a resemblance of the relationship between the informal sector and the formal sector.

5.3.1 Clientelism during the 'socialist phase' in Zimbabwe

Having attained power through a popular vote facilitated by intimidation and political harassment during the run-up to the 1980 elections, ZANU jettisoned its pre-liberation promises rooted in socialist principles and adopted a policy aimed at accommodating capitalism though implementing a welfarist social policy which boosted the peasant economy with subsidies and infrastructural development (Dawson and Kelsall, 2011). The ZANU-PF government, delivered agricultural subsidies to the rural peasantry, its key support base, while also using state power to support government parastatals and companies owned by ZANU-PF. Jobs in both these enterprises were made available to party supporters. Tenders and contracts in government parastatals such as the National Railways of Zimbabwe (NRZ), Zimbabwe United Passenger Company (ZUPCO) among others were given to ZANU-PF companies, and both party companies and private capital returned resources and political support to ZANU-PF. The government also issued foreign exchange licenses in a controlled market, which became a lucrative source of rents (Dawson and Kelsall, 2011).

It should be noted that the non-agricultural economy during the socialist phase remained in the hands of multinational corporations, such as Anglo-American, Old Mutual, and Lonrho, representing 'imperial/metropolitan capital' (Dawson and Kelsall, 2011; Stoneman, 1981). This was the impetus behind the need for co-option in order to deal with the white dominance which had characterised the formal sector thereby fulfilling revolutionary ideas which had been promulgated during the armed revolution. The process of co-option saw the appointment of well-connected or politically powerful individuals to the boards of many companies, people such as John Mkushi and Ariston Chambati in the mid-1980s. It should be noted that Ariston Chambati is a well-known friend of the top ZANU-PF cadres (Todd, 2007). Chambati later became Minister of Finance (Bond, 2006). During this period, Zimbabwe saw the surge of a novel 'bureaucratic-financial elite' (Bond and Manyanya,

2003), more concerned with maximising rents and profits than with socialist rhetoric and the ideals of the revolution. To be noted however, is that new foreign direct investment was very limited despite impressive social investment in health and education. This meant economic stagnation and few jobs were created to absorb the surging number of graduates from new polytechnic colleges and the University of Zimbabwe, the only university the country had during the early years of independence (Brett, 2005). The government had no supportive policies to finance graduates to start sector small businesses in the formal economy. Therefore, the majority of the graduates who failed to secure job opportunities in the formal sector ended up eking out a living through informal activities.

It should be noted that a substantial portion of the country's economy was controlled by state-owned enterprises commonly known as government parastatals. From 1980-1990, under the auspices of the socialist ideology, the government parastatals changed in character from production and marketing mechanisms into sites of political patronage as ZANU-PF appointed boards were based less on technical competence than on clientelism (Dawson and Kelsall, 2011). Dawson and Kelsall (2011), note that after the infamous Willowgate Scandal of 1988, patronage politics rather than economic success appeared to be the driving ethos within the government parastatals. For example, in 2005 government parastatals were ordered to erect stands and pay rentals at ZANU-PF's congress thereby contributing to the costs of the event (Independent, 2005). It can be argued that the in-built incongruities of the abuse of government parastatals for political mileage at the expense of economic realities unavoidably resulted in institutions that became less and less efficient even as sources of rents for the political elite let alone as service providers. Since the government parastatals operated as short-horizon and centralised sites of rent-seeking, the cost of maintaining these grew

substantially as profitability declined, leading the state to look at ways to restore their usefulness (Tambudzai, 2003).

Generally, the 'socialist phase' in Zimbabwe can be seen as a period in which the growth functions of economic rents, while not completely ignored, normally played second fiddle to the political imperatives of post-conflict redistribution, patronage, and the more fundamental imperatives of self-enrichment (Dawson and Kelsall, 2011). During this period, it can be noted that the ZANU-PF government was unable to arrest the situation by confronting and controlling the surging corruption. Dawson and Kelsall (2011) avow that a 'Leadership Code' issued by the party in 1984 acknowledged the problem but did not curb short-term unproductive rent-seeking by party leaders. While criminal prosecutions over corruption did result in convictions of many senior ZANU politicians such as Kumbirai Kangai, Maurice Nyagumbo and Fredrick Shava, ambivalent responses by the party sent a clear message to the nation that corruption was acceptable as long as one was in favour with the party. Therefore, the corruption that is found in the informal sector is rooted in events that were taking place in the formal sector. The ZANU-PF party had entrenched corruption to the extent that it had been normalised but that had a negative impact on the country in terms of attracting foreign investors that had the potential to expand the formal sector.

The ZANU-PF's inclination to extract rents from the business sector through regulatory predation encapsulating outright extortion placed it as a parasitic entity from the beginning of its rule (Dawson and Kelsall, 2011). The unpredictable shifting of the government's ideological and legislative policies meant insecurity for any investment and chronicled the raising of the costs of doing business which meant it made much economic sense not to produce goods but to trade them, seeking arbitrage on everything from foreign currency to

fuel and this was the prelude to the upsurge of the informal economy as massive layoffs had to follow given the new trends in the business sector because in this context, a productive capitalist sector and an intermediate class secure in their property rights could not develop (Dawson and Kelsall, 2011). Otieno, (2009) notes that in such a milieu, an elite of political businessmen and outright 'robber barons' emerged, whose positions and profits depended not on productivity but on connections to the Party. This was then perpetuated during the period of massive liberalisation characterised by a burgeoning informal sector.

5.3.2 Clientelism during the period of economic liberalisation (1990-2000)

The economy, during the UDI period and maintained by the post-independence government, reached a crisis point in the late 1980s. With the adoption of the structural adjustment model popularly known as the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) in 1990, the economic orientation of the state which had been premised on import substitution during the Unilateral Declaration of Independence by the Ian Smith government and maintained during the 'socialist phase' by the ZANU-PF government changed to become an export-driven model (Robertson, 2010, Dawson and Kelsall 2011). Davies (2004) asserts that by 1990 the limits of the state as a site for personal wealth acquisition were being reached. The fiscal constraints on state expenditures limited the scope for patronage, clientelism and rent seeking unlike before. Davies, (2004) also argues that the scope of arenas such as abuse of foreign exchange administration was also shrinking as low economic growth limited the spoils. Expenditure on social welfare wilted, which led to great suffering for the working class. Moreover, the structural adjustment transformed the make-up of the economy, eradicating the protection previously afforded to import-substituting manufacturing and introducing incentives favouring, in principle, efficient specialisation within an international division of labour (Dawson and Kelsall, 2011).

It should be noted that the ZANU-PF government abandoned its centralist capitalist welfarist model that aimed to improve the lot of a previously deprived poor to a globally-oriented market economy that abandoned the poor in favour of a consumerism that would see a dramatically widening chasm between the rich and the poor. Massive layoffs had to follow, and a lot of people became redundant. Popular discontent expressed itself in riots in 1995, and in so called 'bread riots' in 1998 and in 2000 as the urban poor rejected increases in basic commodity prices. Real earnings declined to less than ten per cent of their 1982 peak (UNDP 2008). This saw the upsurge of the informal sector which had been brewing slowly through the 'socialist phase'. Formal 'Peoples' Markets', as well as both illegal and licensed mobile and stationary vending became ubiquitous: even here, the political elites were able to utilise access rights to distribute resources to its supporters (Dawson and Kelsall, 2011). While this may be seen as the state decentralising or somewhat losing control of rent management, it can be argued that it was just a process of extension whereby access to rents was extended into the lower echelons of the party (Dawson and Kelsall, 2011).

It soon became apparent that for most aspiring business people, the road to stardom within supplicatory organisations was the only option to be explored. Dawson and Kelsall (2011) affirm that in 1991, a votive organisation which came to be known as the Indigenous Business Development Centre was formed with the state president as its patron and Strive Masiyiwa as Secretary-General. By 1994 the IBDC had extracted several access rights from the state such as a quota for building contracts but its internal dynamics led to two factions developing which immobilised the organisation and gave rise to the establishment of a more militant group, the Affirmative Action Group (AAG), chaired by Philip Chiyangwa (Makombe, 2010). The ZANU-PF government gave funds to the two organisations, but it

later complained about accountability for the funds (Zimbabwe Times, 2009). Dawson and Kelsall (2011) notes that a number of ZANU-PF linked businessmen arose through these organisations with the likes of Enock Kamushinda, Philip Chiyangwa, Roger Boka, Supa Mandiwanzira, Strive Masiyiwa, Chemist Siziba, and Peter Pamire among others. These individuals used their access to the state to develop significant business interests, though Masiyiwa faced major impediments when he tried to establish Econet, a mobile phone company (Dawson and Kelsall, 2011). It can therefore be noted that clientelism which had started from the onset of independence continued to grow with new self-serving actors coming into the picture whilst the party heavy weights who had been at the forefront of the kleptocracy, rent-seeking, patrimonialism and clientelism sat in the dock enjoying the booty and the loot whilst the new elite did the job for them.

A close look into Masiyiwa's story can be very insightful. Masiyiwa's business success attracted attention from the party heavy weights and he was detained and questioned by security agents (Dawson and Kelsall, 2011:40). In an interview in 1996, Masiyiwa pointed out that 'In those days – just as economic reforms were being debated – successful black entrepreneurs were viewed as enemies of the self-proclaimed Marxist/Leninist establishment' (Horizon, 1996). Having been unable to entice the state-owned Posts and Telecommunications Corporation (PTC) to set up a joint venture, Masiyiwa decided to go it alone. He successfully challenged the state monopoly on the provision of information and managed to set up a network with Ericsson, the Swedish mobile phone company, but was later thwarted by a presidential decree in February, 1996. By the time Masiyiwa was involved in a legal wrangle, the ZANU-PF government established a mobile operating company called Net one and also issued a private licence to Telecel, owned by the Empowerment Corporation and the shareholders included the president's nephew, Leo Mugabe. Masiyiwa therefore

challenged the tender procedure and Telecel's licence was suspended, only to be restored through the action of the then Minister of Telecommunications, Joice Mujuru whose husband, Solomon Mujuru, was a business partner of James Makamba, a shareholder in Telecel. Finally, in late 1997, Econet was granted a licence and subsequently launched its service the following year (The Economist, 1998).

It should be noted that despite Masiyiwa's resolute efforts to ward off the government's attempts to frustrate him, the fecundity of his efforts can be largely attributed to the patronage of the vice-president Joshua Nkomo, hence the formation of a scholarship scheme by Masiyiwa bearing his name. Masiyiwa relocated to South Africa after Nkomo's death from where he became a major financial supporter of the (MDC) opposition party and an opposition newspaper, *The Daily News*, while turning Econet into a transnational corporation. In the 1990s, Masiyiwa was also a director of Thebe Investments, owned by the ruling ANC in South Africa, clearly demonstrating that a close relationship between national ruling elites is a favoured business model (Velamuri, 2003).

Roger Boka's scandal of 1998 gives a crystal-clear picture of government-driven clientelism and cronyism. Boka, was the head of the Affirmative Action Group (AAG) with extensive ties to the ZANU-PF political elite and was given a commercial bank licence (Dawson and Kelsall, 2011). It was noted that as the chairman of M and S Syndicate, Boka was given loans to start-up businesses but the money was not paid back (Helen Suzman Foundation, 2000). Helen Suzman Foundation (2000) notes that Roger Boka did not only provide 'loans' to his cronies but rather engaged in criminal fraud when he issued over Z$1.2 billion of counterfeit bonds after the commercialisation of the Cold Storage Commission (CSC). Boka was alleged to have externalised over US$20 million but nothing was done to recover these funds. This

prompted the then Minister of Justice, Mnangagwa (now the president) to appoint the Governor of the Reserve Bank to investigate Boka's activities but Boka died in February 1999 and the investigation appears to have been buried with him.

It should be noted that during this period, land was also a source of rents which the state used as a patronage tool (Dawson and Kelsall 2011). In 2000, Margaret Dongo then the sole independent Member of Parliament released a list of senior government and party officials who had been allocated favourable leases for vast tracts of state land. Little came of such reports, which were largely ignored by the ZANU-PF government (Dawson and Kelsall, 2011). Ensuing inquiries by the government itself and threats to curtail multiple farm ownership were not implemented (Financial Gazette, 2006). This shows a new level of clientelism which would affect both the formal and the informal sector.

5.3.4 Clientelism after the period of liberalisation (2000-present)

After a decade of economic liberalisation marred by failed economic blueprints from the ESAP economic blueprint to the ZIMPREST, and the burgeoning informal sector, the rules of the game on clientelism had to change if the political elite had to continue maximising collecting rent as before. Dawson and Kelsall (2011) note that the relationship of 'elite accommodation' between white financial power and black political power that operated after 1980 preserved the inequities of land ownership in exchange for economic productivity and political submission by the whites. The 'understanding' was about to collapse (Dawson and Kelsall, 2011). The impetus behind this change was the upsurge of political contestation against the ZANU-PF elites, from its own supporters and from a new political party (the MDC), which white farmers such as Roy Bennet and Ian Kay, among others, openly supported and bankrolled.

It should be noted that the period of structural adjustment programmes saw the reduction of State control of the economy as liberalisation meant the emergence of a wide range of actors seeking rents. Dawson and Kelsall (2011) states that the State no longer had a somewhat simple set of clients to manage but faced complex, diverse, and relentlessly shifting demands from a varied array of groups, some of whom were no longer clients but independent and militant outfits. There was the emergence of a powerful group called the Zimbabwean National Liberation War Veterans Association, within the ruling ZANU-PF party which was able to extract significant rents from the State through demanding to be paid cash and an increase of the monthly pension in exchange for political support (Dawson and Kelsall, 2011). The war veterans' demands were met by the government, but these payments were unbudgeted for. This precipitated a major collapse in the Zimbabwean dollar and 'Black Friday' as 14 November 1997 (the day the payments were made) came to be known, was often regarded as heralding the prelude of the economic collapse which was to bedevil the country for a decade and a half to follow (Davies, 2004; Bond, 2007). The growing pressure upon the state to engage in radical redistributive policies by an increasingly vocal and effective assembly of 'war veterans', and peasants resulted in an attempt to address the land issue initially through constitutional methods but after February 2000, through violent and illegal expropriation (Selby 2006; Utete, 2003).

Apart from the above, a challenge to the regime had gathered momentum under the auspices of a trade union movement called the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) which had been initially formed by the State as a control mechanism used to control the militancy of workers who had felt betrayed soon after independence (Herald, 2009). It was principally a branch of ZANU-PF headed by the president's brother, Albert Mugabe. However, by 1989,

the union transformed itself into an autonomous entity with Morgan Tsvangirai as General Secretary who later became the president of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) in 1999. The MDC was able to amass support which was key to its challenge on the ZANU-PF government from workers (both formal and informal), students, middle class urbanites and white commercial farmers (Slaughter and Marsden, 2000). To ward off these challenges to its supremacy, the ZANU-PF government responded by appropriating white owned commercial farms and resources and re-distributed some to its supporters whilst some was distributed through cronyism amongst the political elite and, by militarising the State and by increasing access to rents for its faithful both in the formal and the informal sector where a large pool of people has sought refuge after a decade of liberalisation (Dawson and Kelsall, 2011).

As all this was happening, a massive flight of capital and disinvestment was a result whilst the government touted it as indigenisation. Anglo-American Corporation, a long-time multi-sectoral mainstay of the economy, disposed of most of its assets, while Heinz sold its investment in Olivine (Dawson and Kelsall, 2011). These de-industrialising pressures were intensified in urban areas by a series of factory invasions in 2001 which further unsettled business owners and exacerbated the emigration of both owners and workers to other countries.

With the economy spiralling out of control, the ZANU-PF government mutated to its commandist roots and began to implement increasingly arbitrary and inconsistent 'policies' (Dawson and Kelsall, 2011). After the February 2000 referendum and the unacceptable results of the referendum to the ruling elite, rent allocation based on clientelism became a free for all for those in favour with ZANU-PF and descended swiftly into a form of predatory asset-stripping as the political elite, war veterans, bureaucrats and ordinary citizens scrambled

to secure land and its resources (Chimhete, 2010; 2008; Zimbabwe Times, 2009). Dawson and Kelsall (2011) note that during this period, the marriage of convenience between the black political elite and white rural capitalists had totally collapsed. In that unreliable terrain that arose, the black rural elite owing its loyalty unequivocally to the ruling party, rose exponentially.

Despite the allocation of farms through clientelism, tenure was insecure for those that were beneficiaries of this largesse, and this, coupled with an inadequate financial and agricultural extension support, removed any motivation to engage in productive farming. With the short-term horizons that resulted, it was inevitable that asset stripping of both natural resources and farm improvements would result (Dawson and Kelsall, 2011). Dawson and Kelsall (2011) note that a truly massive shift of resources and wealth from a formerly productive sector into the hands of a parasitic elite ensued. In a sign of growing decentralisation of the rent process, the rentiers were often involved in conflicts over the spoils and farms were taken away and re-allocated as seen after the 2004 purges of some political elites after allegations of planning a coup to remove the incumbent president from power.

To be noted therefore is the fact that, not even the informal sector was immune. In 2005, the regime unleashed 'Operation Restore Order' which demolished and criminalised the entire informal sector in towns. Dawson and Kelsall (2011) note that in such mayhem, even the minor functionaries of the state were able to extract rents from the hapless traders; thus, the police and inspectors regularly extracted 'fines' from traders or simply looted captured goods. As noted, after the Operation Murambatsvina, space allocation to urban informal operators was distributed based on patrimonialism and clientelism. Those who 'own' huge tracts of land which can be leased to the informal entrepreneurs had strong and well-oiled

political connections which guaranteed continued ownership of these spaces. Nyamwanza and Mandizadza (2014) indicate that some 'land barons' with connections to some influential political elites acquired land which was meant for future development, thereby authenticating the fact that clientelism defined and still defines the informal sector in Zimbabwe. Even among vendors, space was also accessed and secured through political connections. Some space seekers have resorted to the tactic of political clientelism and patronage to obtain and secure spaces of operation. Such entrepreneurs openly support ZANU-PF for "giving them land" and get no interference from municipal authorities or police details as they are 'politically backed' (Mandizadza and Nyamwanza, 2014).

In 2007-8 the government initiated the Operation Reduce Prices in which all businesses were obliged to reduce prices of all commodities through physically forcing shopkeepers to mark down prices irrespective of either original or replacement costs (Sunday Mail, 2007). The goods would then invariably be 'purchased' by the same enforcers and their supporters and apparently a few free-lance privateers taking advantage of the chaos (Financial Gazette, 2007). Dawson and Kelsall (2011) note that this pillage provided enormous patronage and clientelism, supplying goods to rank and file members of ZANU-PF and sent a populist message accusing businesspeople of seeking 'excessive profits' at the expense of ordinary people. Captains of industry were arrested and locked up (Sunday Mail, 2007). The government actions to the captains of industry set a bad record for the country and no serious foreign investor could do business in the country under such deterrent conditions. This had a bearing on the burgeoning informal sector as the formal operators were being penalised by the state.

The year 2006 saw a major new rent source established in the diamond fields of Chiadzwa in Manicaland Province (Mirror, 2007). The diamond fields were passed in 2006 to Africa

Consolidated Resources (ACR), a UK registered company whose shareholders apparently included the late Solomon Mujuru and former ZANU-PF leader Dumiso Dabengwa (Monsters and Critics, 2007). Before the announcement of the major discovery, informal diamond diggers had flocked to the area to make their fortunes which subsequently led the police to declare war on 'illegal' miners in what was termed 'Operation Mari Wakaiwanepi' (Operation where did you get the money) and moved in to secure the diggings. The police then became the gatekeepers who rented the fields to diggers, further entrenching clientelism (Financial Gazette, 2008).

Overall, clientelism in both the formal and the informal sector of Zimbabwe have been utilised by a leadership cabal that connects the Joint Operations Command, the ZANU-PF government, party companies, and state-owned enterprises. Clientelism defines access to rents from land, foreign currency, diamonds, and farm equipment, which have been distributed mainly to members of the defence forces and to 'war veterans', with pro-ZANU-PF peasants, civil servants, and pro-regime capitalists being secondary beneficiaries (Dawson and Kesall, 2011). Through clientelism, these groups, whether in the formal sector or the informal sector, provide the political support, and more significantly, the coercive power, to maintain the regime in office.

5.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, clientelism in such African countries as Nigeria and Tanzania has been explored. It has been noted that even in Zimbabwe clientelism has been a common phenomenon in both the formal and informal sector. I traced this phenomenon of clientelism from independence to the year 2000 and beyond in Zimbabwe. This study will dwell much on the clientelistic nature in the informal sector. In the next chapter, I explore the conceptual

framework.

CHAPTER 6: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

6.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter I looked at the Big Man concept in Africa in general and its applicability in the Zimbabwean informal sector. I also explored the operationalisation of the concept in political settings. This concept has been used in different countries in the exploitation of resources in all facets of life. The Big Men in this study refer to political leaders 'maboss' or 'mashefu'. These are the people who command influence and have followers who pay allegiance to them. The Big Men are connected by social networks amongst themselves and even with their followers. In this chapter, I explain the data gathering process. I briefly explain the study site, Glenview Complex 8, which is regarded as the hub of the informal activities in Zimbabwe. Qualitative methodology was used to collect rich and thick data on the influence of clientelism in the Zimbabwean informal sector. In line with this methodology qualitative research methods such as in-depth interviews and focus group discussions were used in exploring the influence of clientelism in the informal sector of Zimbabwe. I used purposive and snowball sampling techniques in selecting the research respondents. All ethical considerations were observed throughout the research process.

Study Site

The study was conducted in Glen View, Harare, one of the many dormitory suburbs for Africans before Independence in 1980. It was developed on a private farm in 1979 by the transitional government of Abel Muzorewa seeking to boost urban support through improved housing. This was a short-lived government formed in 1979 by Ian Smith, Abel Muzorewa and Ndabanigi Sithole. Passage of time led to the development of Glenview Complex which is a thriving hub of informal economic activities in Harare. It is to the South West of Harare,

the capital city of Zimbabwe. Glenview is a populous location owing to informal housing arrangements, some of which were cleaned up in the traumatic operation code named Murambatsvina in 2005 (Tibaiijuka, 2005). The operation also targeted informal sector operators, and this resulted in tens of thousands of people losing their sources of livelihood. This ruinous operation was followed by fire outbreak that destroyed the complex in 2006. As if this was not enough, the same calamity occurred in 2014 and almost the whole complex was reduced to ashes. The two incidences were allegedly due to political conflict, although no concrete evidence was gathered. The location provides a market for the informal sector. According to the Glen View Residents Trust, (2010), over 90% of the residents make some sort of living from informal sector trade.

Previously, the informal operators used to conduct their business from roadsides and open land. Some do their business in the Complex which was established in 2005 to act as a nerve centre for the production of furniture and as a "training centre" for upcoming carpenters and welders. The Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises and Cooperative Development through Small Enterprises Development Cooperatives built the complex in 2005 (Vambe, 2008, Tibaijuka, 2005). The complex falls under a Zimbabwe African National Union (Patriotic Front) management committee. The committee's functions include allocation of stalls, a function that it abuses to allocate stalls to ZANU-PF card holders at the site (Zimbabwe Informal Sector Association 2012, Tandire et al., 2012). Here carpenters and welders are attracted from all parts of the country and some are assisted by relatives and friends already established at the complex. After the training, they qualify as carpenters and welders but due to lack of capital, the majority of them are forced to work under the established carpenters and welders.

The structure is split into multiple stalls, each roughly with four operators. Formally, the complex should have had 480 business units but due to the ever-escalating number of unregistered and illegal informal operators those operating from inside are well beyond 3000. In addition, there is an extension of illegal structures outside distinctions the building complex and these are made of tents, plastics and others of asbestos. There are also some carpenters and welders who operate from outside the fence producing the same products as those operating from inside. There are distinctions to be made. Firstly, there are people who were allocated stalls and those who have been subcontracted. All operators renting a stall are supposed to pay to the city council a monthly charge of US$60 per stall to enable the city council to service the furniture complex. Additionally, people are supposed to pay for electricity to the power utility. Whilst users – those subletting - pay, and have proof of payment, the money is often pocketed by the registered owner who in any case inflates charges (Tandire, et al., 2012).

Kaseke (2012) refers to the informal sector as the seedbed of entrepreneurship development in the country. The operators are known for manufacturing quality products that compete favourably with established furniture retail and wholesale groups who even purchase goods from there (Glen View Furniture Complex Association Report, 2010). The operators specialise in carpentry, producing such goods as kitchen units, coffee tables, room dividers, lounge suites, beds, bedroom suites, television stands, dining room suites, and wardrobes among others. A welding service has emerged, and one can now buy doorframes, window frames and other metal related products which together with carpentry products, are displayed in and outside the complex for prospective buyers to see. The buyers are from all over the country, because the prices are affordable to the urbanites and their rural counterparts who cannot afford upmarket products.

6.2 Study Approach

6.2.1 Methods, Procedures and Techniques

According to Gray (2009) research methodology refers to a procedure for data collection. This study employed a qualitative methodology. This was mainly because the researcher wanted to extract rich and detailed data on the clientelistic networks in the informal sector. I also wanted to establish a deeper understanding of the political dynamics in the informal sector. Therefore, with qualitative methodology I was able to unpack the meaning of naturally occurring phenomena in the social world (Wellman et al., 2005). The research instruments that were used in this thesis were in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. These research instruments enabled the researcher to capture the livelihood strategies that were employed by informal sector operators in their natural setting and the political dynamics that were found in the informal sector. Research respondents were selected using purposive and snowball sampling techniques. Unlike questionnaires and interviews, observation gives the researcher first-hand information of activities and behaviour in their natural settings (Berg, 2007). It also describes and analyses peoples' individual and collective beliefs, thoughts and perceptions over social phenomena. The strength of qualitative research is that it allows the researcher to interpret phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them as it shows events and meanings as perceived by research participants. Its shortcoming is that generalisations are difficult to make from the findings of a particular social setting. However, this research is not concerned about making generalisations since it is qualitative in nature. The research intended to capture rich, detailed and exploratory data on the influence of clientelism in the informal sector in Zimbabwe.

Qualitative research illuminates local perspectives in rich detail (Cresswell, 1998). Such an approach is important as it can help the interviewer/researcher to capture people's attitudes, motives, experiences, feelings, perceptions and other emotions which can be directly

observed (Burgess, 1984). It explores meaning, purpose of reality (Hiatt, 1986). It involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Denzin and Lincolin, 2005; p3). The researcher capitalised on the strengths of qualitative research to gather data from the informal sector operators and other key informants such as former management committee members. I managed to collect detailed data on the political dynamics of in the informal sector and the livelihood options pursued by the operators' at the complex. The participants explained their lived experiences in light of the clientelistic nature of the informal sector of Zimbabwe and in the process revealed how they benefit or lose in their business.

6.3 Data Collection Methods

6.3.1 In-depth Interviews

According to Creswell (2007) an interview is a two-way process initiated by the interviewer for the specific purpose of to collect research-related information on ideas, beliefs, opinions, perceptions and views of the research participants. In this study I used in-depth interviews to gather data from the informal operators (carpenters) on the clientelistic nature of the informal sector, factors that have led to informal sector development, and a plethora of livelihood strategies employed by the operators. In-depth interviews were conducted with individuals who possess substantial knowledge of the topic at hand. These individuals were deemed to know more than other members of the community by virtue of their technical expertise, age, position in society etc. A total of 15 in-depth interviews were conducted with informal sector operators who were selected from Glenview 8 (Complex). Interviews are partially guided but detailed discussions held between the researcher and respondents (Cohen et al., 2006). Prior to conducting the interviews, I noted down the questions I used in enquiring about the

phenomena under study (Fielding and Fielding, 1986). That they are in-depth means they allowed for discussion to be broad while at the same time allowing the researcher to direct his enquiries to topics of interest to him. They are also useful in that they allowed the researcher to probe and follow up on answers given which enrich the outputs (Horton et al., 2004). This was useful in soliciting data on the political dynamics in the informal sector, livelihood strategies employed by operators and the manifestation of the Big Men in the Glenview complex.

6.3.2 In-depth Interviews with Key Informants

I had a total of 12 in-depth interviews with key informants and these were two SME officials at district level, the acting management committee chairperson, three former management committee members, two police officers, one MDC-T councillor, two ZANU-PF officials, former Harare provincial youth chairperson, district officer and district youth chairperson. These key informants provided different nuances on the political dynamics at the complex, manifestation of the big men and the different livelihood strategies pursued by operators.

Table 2.3: Demographic characteristics of Key informants

Age	**Gender**	**Educational Qualifications**	**Political Affiliation**	**Designation**	No
30	Male	Degreed		District Officer in the Ministry of SME	1
55	Male	Ordinary Level	ZANU-PF	Acting Management Committee Chairperson	1
45	Male	Ordinary Level	ZANU-PF	Former management committee member	1
48	Male	Ordinary level	ZANU-PF	Former management committee member	1
40	Male	Diploma		Police officer	1
30	Female	Degreed		Police officer	1
40	Male	Diploma Holder	MDC-T	Councillor	1
35	Male	Ordinary Level	ZANU-PF	Former Harare Provincial` Youth Chairperson	1
33	Male	Advanced Level	ZANU-PF	District Youth chairperson	1

42	Male	Degreed	Harare City Council	District Officer	1
50	Male	Degreed	SME Ministry	SME Officer	1
45	Male	Degreed	SME Ministry	SME Officer	1

6.3.3 Focus Group Discussions

A focus group discussion is a carefully planned discussion designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive and non-threatening environment. During FGDs data is collected through group interactions and this enriches the study that diverse ideas manifest from the participants. Two Focus Discussions (FGDs) were conducted with informal sector operators and some key informants. A Focus Group Discussion is a rapid assessment, semi-structured data gathering method in which a purposively selected set of participants gather to discuss issues and concerns based on a list of key themes drawn up by the researcher (Kumar, 1987). The main argument for using FGDs in this study is because of their collective nature. FGDs are typically best used for topics that are less sensitive, where loss of confidentiality is not a substantial risk (Cresswell, 1998). They are considered to be naturalistic (Kruger and Casey, 2000). Focus groups do not aim to reach consensus on the discussed issues. Rather, focus groups encourage a range of responses which provide a greater understanding of the attitudes, behaviours, opinions or perceptions on the research issues. This enables the researcher to learn and confirm not just the facts but the meaning behind the facts. Above all FGDs provide trustworthy naturalistic data that can also lead to important insights about human behaviour (Fern, 2001). One focus group discussion was conducted with informal operators and some key informants at High Glen Shopping Centre. In the FGD the participants were , one district officer in Harare city council (stationed at the Glen View council offices), two politicians, one from MDC-T and one from ZANU-PF, two customers, SME officer, chairman of Harare Residents Association (HRA), one

representative of Informal Sector Association (ISA), one former management committee member and one police officer . I had a total of 10 FGD participants. The place is one kilometre from the Glenview Complex and was quiet and convenient for the focus group interviews. The Glenview Complex is noisy and very busy such that it was not possible to conduct focus group discussions at that site. However; focus groups have their own limitations as a research instrument. The noisy social environment of focus groups also makes it an inappropriate setting in which to assess an individual's knowledge of content (Krueger and Casey, 2000). Despite these limitations, I managed to capture the nuances of the participants on the clientelistic nature of the informal sector at the complex.

6.3.4 Demographic characteristics of FGD participants

Age	**Gender**	**Educational Qualifications**	**Political Affiliation**	**Designation**	No
45	Male	Advanced Level		Carpenter	1
40	Male	Ordinary Level		Carpenter	1
35	Male	Degreed		SME Officer	1
55	Male	Ordinary Level		MDC-T District Chairman	1
45	Male	Ordinary Level	ZANU-PF	Former management committee member	1
48	Male	Ordinary level	ZANU-PF	District secretary of information and publicity	1
34	Male	Diploma		Customer	1

25	Female	Ordinary Level		Customer	1
32	Male	Degreed		Police Officer	
37	Male	Diploma		Chairman of Harare Residents Association	
40	Male	Diploma		representative of Informal Sector Association	

6.4 Sampling Techniques

Glenview 8 (Complex) was picked purposively as the study area based on the unique characteristics it possesses as discussed in context of the study. Two non-probability sampling techniques; purposive and snowball; were used to select respondents for this thesis. In non-probability sampling the researcher uses his or her discretion to come up with a small sample size and this restricts the researcher to generalise the findings to the whole population. Therefore, the findings in this study are only valid in the context of Glen View Complex 8. The researcher used purposive sampling to select the operators that took part in the study. Snowball sampling is very useful in studies of social networks and this helped the researcher to identify former management committee members. I managed to get the phone numbers of one of them and it became easy to reach out to the other members. However, such samples cannot be representative since to have any chance of being included in those studies must be part of a network of personal contacts. But for the fired former management committee members it was not easy to use other ways of obtaining a sample because this was a sensitive area. On the other hand, when backed up by ethnographic data, studies backed by this sampling technique are often highly credible (Bernard, 1988).

6.4.1 Sample Size

A sample is a subset of the total population under study. In research it is not possible to study the whole population and in this study, I had a sample size of 34 participants. I had a total of nine in-depth interviews with key informants, 10 FGD participants and 15 in-depth interview participants.

6.5 Ethical Considerations

All actions of the researcher were consistent with ethical standards. Before collecting data, I got a clearance letter from the Ministry of Small Medium Enterprises. This was after I wrote a letter with an attachment of proof that I was a Rhodes University PhD student. To enhance my chances of getting clearance I indicated in the letter that I am a University of Zimbabwe employee. In the letter, I clarified the purpose of the study to the principal director in the Ministry of Small Medium Enterprises and this was also made clear to the respondents. It took me two weeks to be cleared by the Ministry. After getting the clearance I was instructed to get another clearance letter from the district officer for Glenview 8 in the Ministry of Small Medium Enterprises. I had no problems in getting the district level clearance letter since the officer complied with the directive from the director in their Ministry. Armed with this letter, I thought that it was game over but surprisingly I was instructed to go to the complex and present the letter to the chairman of the management committee. I asked the district officer if it was necessary to get clearance from the Complex chairman. The young officer did not mince his words as he said that the chairman has political power. He mentioned some cases of some researchers who were denied entry after they were cleared by the Ministry. I was advised to be very diplomatic in my approach when negotiating entry into the research area. I was misguided to think the ministry had a final say on my clearance. When I got to the

Complex I was informed by my research assistant that there was no standing management committee as the previous committee was fired on allegations of aligning themselves with another ZANU-PF faction that was fired in 2014.

At a time when I was doing my paperwork on clearance my research assistants were already on standby. I enlisted the services of two research assistants, Douglas and RK. Douglas is former University of Zimbabwe student who completed his undergraduate degree in Sociology in 2014 and RK is a teacher at Glenview High One and is a former University of Zimbabwe student too. Douglas works at the complex as a carpenter and RK operates snooker in the complex too. These men had developed rapport with the informal operators in the complex and this enabled me to gel with the operators without problems. One of my research assistants Douglas took me to a war veteran who acted as the caretaker chairman and was referred to as the complex 'Elder'. At arrival, I was introduced to the 'Elder'. I then presented my clearance letter to him but he requested a drink to work on my clearance letter. I had no option but to give him the drink to get clearance from him to conduct the study in the complex. My research assistant had tipped me before that the chairman had a tendency of asking for drinks from researchers. Therefore, I was not surprised and he requested to keep a copy of my clearance letter for filing purposes. I conformed to the ethics of research and this was accomplished through seeking informed consent from the informal sector operators and management committee members. Confidentiality was observed at all levels of the thesis and no individual names were disclosed without their consent. The respondents were notified of their right to withdraw from the research process if they deemed it necessary. Respondents were respected throughout the research process and their contributions were portrayed fairly and accurately.

I ensured that participants took part in the research voluntarily and without coercion. Gaining entry into the complex was a mammoth task as the research was conducted during summer of 2017. The area was muddy since it does not have tarmac surfaces. One of my research assistant Douglas works at the complex and he gave me a pair of gumboots. The operators that I interviewed were quite cooperative in that they agreed to be interviewed outside the complex. I would get to their workplaces and then take them to an open and quiet place outside the complex. I could take an average of almost one hour and some minutes with one respondent. I had a tape recorder and I asked for permission to record them before the interview process. They all agreed to be recorded but I made sure that I started recording after they had provided their names. I did this to ensure privacy and confidentiality. In most cases I used their totems when capturing data in the presentation section. During the interview sessions, sometimes, there were some interruptions as the carpenters picked up their customer's calls. After the interviews, I gave each one of them a token of appreciation of US$5 for food. However, I could only give them after the interviews since I wanted to avoid a situation where it could appear as if I induced them to provide favourable data. I had established rapport with the operators during my fieldwork days. This was made easy by the fact that my research assistants were former University of Zimbabwe students and had some business in the complex. They were unperturbed to share their experiences with me as I assured them that the information they provided was securely stored and used for academic purposes only.

During mid-March 2017 there was a rumour that circulated that the complex was going to be closed because of its filthy state. I was told that on 14 March 2017, some officials from the Environmental Management Authority had visited the complex and informed a few carpenters that the complex was going to be closed for a clean-up campaign. This was the

correct version but the message was fabricated and when it got to me it was more like the complex was going to be closed for good. Then I had some sleepless nights because that could have been the end of my research. However, I had some hope in that some operators were arguing that the complex was a ZANU-PF project and they assured me that the party would do everything within its powers to block the closure of the complex. At that moment I was relieved and on 16 March 2017 the clean-up team arrived at the complex and all operators were tasked to clean their places and some refuse trucks were parked outside to ferry the garbage to the council dumping sites. I joined one of my research assistants in clearing his shed of garbage. Some space was created inside the complex to allow the free flow of human traffic carrying their garbage to load the refuse trucks parked outside. The trucks could not be driven inside the complex since there are no roads. It was a busy day as business came to a standstill. The clean-up started at around 9:00 am and ended at 14:00 pm. The complex became clean on this day but just after a week it was back to its sorry state. Data was collected from 2016 to early 2019.

6.6 Limitations of the Study

When I started the data collection process, I experienced some problems. Firstly, I had problems in locating the former management committee members who were useful as key informants in this study. These members have a wealth of data with regards to the complex as they were in the echelons of leadership positions. One of the former chairmen of the committee was at the complex and he was in the company of 'magombiro'. When my other research assistant RK, a teacher by profession tried to introduce me to him he was so evasive. I asked my research assistant to excuse myself from the place because I felt that the guy was not comfortable with my presence. I could not interview him at all. There were some previous cases of harassment of strangers at the complex therefore after sensing danger I just

left the place. However, I successful interviewed other former management committee members after two weeks. They cooperated well in providing me with the data that I requested from them. The major problem was that of suspicion by some respondents especially at the complex as they feared political backlash. However, I managed to allay their fears by showing them my fieldwork letter which was stamped by the Principal Director in the Ministry of Small to Medium Enterprises. I managed to develop and maintain rapport with the research participants since I collected data over two years. Organising key informants for FGDs was difficult as these were drawn from different departments and some of them had tight schedules. However, I managed to have successful FGDs in the end.

6.7 Data Presentation and Analysis

6.7.1 Introduction

Data was presented and analysed using the thematic format. Data was analysed using emerging and recurring themes. According to Fossey et al., (2002:728) 'thematic analysis is a category of qualitative data analysis whereby the researcher carries out the processes reviewing, synthesising and interpreting data or social worlds being studied'. It follows that the collected data responded to the research questions and objectives. The data was analysed in the context of the existing literature. As I presented data, I concurrently analysed it on an objective by objective basis.

6.8 Conclusion

In this chapter, I explained the data gathering process. I briefly explained the study site, Glenview Complex 8, which is regarded as the hub of the informal activities in Zimbabwe. The location of the study site was provided on the map. The qualitative methodology was employed in this thesis. This methodology has strength in that data is collected in its natural setting. In line with this methodology qualitative research methods such as in-depth interviews and focus group discussions were used in gathering data on the influence of

clientelism in the informal sector of Zimbabwe. These research tools enabled the researcher to extract rich, detailed and in-depth data on the social phenomenon under study. I used purposive and snowball sampling techniques in selecting the research respondents. All ethical considerations were observed through-out the research process. As I was collecting data I captured all the methodological problems I encountered. I explained the measures that I employed to address the problems. In the next chapters data is presented and analysed objective by objective.

CHAPTER 7: INFORMALITY AS A LIVELIHOOD STRATEGY

7.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter I explained the methodology, research techniques and the data collection procedure. I used a qualitative methodology to extract rich and detailed data on the clientelistic relationship of the informal operators at Glen View Complex in Harare. In this chapter I focus on the livelihood strategies that are employed by operators in Zimbabwe in general and at Glen View 8 Complex in particular. I look at the nature of businesses that informal operators perform at the Complex. I also examine the types of premises in which operators conduct their activities and the factors that led them to choose their areas of specialisation. I track the operators work history before they started their own businesses at the Complex. The operators are obsessed with problems of political interference and patronage but that will be addressed in the next chapter. In this Chapter I explore the socio-economic problems that affect the informal sector operators at the Complex such as capital constraints, cash crisis, inadequate operational space, stiff competition, operational hazards, lack of security, fire outbreak, and lack of social protection schemes.

7.2 Nature of Business and Skills Acquisition

The carpenters at Glen view 8 Complex manufacture furniture wares such as room dividers, wooden and metal chairs, beds, kitchen units, wardrobes, moulding and designing headboards and selling hard boards. These carpenters acquired the skills through informal training from their mentors. This is consistent with Muponda (2014) who argues that many people in most post-colonial African states have demonstrated great creativity to create jobs as street-vendors, cross-border traders, carpenters, sculptors, brick-moulders among other activities. This confirms that the informal economy in Zimbabwe is a viable sector in terms of

absorbing many urban people failing to find what is referred to as decent work in the formal sector (Chidoko et al., 2012). In addition, most of the carpenters that were interviewed acquired their carpentry skills through informal training from relatives and friends. Social networks are seen to be very pivotal in the recruitment of new trainees at the Complex. The carpenters that were found in the Complex did not have certificates but the quality of their furniture resemble those of qualified carpenters. Therefore, the findings refute the widely held view that informal sector workers lack skills. This is quite misplaced as there were people who had well-perfected skills that they acquired through either formal training or informal training.

Moreover, the most prevalent mode of skills acquisition at Glenview Complex 8 was through informal apprenticeship under a trained carpenter. The trainee (client) will be tied to the experienced (patron) for some period of time under mentorship. Therefore, the patron-client relationship is established in the journey to skills acquisition. For the upcoming inexperienced carpenters that is the only available route since most of them come from poor families that cannot afford to send them to formal carpentry training colleges. The hopes for these trainee carpenters' enrolment in formal training institutions are limited because of the deterring monetary requirements. This informal training system is a better option in that it provides a small income during the training period in the form of stipends.

Nevertheless, the only disadvantage of this informal training system is that it does not provide certification of their skills. They don't have anything to show at the end of the training despite their capacity to produce quality products. However, it is worth noting that there is need to strengthen the formal-informal sector training linkages in terms of training carpenters as a way of enhancing the certification of their skills. Therefore, the role of the

informal sector cannot be underestimated as this sector has developed to be the major source of livelihood for semi-skilled and unskilled workers in Zimbabwe (Mudzengerere, 2013).

In addition, it was also established that most of the carpenters at the complex came from the rural areas. In most cases they were invited by relatives who have already established themselves at the complex. According to Lipton's "Bright Light Theory", the rural dwellers migrate to urban areas in anticipation of improved health, education and employment opportunities. In light of high unemployment in the country most of these people upon arrival in the urban areas, join the informal sector to eke out a living. In this case they are absorbed into the carpentry industry at the complex. This phenomenon was also observed in the Ghananian informal sector. Just as in other African countries rural-urban migration has been alluded to as a catalyst to the development of the informal sector in Ghana (Austin, 2005, Amanor, 2006). People in the rural areas at the attainment of independence perceived life in the cities to be more attractive than in the countryside (Caldwell, 1969). Benjamin (2007) argues that development in Ghana had an urban bias and economic liberalisation made it possible for investment to be poured into already developed parts of cities of Accra. At independence the urban areas attracted the rural folks as they promised a wide range of opportunities for people's livelihoods. However, Zimbabwe, because of the decline of the formal economy and political persecution of opponents has for many years had a reverse flow of people from urban to rural areas.

The informal sector has proved to be a destination offering opportunities to those wanting to become entrepreneurs. The education levels of those employed in the informal sector are generally lower than those in the formal sector (Liimatainen, 2002). My findings contradict Liimatainen 2002, as I have observed that most of the respondents were grade seven and

ordinary level graduates. There was one peculiar case of a carpenter who was a sociology degree holder. This confirms that with the limited job opportunities in the country even university graduates are finding their way into the informal sector as a livelihood strategy. In other cases, highly educated and skilled people join the informal sector to supplement their dwindling incomes mainly exacerbated by the economic meltdown experienced in Zimbabwe (Mudzengerere, 2013). According to Xaba et al., (2002), the informal sector in Zimbabwe is expanding in terms of employment and enterprises. Without the informal economy, it is difficult for the majority of Zimbabweans to earn a living especially in urban areas. It has been noted that the informal sector has become an alternative to the formal sector in terms of employment creation in Zimbabwe. The country has become more informal than formal as the economic situation is becoming worse. People are able to create jobs on their own and to sustain themselves and their dependants. The sector becomes crucial in providing employment and income.

7.3 Problems Faced by Carpenters in Starting up the Business

7.3.1 Capital Constraints

While there are some entrepreneurs who have access to capital, and have indeed established themselves, the majority of carpenters lack funding to procure the necessary materials for production. The experiences of carpenters are captured below. This is captured in the following remarks by Takunda who works as a carpenter at the Complex;

> *I was trained as a carpenter at the complex in 2009 and I can make quality wares on my own but I wait for prospective carpenters to pay a deposit for me to produce wares. I don't have capital to procure raw materials to produce furniture wares for display and this is affecting my monthly income (Takunda, Interview, 2016).*

The carpenters who were interviewed, Peter and Caleb (Interview, 2016), agreed that if they were given starting capital roughly from US$500-US$1500 they would be able to produce products that can generate capital that will boost their operations. Unfortunately, banks are not forthcoming partly because these petty commodity producers lack collateral security. Where banks are willing to provide loans, the interest rates are often so high as to discourage even the most daring of the carpenters. The producers made reference to one bank, CABS which they said charged such high interest, that it will stifle any possible growth within the facility. Indeed, as one carpenter remarked;

> *The interest rates charged by the banks make it difficult for them to pay back and as such they want loans with no or very low interest rates of say 5% and not the 25% charged by banks like CABS. If this is done, they will be able to boost production and their business can thrive well. (Interview, Moyo, 2016)*

In the absence of capital, entrepreneurs turn to a variety of strategies to continue production. Some depend on their sales to raise income for the next line of production while others cleverly opt for cheap resources for production, buying these from the Chinese outlets that are dominated by fake products in the downtown shops. Many carpenters opt to buy non-leather material, opting for the cheap REXINE which they present to clients as genuine leather, according to Mr Chauke (Interview, 2016) a victim of this practice. Clients of course fight or protest against such malpractices, but these persist because the producers lack the funding to buy genuine material.

It has been established that finance is the main problem experienced by carpenters to start their business. The money is required to buy tools and raw materials needed for the production of furniture. Some of the carpenters do not have a culture of sharing tools. The money is essential to boost and expand the business. One of the carpenters had this to say;

Capital was a major problem I faced; it was hard for me to acquire it. I had to do part-time jobs for other carpenters. I could make a wardrobe for them and they could pay me 10 per cent after they have sold the product. In cases where wardrobes were sold at US$150, I could get US$15. The more furniture wares I produced the more I increased my income per month. I had to budget that money to pay rent, buy food, pay school fees for my three children and also had to save a small amount for start-up capital but it was hard. My relatives were reluctant to lend me some money for business, and then I could back pay in instalments. If I had the money then I could have expanded my business but capital was then a major drawback (Interview, Moyo 2018).

Starting capital proved to be a major problem to many up-coming carpenters at the Complex. Mukanya (Interview, 2017) had five Ordinary Level passes but could not progress with his education after his parents passed on in a tragic car accident in 2009. He got married in 2012 and ventured into carpentry as a survival strategy. His journey into this trade was not smooth as he experienced capital constraints just like any other entrepreneur. Mukanya (Ibid) remarked that;

The main problem that I faced was that of capital to start the business because at that time I was now married and had a child. I had to make stools, coffee tables and pushing trays which I would sell around the locations such as Kambuzuma and Mufakose, then I would save the little money that I made. If it wasn't for this job, I might be in the streets doing nothing. You know that education in Zimbabwe is now useless, even with a degree you might still be unemployed.

The problem of capital has come to the attention of the government and efforts were made to address it. The government through the Ministry of Youth and Indigenisation disbursed some funds in 2013 but unfortunately some youths were marginalised in accessing the money. The following is a narrative of one of the carpenters who was denied access to the funds;

> *The youth that benefited from the loans were less than 10. It was a mystery to us why a few carpenters benefited because we even hired professionals to help us in developing the project proposals. This happened in 2013 the period Honourable M was the Minister of Youths and Economic Empowerment. The party leaders in the management committee are the ones that benefited from the loans but we never got a cent. The committee monopolizes everything to benefit themselves. When they are allocating funds, they approach people that are affiliated to them. Civil protection was also unveiling money to help the carpenters that were affected by fire outbreak but the committee members hijacked the disbursement process and we did not benefit. The only loan that I benefited from was the one that was given by the ILO donor. This loan allocation was transparent in that everyone who was affected by the fire outbreak benefited. I only know of five carpenters from ZANU-PF who got US$1 200 from the loans but they never paid back. I think the government should intervene and create a friendly working place, and also give carpenters transparent loans that are not politicised. Loans should benefit everyone regardless of political affiliation (Interview, Sithole, 2018).*

Most of them are semi-skilled but they do not have the funds to be independent and start their own business, and even if they go to the banks to request a loan, they do not have collateral.

While there were some carpenters who had access to capital, and had indeed established themselves, the majority of the carpenters lacked funding to procure raw materials for production.

In the above narratives, it has been shown that, in the absence of capital, carpenters turn to a variety of strategies to continue production. The unprecedented politico-economic and social problems that have bedevilled Africa have not spared Zimbabwe (Bratton and Masunungure 2006). Regardless of the Zimbabwean experience being unique in a certain way, sub-Saharan African countries have faced problems which have tested the resilience of the citizens of most countries most notably the urban poor (Ndoro, 1996). In this study the problem of working capital has been so pronounced that it was a setback to many furniture operators at the Complex. In most post-colonial African states, informal employment has been a source of livelihoods for many people (Mutillah, 2005). The operators have been creating employment to relatives from the rural areas though the remuneration system has been found to be characterised with uncertainty. This has kept many people in employment, and thus has helped to avoid high unemployment despite adverse economic conditions.

In view of the above problem what needs to be done is to provide capital to the operators. In respect of capitalisation it is obvious that the creation of sources of funding need to be identified for the sector. In the case study, I have discussed that small producers denied access to loans by formal financial institutions. What may be required is to create dedicated banks and lending facilities along the lines of what was done in Asia, particularly Bangladesh. Small companies with viable plans are able to access a variety of banks and credit facilities dedicated to them.

There are obviously problems which relate to possible mismanagement of funding, corruption and general abuse of funding facilities. But this is not to be considered a specific problem affecting the sector. The problem of funding in United States of America and the global crunch would seem to support that this is a common problem perhaps what can be done is to provide economic and financial skills to the feared problems of financial mismanagement.

Capital constraints have been singled out as one of the major problems experienced by carpenters in their production of furniture wares. Capital is needed for labour costs, purchase of raw material and marketing related costs. In this study, I indicated that the small producers are not benefiting from formal financial institutions. Banks cannot fund these operators, citing lack of collateral security, while other lenders demand exorbitant interest rates.

The above findings correspond with Mupedziswa (1991) who reports that 41% of the informal sector operators in her study had been negatively affected by lack of capital, mainly due to the fact that financial institutions view the informal sector with condescension. Lack of collateral security among informal sector operators is cited as the major stumbling block in their endeavour to access credit (Dhemba, 1999). The informal sector operators are alleged to be involved in criminal tendencies and this discourages the banking sector from availing financial support to the sector (BAZ, 2014). However, this observation is in sharp contrast with the above findings where most of the operators use legitimate means for survival. Adisu (2006) posits that in times of financial constraints the operators' access capital from money lenders commonly referred to as loan sharks. This has been the case with the Glenview informal sector operators. However, this had brought more misery among the operators' since they are charged exorbitant rates when they repay the loan. In spite of this, the carpenters are

very innovative people who employed an array of strategies to raise capital to start their business.

7.3.2 Cash Crisis

It has been noted that apart from the capital constraints faced by carpenters in starting-up their business there is also the problem of cash flow that is affecting their business. When the economy was a bit more stable the informal sector thrived on cash transactions and the issue of plastic money came as a surprise to the operators. The transactions were done in $US but by the time of conducting research most of the transactions were carried out in bond notes and electronic transfers. Most of the carpenters were not spared by the acute cash shortage experienced by everyone in Zimbabwe. The situation has become worse since 2017 to date. The operators source some raw materials from South Africa, and they must buy foreign currency on the black market at high rates. US$100 was costing 130 bond notes and when it was electronic transfer or Eco-cash it was 140-150 bond notes. As of January 2019, the rate had skyrocketed to between RTGS$460-500 to US$100. One of the carpenters Chirandu (Interview, 2017) narrated his experiences in business from 2011 to 2017 as follows;

> *From 2009 to 2013 I could make up to US$700 profit per month. Business was doing well during the time of the inclusive government, because there was circulation of cash. The introduction of the multicurrency system stabilised the economy which was previously characterised with hyper-inflation in 2008. Customers were there, and during that time farmers as the major clients were given cash so they could easily buy our products. The cash withdrawal limits were pegged at US$3000 in all banks. As for farmers they were given preferential treatment by banks as they could withdraw US$5000 as they were placed in the bracket of companies. However, things have*

changed as farmers are no longer paid in cash but through the electronic system and Econet-cash. When money is deposited in their accounts, they have to wait on bank queues for hours on end to withdraw only US$50 dollars per day. At one time tobacco farmers attacked the bank staff at Leaf Tobacco Floors after they have gone for days without withdrawing money. This was followed by clashes between the armed riot police officers and the farmers. Some farmers suffered some minor injuries during the skirmishes. However, some farmers who were alleged of inciting violence were arrested but later released without any charges. Thus, this makes them unable to buy our products using cash. The farmers are struggling to get money from the banks so it is hard for them to buy our furniture.

Also due to the cash crisis carpenters at times are forced to reduce the price of their furniture wares. This results in carpenters buying cheap materials for production and that compromises the quality of their wares. The carpenters have the zeal to expand and boost production. However, it was noted that this dream cannot be achieved without the intervention of the government. They expected the government to liaise with banks to relax the conditions on the provision of loans. This could enable carpenters to increase their production of furniture and they can open other shops in other towns. They will be able to widen their clientele and increase the sales. This concurs with Tandire et al., (2012) and Mupedziswa, (1991) who explained the impact of cash crisis on informal sector development. They also explored the stringent measures that are required by banks for the informal operators to access capital.

7.3.3 Fire outbreak

Fire outbreak has been a major problem in the Zimbabwean informal sector sites. This problem has been attributed to a number of factors such as negligence, overcrowding, poor infrastructure, politics and lack of security. It was noted that some carpenters were negligent as they fail to take good care of their consumables. They use flammable products such as glue, thinners and vanish. Therefore, at times some smoking carpenters could just drop their stubs of cigarettes everywhere and this will lead to fire outbreaks. Another issue that was raised was that of poor connections of electrical cables which leads to short circuits and fire outbreaks at the Complex. The carpenters have connected electricity from the neighbouring Glen View 8 location. So as a way of cutting costs these carpenters enlisted the services of less skilled electricians which in the end pose a danger to their property and the lives of people in the event of fire outbreaks (Daily News, 2012). Apart from negligence, overcrowding has also exacerbated the outbreak of fire and there is need to address this issue by opening new places so as to decongest the complex. In Ghana just like in Zimbabwe, fire outbreak has been singled out as a major problem to the informal sector operators. The problem is always compounded because of congestion (Anaglatey, 2013). Boateng (2013) posited that improper electrical fittings, use of sub-standard electrical materials, defective generators and power fluctuations resulting from frequent power outages are some of the possible causes of fire outbreak. Hence these findings corroborate with what has been happening in other African countries.

7.3.4 Lack of Insurance Cover

It was established that the operators at Glen View Complex shun insuring their goods. They value insurance in cases of fire outbreak, but they fear that the business might crumble and might fail to pay the insurance subscriptions. In light of the previous fire outbreaks at the complex it is critical for the carpenters to seek insurance cover. Larsen (2000) argues that

insurance does not prevent risk from happening but provide the means by which individuals and entities exposed to risk can transfer the financial consequences of the risk to the insurer in return for the payment of premium. However, the majority of the carpenters find it difficult to have insurance cover as the nature of their business is characterised by uncertainty. As their business is sometimes fragile, they might not make a profit so it will be difficult for them to pay the insurance monthly fees. One of the operators had this to say;

> *Insurance would be helpful in protecting our products. The management committee once talked of insuring the Complex and even invited an insurance company to come and address the people, but up to now nothing has been done. An insurance company came and tried to talk to us as Complex members but its representatives revealed that they could not work with us because our management committee is aligned to politics. I also personally tried to talk to the insurance company representatives, but they said they wanted us to have adequate security, better roads, and better buildings if we were to access their services. These were their conditions if they were to work with us. The management committee could not allow us to be under an insurance company because they knew they could not get money from us. We are scared to even insure our products because in Zimbabwe there are now bogus insurance companies. We may pay the insurance subscriptions but, in the end, get short-changed (Sinyoro, Interview, 2017).*

This is supported by Diko (2014) who argues that social protection schemes for informal workers are critical for fulfilling the rights of urban informal workers to earn a decent living. Sadly, these insurance schemes do not exist in the informal sector to cover business activities and assets making these businesses vulnerable to adversities such as fire. The situation could

have been better if the carpenters had insurance cover. Chikova (2013) notes that Zimbabwe like most developing countries, especially in Africa, face an uphill task in providing universal access to social security schemes for all its citizens.

7.3.5 Inadequate operational space

A notable challenge relates to operational space. The operators highlighted lack of adequate space for them to realise maximum production. Simon *(Interview, 2018)*, a founder operator remarked that;

> *The formal stalls that were built by Small Enterprises Development Cooperative (SEDCO) are not enough to cater for the ever-expanding need of formal space by the carpenters.*

His point is valid, because whereas the original complex was designed to accommodate 480, now there are about three thousand cramped in the same complex. The problem of space is felt the more in summer. Most of the operators interviewed revealed that the soaking rain affects their timber and furniture. This is clear from the remarks by Masimbo*, (Interview, 2017)* who supplies downtown furniture shop Fair Deal;

> *Wood which is the major raw material required in the production of furniture is very sensitive to bad weather, (rain). When "mapiritsi ebasa*[1]*" gets soaked with water this compromises the quality and subsequently the price of the finished products*.

In some cases, the loss is substantial as happened to Masimbo who lost furniture worth US$1 500 in 2011 summer season.

Carpenters plying their trade right adjacent to the flowing stream are often forced to vacate their workplace in bad weather. A sofa making kinship-based group "VanaMurehwa from

[1] 'Mapiritsi ebasa' refers to timber that is used by the carpenters in making different kinds of furniture.

Buhera" once abandoned their base for more than two weeks which was swamped with water following heavy rainfall. There are kinship networks that help sustain the informal sector at the Complex. In this context, it has been noticed that social networks cuts across the political, cultural and economic domains of the informal sector operators (Coleman, 1990). It suffices to argue that, the informal sector in Africa in general and in Zimbabwe in particular had stood the test of time through the intricate social networks that are being employed by the operators.

The furniture that survives the rain damage is often affected by mud as people trudge through the waterlogged shops. The soiling compromises the quality as well as the price of those products displayed on the open spaces. Some Johanne Masowe apostolic carpenters Tinorwa and Chibwe (Interview, 2018) had to slit the price of their wardrobes by 50% following extensive soiling of furniture from buyers and pedestrians late last year (2018). In such situations, carpenters run losses. Rainfall related problems are long term and there have been attempts by government to solve them by putting tarmac surfaces on the place in 2010. The attempts were fruitless causing many people including the Acting Chairman of the complex to be frustrated;

> *We are now tired of empty promises from the government and there seems to be discord on forging the way forward. A long time ago in 2010 we were promised tarmac surfaces but nothing materialised. This is lip service and there is need to translate words into action (Acting Chairman, Interview, 2017).*

Because of the limited space, there is overcrowding at the complex with an estimate of over 3000 operators (Tandire et al., 2012). Secondly, the multiple self-made workshops are overcrowded to the extent that carpenters end up with limited space to display their products. Because of the problem of overcrowding at the complex and in the stalls, buyers find it

difficult to move freely when viewing products on display. Some carpenters fail to access potential buyers because of lack of adequate space.

Therefore, it is clear that in response to the problem of space carpenters have resorted to the construction of makeshift and substandard workshops. The structures are assembled from plastics, metal sheets, wood and any material of convenience. Such structures serve the immediate need for space, but simultaneously create problems. It was in November 2011 when fire, fanned by flammable materials plastic used as shelter, destroyed furniture worth more than five hundred thousands of dollars putting many carpenters like Sam out of business. Sam had borrowed US$300 from his uncle to start up his furniture business and the furniture that was valued at US$450 was destroyed on that day (Sam, Interview, 2017).

7.3.6 Stiff Competition

The carpenters at the Complex face stiff competition at various levels. Firstly, there is competition amongst them. While the operators appeared to be a united body from outside, in practice they jostled for customers who included civil servants, casual labourers and farmers, especially those specialising in the country's lucrative tobacco production (Herald, 2015). The competition was getting tough because the segment of civil servants with disposable incomes had been shrinking over time.

In-order to outdo each other, carpenters cut their prices to ridiculous levels. The operators affected by the price reduction were the small carpenters, incapable of producing in bulk or those who undersold their wares often failed to get income for subsistence, let alone the fees for school going children. Those who were severely affected often jumped the fence,

choosing to operate their business outside the Complex where they turned to brokers, so-called ‘magombiro’ who for a fee help to advertise their wares.

The operators bemoaned the market exhaustion in the country and they were talking to government officials so that they can facilitate external markets for their wares (Daily News, 2016). The operators cherished the dream of exporting their manufactured goods to the neighbouring countries such as Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique. The lack of a proper market is hindering the growth of their businesses as they sold their wares at low prices. In response to the strong competition some operators were moving out of the complex to look for new markets. They were relocating to areas where they know that there are many customers.

Competition is a big problem at the complex as explained by one of the carpenters;

> *It was hard when I started business to market my products because there were those that were already known in the business, so as a newcomer it was hard to get customers. However, I hope if all goes well and I get a loan my business will expand. I also hope to improve on marketing so that I can attract many customers. Also, our working places are not attractive to the customers, so we need better places to do our trade (Makuyana, Interview, 2018).*

7.3.7 External Competition

There was also competition from established furniture companies which shared three characteristics, giving them an edge over the Complex carpenters. Firstly, they had capital and could afford to buy the necessary raw materials. Secondly, and as a result produced quality furniture. Thirdly, they had flexible payment terms, a facility which carpenters were

slowly embracing. This has affected carpenters at the Complex and has resulted in a big drop in the number of customers. One of the respondents *(Shumba, Interview, 2018)* moaned:

> *You can be as entrepreneurial as you like but a small, informal business cannot compete with established furniture shops like Pelhams, TV Sales, and Teacher's Furniture, among others. The market space is taken by these giant shops*.

To survive, the small furniture producers devised strategies which included entering into partnerships with established furniture shops that came to do business with them. Masimba, (Interview, 2017), who specialises in sofa-making, had carved a deal in 2015 with Fair Deal to which he sold his wares at low prices of US$500 for a single set of sofas. These would subsequently be sold at between US$800 and US$900 each. Masimba agreed to this deal since there was the benefit of a ready market.

There was an expansion of the market for carpenters during the time of the inclusive government as the economy was stable. The carpenters were enjoying doing business as they made profits from their sales. However, after 2013 elections things became worse for business as there was reduced circulation of cash. There was also a decline in customers that came to the complex and it led to many operators to move out of the Complex to find new markets. Some even went back to those areas that were destroyed during Operation Murambatsvina such as in Gazaland and Makomva. The relocation of these operators has led to reduced number of customers who came to the complex as some customers could get the services, they wanted from the operators who relocated to other areas. Mupedziswa (1991) notes some of the problems, such as the lack of capital, lack of tools and machinery,

inadequate skills, lack of premises, too much competition and negative by-laws which lead to harassment. These problems always have a negative impact to the growth of the informal sector in the country.

It was also established that carpenters sometimes have a problem of dealing with unscrupulous customers who come to the Complex. Some of these customers would be regular customers and they could buy big orders on zero deposit or they could pay half upfront. They would be expected to clear their balance after clearing their stock. When doing the transactions, they purport to be genuine and honest but they would show their true colours by failing to clear their arrears. Shumba, *(Interview, 2018)* one of the carpenters who was a victim of these unscrupulous customers, had this to say;

> *I sold 20 wardrobes and 10 kitchen units to Mr Shaw. He paid me half the price which was US$3 250. The selling price for wardrobes and kitchen units was US$250 and US$150 respectively. Mr Shaw agreed to clear the arrear after the sales but six months down the line he started playing hide and seek games with me as he refused to clear his balance. He was ignoring answering my calls and was now hoarding his stuff from other carpenters. I experienced problems in buying raw materials for the business. I was left with no option except to report him to the police. He was arrested and the case was brought to the criminal court. It was my first time to go to the court and I panicked when his lawyer fired me with confusing questions during cross-examination and I ended up losing the case. The lawyer requested for written evidence of the balance that was to be cleared by Mr Shaw. Through the trust that had developed between the two of us I did not have receipts which stipulated the balance that he owed me.*

In face of the external competition Bhila one of the carpenters and his workmate Museyamwa opened some furniture shops in Chinhoyi and Karoi. They registered good sales, but business was expensive for them because of the high rentals, thus they closed the shops. At the time of doing research the two operators were selling their furniture ware at the complex but they had customers who came from outside Harare, from places such as Karoi and Chinhoyi where they once operated. Other customers came from areas such as Bindura and Masvingo. All the customers from faraway places bought furniture ware in bulk. This works as an advantage to the carpenters since they can get a once off profit than the customers who buy single products. The operators have shown that they are very innovative in that they managed to diversify their market to the outskirts as a way of offsetting the competition at the complex. This strategy has worked not only for the two carpenters but for many of them. The carpenters are not passive beings but are very active in finding solutions to their problems (Bhila and Musiyamwa, Interview, 2017).

7.3.8 Poor Sanitation

In-order for business to prosper, carpenters must operate in good hygienic conditions. The situation at the Complex is not encouraging in terms of sanitation. The ablution facilities constructed by SEDCO were described by Ncube (Interview, 2018), a coffin maker, as pathetic. They could not cope with the ever-expanding population at the site and as a result were in appalling condition. It was established that there is a total of four toilets to cater for a population of about over 3000 people. Out of these four two are for women and the other two for men. Clearly, the facilities are congested. The other problem was that the available facilities were expensive. A fee of 20cents was required for the carpenters on site. This was when the toilets were still functional. Although the payment appeared small, to the carpenters it was a major problem. Those who could not afford to pay for ablutions ended up using the

swampy areas to relieve themselves, thereby creating a health hazard. At one point the City Council threatened to close the whole complex to prevent the spread of water-borne diseases like cholera (Ncube, Interview, 2018). This issue was raised by the Glen View city of Harare District Officer in a FGD. He revealed that as the city authority they have a specialised department for health and waste management. This department desires to make Harare a clean city and health inspectors have the powers through the urban by-laws to close all sites that have inadequate sanitation structures (Harare District Officer, Interview, 2018).

Some carpenters accused the management committee members of taking money from the carpenters under the pretext that they could build more toilets. They just pocketed the money for their personal use as there are no additional toilets that were constructed. The three former management committee members in FGDs confirmed that money was misappropriated by their bosses and they had no powers to restrain them as they are their superiors in the party. One of them had this to say;

> *My brother so many bad things happened at this complex and politicians use party politics as a scapegoat as they squandered resources that were earmarked for development. Our major priority as the former management committee members was to leave an indelible mark on sanitation issues but all that is history as there are no tangible structures that were constructed during our time. (FGD, 2018)*

By the time of completing the research all the toilets had blocked and people were relieving themselves in the nearby stream and others with relatives near the Complex could use toilets in the neighbouring houses. Below are pictures of male and female blocked toilets.

Picture 1: Complex Female Toilets

Picture 2: Complex Male Toilets

Garbage has been a major problem at the Glen View Complex and if the authorities do not take drastic measure this place can become a breeding ground for diseases. I observed garbage heaped all over the complex as the city council waste management department don't service the area. Shekede (2016) concurs with this observation as he argues that poor sanitation and hygiene poses a threat to the spreading of diseases in the informal sector of Zimbabwe.

Below is a picture of uncollected garbage at the complex.

Picture 3: Uncollected Garbage

There is also critical shortage of water at the Complex. The whole Complex is serviced by one tap. The tap is located at the centre of the Complex but only the brave can take drinking water because the place is filthy. Below is a picture of the water source.

Picture 4: Water Source, Tap

The carpenters that operate in the ‘mahalape’ area also face a similar predicament to those working in the main Complex;

We are now operating here in 'Mahalape' because there is enough space but the problem is that there are no proper roads, there is no electricity and toilets. People now use the nearby bushes to relieve themselves and this makes the Complex prone to disease outbreak (Moyo, Interview, 2018).

This is consistent with Diko's (2014) findings who note that the informal sector in Zimbabwe is characterised with occupational hazards in the form of poor sanitation. In addition, he argues that there is inadequate access to running water and toilet facilities. These problems have a potential of exposing the carpenters to waterborne diseases such as cholera and dysentery. It is clear that environmental problems are hampering production among petty producers. This is what I saw in the case of Glenview. In light of the above, both government and producers have to join hands to provide sanitary facilities on a wide scale. It is clear that without the involvement of producers, there can never be a sustainable sanitary environment.

7.3.9 Poor Infrastructure

The infrastructure that was built by SEDCO was good but unfortunately all the 11 buildings were razed by fire. The stalls were also small and could not accommodate even two wardrobes. Therefore, storage space has been a major problem since the inception of the complex. The available makeshift 'shades' are not sufficient to store the products and because of the annual fire outbreaks these shades are not good enough to protect furniture from fire. One of the Informal Sector Association representatives in a FGD decried the poor state of infrastructure at the complex. His contribution was that the government should provide funds through the Ministry of Small to Medium Enterprises to develop the area considering that it was razed by fire on several occasions. He went on to say that when decent structures are constructed the informal sector operators will also contribute to the national economy through paying tax. He was against the government's idea of taxing the informal

sector operators when the government was doing nothing to improve the working environment of the operators. This supports Mutillah (2005) who asserts that, informal sector players complain about expensive daily charges, poor and insecure working locations, inappropriate hours of business, poor locations for business, constant harassment, confiscation and loss of goods to urban authorities and poor enforcement approaches by urban authorities.

7.3.10 Lack of Security

Cases of theft were on the increase because of lack of security. If carpenters are not around, the 'magombiro' are alleged to break in and steal furniture. In order to avoid losses during fire outbreaks and to theft cases, some operators have been moving out of the Complex and operating in other areas where their products are secure. Those that work outside the complex are not affected by the 'magombiro' and they have close contact with their customers and they negotiate prices with customers without interference from 'magombiro'. This problem was rightly captured by Brand (1986) in his study when he observed that a number of informal operators decried lack of security of tools, completed items and capital equipment at Magaba in Harare.

7.3.11 Impact of Business on livelihood

Despite the problems that the carpenters experience at the Complex it has been noted that people's livelihoods have been changed for the better. Due to the high unemployment rate in Zimbabwe many carpenters take their job as their major source of livelihood. According to Xaba et al., (2002), the informal sector in Zimbabwe is expanding in terms of employment and enterprises. Without the informal economy, it was going to be difficult for the majority to earn a living especially in urban areas (Chirisa, 2012). The informal sector is playing a

pivotal role in the provision of jobs for the urban people. One of the carpenters who eke out a living marking furniture revealed that;

> *If it wasn't for the business, I would be dead. However, the profit margins are taking a nose dive due to the economic crisis now as I pocket US$400 per month. My family depends on this business. There is no other source of income that I have, thus it has enabled me to take care of my family and send my four children to school. I have managed to buy a stand in Glenview 1 extension, and I have built a two roomed house and that is where I am staying with my family. I have also bought three cars but I sold them when my furniture wares were consumed by fire. My first car was a Mazda B2200, followed by a Mazda 323 and then I bought a Toyota Carina which I sold in 2016. I am looking forward to buy a car if my business goes well. I also developed my rural home by building a four roomed house. I also have three cows and 30 goats. Though I haven't finished paying lobola, the money I used to pay part of the lobola was from this business. After the 2017 tobacco selling season, I managed to do a follow up and discovered that the carpenter managed to buy a pick-up truck, Mazda B1800 (Sithole, Interview, 2018).*

Much of what I propose ultimately depends on the goodwill and support from those in positions of authority. The country has experimented with the formal sector approach for a long time and seems not to be going anywhere meaningful. It is hoped that the promise of the private sector can provide a motivation for politicians to see sense in supporting the informal sector wholeheartedly.

7.4 Conclusion

In this chapter I focused on the livelihood strategies that are employed by operators in Zimbabwe in general and at Glen View 8 Complex in particular. I looked at the nature of businesses that informal operators perform at the Complex. I also looked at the types of premises in which operators conduct their activities and the factors that led them to choose their areas of specialisation. I tracked the operators work history before they started their own businesses at the complex. I also explored the problems that affect the informal sector operators at the complex and these range from capital constraints, fire outbreak, external competition, internal competition, operational hazards, poor infrastructure, lack of security, overcrowding, shortage of space and lack of insurance. These problems form the basis of the major political problem that will be explored in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 8: POLITICAL DYNAMICS IN THE INFORMAL SECTOR

8.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter I explored the livelihood strategies employed by operators in face of a wide array of problems at the complex. The problems range from capital constraints, cash crisis, inadequate operational space, stiff competition, operational hazards, lack of security, fire outbreak, and lack of social protection schemes. In this chapter I present the findings on the political dynamics in the informal sector. I start by providing the history of the complex. Thereafter, I focus on the politicisation of stall possession where some operators are marginalised on the basis of their political affiliation. Cases of stall hoarding and corruption are also unpacked. As the chapter progresses, I look at the implications of politicisation of the informal sector operations at the complex. The complex as a ZANU-PF project is controlled by a management committee who are ZANU-PF members. The distribution of the stalls has been noted to be biased in favour of ZANU-PF card holders and those who belong to the other opposition parties lose their stalls. However, it has been noted that there are some who pretend to be ZANU-PF supporters as a strategy of accessing stalls but they are opposition political party supporters.

8.2 History of the Complex

The complex was opened in 2006 after operators who toiled along the roadsides were removed as a result of Operation Restore Order that took place in 2005. According to Brandon et al., (2006) the ZANU-PF government ordered the destruction of informal sector structures and housing dwellings that were constructed in undesignated places. This was in retaliation for the 2005 election results in the urban areas, where the majority of the seats went to the opposition party, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC). Therefore, the destruction of the informal sector structures was construed as punishment meted out to the urbanites for supporting the opposition party and ditching ZANU-PF. According to the UN-

HABITAT (2006), human rights organisations condemned the blitz on informal operators as this was a direct attack on the source of livelihoods of the majority of people who eked out a living through informal activities. There was direct political interference by the ZANU-PF party into the informal sector activities.

It was out of this international condemnation of the government's shameless action that the Ministry of Small to Medium Enterprises was tasked with paving the way for the construction of the Glen View Complex 8. The Ministry of Small to Medium Enterprise, and the Ministry of Housing worked together to build structures for the informal sector operators. The people who accessed stalls in the complex were selected from ZANU-PF political districts such as Budiriro, Highfields and Glen View. The management committee chairman 'Big Man' was an active ZANU-PF party official in the Glenview constituency. Apart from this he was also a war veteran and this was a way of recognising him. He was voted into that position because of his political popularity in the area. He had the final say on stall allocation although he worked hand in hand with some other committee members. He ensured that the beneficiaries were ZANU-PF supporters and not anyone else. It was at that stage when politics of inclusion and exclusion became entrenched in stall allocation at the complex (Zimbabwean, 2012). The carpenters who were supposed to be the beneficiaries were marginalised ahead of ZANU-PF party members (Harare Residents Trust, 2016). The partisan allocation of stalls was executed in a bid to neutralise the increasing popularity of the opposition in towns. Therefore, it is clear that there was an intricate social network of politicisation of stall allocation at the complex. The Big Men dominate other networks because of their privileged access to resources (Utas, 2009). Those with strong networks (perceived ZANU-PF supporters) were rewarded with stalls whereas those with weak networks (perceived opposition supporters) were marginalised in stall allocation.

At Glen View Complex 8 there are seven blocks of buildings and four show rooms that were built by the Small Enterprises Development Corporation. Initially, in 2006, the buildings accommodated 426 operators (Chekenye, 2014). At that time there were two building structures that were at foundation level and unfortunately, they had not been completed by the time the interviews were administered. About 10 buildings out of 11 were affected by fire and carpenters had to use tents and iron sheets as roofs for these dilapidated buildings. The survey by Luebker (2008) confirms what I established in the field with regards to the nature of the jobs of the operators in Glenview. A number of operators are engaged in carpentry and selling of the raw materials required in the carpentry industry. The entry into the sector is easy since there are no strict regulations and registration processes that take place. However, the only restriction was that of political exclusion of operators' who were perceived to be from the opposition political parties. On a similar note Mhone (1996) concurred with Luebker (2008) who asserts that ease of entry has been a major trend resulting in a saturation of the informal economy and that they operate in 'substandard structures'. Below are the pictures of some of the sub-standard structures used by the operators at the complex.

Some remains of buildings that were affected by fire outbreak in 2016

Picture 5: Structures with rusty iron sheets

Adjacent to the complex the MDC councillor mobilised resources through his networks within the MDC-T Party and fenced one of the open spaces. The councillor worked together with the MDC Glenview legislator in this project. It is worthwhile to note that the MDC councillor is a Big Man in his own right and he has his own Big Man who in this case is the constituency Member of Parliament (MP). The MP also pays allegiance to his superior within the ranks of the party. In these networks 'carpenters' belong to different networks and therefore have several Big Men, who in turn have their own Big Men. This is an intricate affair where some clients belong to the ZANU-PF Big Men network and others belong to the MDC-T Big Men network. It should be noted that networks are unstable, fluid and constantly adaptable, that being the case, social networks flexible (Taussing 1992). The carpenters as clients have no permanent Big Men but they shift allegiance when they perceive that there are more benefits than costs in supporting a rivalry Big Men.

The process was led by the MDC councillor and this was done during the Inclusive Government[2] in between 2009 and 2013. However, after the inclusive government came to an end in 2013 the carpenters were removed from this place by council officials because the council argued that in case of a fire outbreak it was going to be easy for the fire to spread to the adjacent fuel station and then to the surrounding residential area. This area was suitable for business for the carpenters and the customers. It was noted that during the rainy season the complex is always covered in mud and this chased away customers to the fenced area. Also, the fenced area had adequate space for customers to drive in and parks their cars.

Despite all the positives, the place was finally closed. The closure of the purported MDC-T fenced area signified the climax of the political conflicts that prevailed at the complex after the expiry of the Inclusive Government in 2013. This area was closed because the councillor who initiated the construction of the area was from the opposition MDC-T party and its closure by the ZANU-PF leadership at the complex was politically motivated. The management committee wanted to prove the point that anyone who goes against ZANU-PF had no place at the complex. The MDC-T councillor was very bitter about the ZANU-PF action at the complex just after the expiry of the Inclusive Government symbolised the highest level of politicisation of the informal sector by the ruling party (ZANU-PF). When I interviewed councillor, he did not mince his words:

> *When the three political parties ZANU-PF, MDC-T and MDC-M formed an Inclusive Government in February 2009 many people celebrated because this marked a new era of political tolerance in the country. People were tired of the social and economic ills that characterised the whole of 2008 and they were ready to work tirelessly*

[2] Inclusive Government refers to the coalition government that was formed in 2009 after Zimbabwe experienced a political crisis after the disputed 2008 harmonized elections. The ZANU PF, MDC-T and MDC-M were the political parties that formed the Government. There was political tolerance at Glenview which made it possible for the MDC-T councilor Mr N to initiate a programme that led to the fencing of a portion of Glen View 8 Complex.

towards rebuilding the country. This view was cherished by politicians and I took it upon myself to create space at the complex where operators across the political divide could sell their furniture. Through my networks I donated the security fence and paid the people who erected it. This I did for the benefit of the people in my ward. My key result area was to identify problems and provide solutions in my ward. Therefore, the problem that was there was that furniture of the operators in the complex was not safe and there were numerous theft cases were reported to the police during those days. This intervention helped to scale down that problem. However, at the expiry of the Inclusive Government all that effort went down the drain. I even failed to trace the fence as it just disappeared. However, little did I know that my effort was misconstrued as an MDC-T project which was to run side by side with the ZANU-PF project (Tatenda, Interview, 2019).

One of the police officers at Glen View police station confirmed what was said by the Glen View Ward 7 councillor on the issue of the increasing cases of theft at the complex. Constable P applauded the councillor's initiative as it contributed to a drop in theft cases even though the portion that was fenced was quite insignificant in terms of size. He said that if the councillor was genuine, he should have made an effort to source funds to fence the whole complex. The other side of the complex during those days continued to experience the same problem. Constable P had this to say:

As a police officer my duty is to safeguard law and order in our country and this is achieved through fighting against crime. The complex is a site where there are people with heterogeneous backgrounds and because of that chances are very high that there are thieves who want to survive on stealing other people's furniture. Such cases were reported at our police station but the problem was that through our investigations it was more of an inside thing. The thieves seemed to have connections with some members of the management committee. There were high cases of theft but very few suspects were summoned to the police station for questioning. My suggestion was that

these thieves got protection from some politicians in the complex as they benefit from their actions (Constable, Interview, 2019).

The credibility of the Big Men at the complex becomes too compromised especially when there are serious allegations coming from the law enforcement agents. Instead of providing protection to the operators they are being implicated in protecting thieves at the complex. Therefore, the best description that can be given to the Big Men at the complex is that they are ZANU-PF political thugs who are bent on exploiting the carpenters' at the complex.

In addition, the ZANU-PF led management committee authorised the dismissal of the people who were working in the perceived MDC-T fenced open space. Dube and Chirisa (2012) observe that the contest over urban political space in Harare is synonymous with fighting from diametrically opposed political parties, ZANU-PF and MDC-T. Chirisa further notes that the polarisation between these political parties explains the contestation alluded to. One of the carpenters Nyamasvisva who had a stall in the new place remarked that:

The main reason why this side was closed was because the ZANU-PF led management committee members were no longer getting gate takings as was the case before the opening of this MDC open space. So to me this was politics at play. However, when two elephants fight it is the grass that suffers. As carpenters we were chucked out from the place and we could not resist because the ZANU-PF bouncers were on standby observing events as they unfolded. The timing of the closure of the place was questionable to us, why after the 2013 harmonised elections. This coincided with the expiry of the inclusive government between ZANU-PF, MDC-T and MDC Party. Carpenters were happy to work in this area. Some customers especially farmers who came late to purchase their furniture would find this new area still open but this was different with the complex which closes at 6: 00 pm daily. The area was more flexible in terms of convenience to the customers. The other advantage was that carpenters could provide their own security to their furniture unlike in the complex. Carpenters hired their own security guards that provided maximum security to their

furniture wares. The area was also partitioned in the same way as the shades in the complex. However, some carpenters thought that the new area was a campaigning strategy by MDC-T party as the staff that manned the gate was not collecting any fee from the carpenters. All carpenters regardless of their political affiliation were welcome in the new area (Nyamasvisva, Interview, 2017).

The above scenario is similar to what happened during Operation Restore Order in 2005 where the informal sector cabins were razed by the ZANU-PF led government. The issue at stake was to destroy the informal sector in Zimbabwe since the operators were perceived to be sympathisers of the opposition party, MDC-T (Masunungure, 2006). The closure of the MDC-T open space at the complex was a tactical strategy of silencing the MDC supporters at the complex. That was a way of retribution as this managed to send a clear message to the MDC-T sympathisers that ZANU-PF was in full control of the complex activities. The ZANU-PF politicians at the complex were successful in safeguarding their territorial claims. However, the use of coercive strategies by the ZANU-PF Big Men to woo supporters has not yielded positive results to the ZANU-PF party in the constituency. The party has lost both council and parliamentary elections up to date. Some carpenters and the local community seemed to be sympathising with the MDC-T developmental project rather than the ZANU-PF retrogressive strategies.

In the focus group discussion participants had varied ideas about the political dynamics at the complex. The two ZANU-PF politicians supported the partisan allocation of the stalls at the complex as they reminded the other participants that their political party will remain in charge of events at the complex as long as the party remains in power. Nevertheless, one of the MDC-T officials was incensed by the level of arrogance from officials from his rival political party ZANU-PF. In his contribution he had this to say:

My heart bleeds when my political counterparts support something that is seen by everyone as wrong. It is pointless for the ZANU-PF party officials to claim control of the complex when events on the ground show that they have failed dismally. The ZANU-PF led management committees have failed the carpenters at the complex. There is no meaningful development that has taken place at the complex. It is high time these guys should call it a day and give others a chance to develop the complex (Tichaona, FGD, 2018).

In addition, the two officials from the Ministry of Small to Medium Enterprises maintained their neutrality through-out the FGD. They differed with the politicians on issues to do with the complex. One of the officers pointed out that the government should intervene to address the problems affecting operators at the complex. The other officer had a strong feeling that the Harare City Council has the answer to the problems at the complex. However, the two officers concurred that there is politicisation of stall and space allocation at the complex. As representatives of the ministry they do not have control over the goings on at the complex. If they want to find out what is happening at the Complex, they also report to the management committee members. Party politics is above everything at the complex.

Furthermore, the district officer for Glen View also said that the city council is on stand-by to address the problems at the complex:

At the moment our hands are tied. We are not providing any services at the complex. Council officials are irate in the manner business is being conducted by the ZANU-PF led management committee. The committee members do not recognise council and they think that they can do it alone. The ball is in their court to hand over the complex to the relevant authority. Council has the willpower to change the face of the complex but on condition that there is de-politicisation of the complex (Luke, FGD, 2018).

The two customers concurred with the MDC officials on the influence of party politics on informal sector operations. These customers have been buying wardrobes at the complex for over a decade now. They have experienced some sad situations in their trade as they failed to buy their stuff on two occasions when they visited the complex only to find it closed for political meetings. They bemoaned this lack of focus by the management committee members who are said to possess the powers to either close or open the complex when there are political meetings. These two customers who spoke on behalf of other customers said that business is lost at the complex especially on the eve of national harmonised elections. The customers called for the de-politicisation of the complex if those who ply their trade at the complex are to realise meaningful production.

8.3 Social Capital and Social Networks in Stall Possession

The Big Men at the complex use social networks and social capital to achieve their personal interests and political power. The various operators and the Big Men forge relations that help them to do their business at the complex. The dominance of the ZANU-PF party in the management of the complex has a bearing on stall allocation. The process is biased in favour of the supporters of the ZANU-PF ruling party. The city council is overshadowed in managing the allocation of the stalls. However, in an ideal situation the Harare city council is the principal authority responsible for urban land distribution and management. All the people who want housing and commercial stands submit their applications forms to the department of Physical planning and if there is land, they can get allocated. Below is an account of one of the carpenters Shumba who narrated his experiences:

> *The allocation of stalls in the complex was entrenched in politics. When carpenters were still working near the robots there came two ZANU-PF women Cde S and Cde M who addressed them and told them that there were plans to build a complex in*

2005. Carpenters were then evicted from the streets through Operation Murambatsvina in 2005 and when they came to the Complex, they were ordered to produce the ZANU-PF party cards. In the first place the city council was mandated to do the allocation of the stalls, but that role was hijacked by the ZANU-PF management committee at the complex. Therefore, council had a list of the beneficiaries of the stalls and the list included carpenters who had applied through council. This list was concealed by the management committee to ensure that people who were aligned to the ZANU-PF party benefited from this project. In the process many carpenters were side-lined in the allocation of the stalls as the process was highly politicised. The ZANU-PF old women and men who had no experience in carpentry became the beneficiaries of the stalls. Carpenters had to negotiate for space from these old ZANU-PF cadres. When the carpenters got stalls, they were paying rent to the old women and men of the ZANU-PF party that were allocated the stalls. The stall owners were referred to as 'landlords' or 'Maboss'. The landlords jostled for lodgers at that time because they all wanted to cash in from the rentals. However, as time progressed the carpenters were tipped that they owed council money for rates and that was when they confronted the management committee demanding to know the truth. These carpenters started resisting paying rentals to these landlords. The names that were captured in the council data base were those of the carpenters' and not the 'landlords[3]' (Shumba, Interview, 2018).

Below is an account of one of the carpenters Moyo who was also marginalised in the stall allocation process in a similar fashion to Shumba;

I got the place through the council. The council housing officers called all those carpenters that were affected by the operation to register and put their names on the

[3] Landlords refers to the owners of the stalls

waiting list. The allocation of these stands by the council was under lease agreement and the process was transparent. The names came back from the council and were taken by the ZANU-PF leadership at the complex who started to scrutinise and vetted the names. So, they took old women and men from the party in this zone and made them the owners of these shades. I was made to work under these old ZANU-PF people. In 2007 that was when I got news that I was allocated a stand by the council and I approached the council officials and the truth came out and I was given the stall that I was initially allocated. I had a stall in block five number 75, and immediately I moved in. The ZANU-PF leaders at the complex had omitted my name intentionally on the allocation list that came from the council because I was regarded as an MDC supporter. The allocation by the council was fair; the problem was that the ZANU-PF politicians withheld the papers so as to give stalls to their fellow party members (Moyo, Interview, 2018).

In an ideal situation politics should have no place in stall allocation at all informal sector sites, Glen View 8 Complex included. It was established that everything that was done in the complex was controlled by the politicized management committee. The Big Men has control in distributing stalls at the complex. They have power over access and control of land at the site. When there was evidence that a carpenter was not a ZANU-PF card bearer, he risked losing his stall. The allocation of stalls in the complex was not based on carpenter's expertise but on their political affiliation. The informal sector is polarised on issues to do with access to stalls. The ZANU-PF stall beneficiaries did not pay rates to the council, but they took money for rentals from the operators and used it to their own benefit. The stalls accrued huge debts, but the debts were not in the names of these so called 'landlords' but the carpenters. This caused conflicts between the landlords, council and carpenters.

Access to stalls has been characterised by a number of problems at the complex. There was lack of transparency in the allocation process. History repeats itself as the ZANU-PF led government was accused of practising patronage in the allocation of land after independence (Marongwe, 2011). This scenario was noted to be rampant in the way urban space has been parcelled out to the ZANU-PF loyalists. The Big Man who happens to be the chairman of the management committee adopted the approach of inclusion and exclusion of potential beneficiaries on the basis of political affiliation. This concurs with Brown (2006) who argues that urban space in Africa is highly politicised. For Brown, the urban space[4] is an arena for the contest between conflicting interests. From the above narratives it has been highlighted that there has been politicisation of stalls at the complex by the ZANU-PF Big Men. These political leaders are the ones referred to as the Big Men. They are the Big Men in the sense that they have the power to parcel out stalls to people of their choice and these people are referred to as the 'clients' (informal operators). This argument is supported by Bates (1981) who opines that government and political leaders in Africa are rational maximisers of their political interests with political survival as their primary priority. This is a fact but there is need to look at this from another angle that some Big Men do things in the name of ZANU-PF party for self-aggrandisement.

8.4 Social Networks in Stall Hoarding

Bourdieu envisions that the closed networks of powerful actors impose dominance over less powerful actors. Such dominance is translated in the rules of the field. This is in line with complex politics where the Big Men in the management committee allegedly abused their power through grabbing undeveloped stalls in the 'Mahalape' area at the expense of others.

[4] Urban space- sites where the operators do their work

These landlords could have up to five stands each in the ‘Mahalape’ area and they could rent them out to carpenters. This is an extension of the complex and the carpenters just constructed make-shift structures made up of tents, wood and corrugated iron sheets. The area is the one with pictures below.

Picture 6: Makeshift structures

Picture 7: Make-shift structures and some unfinished sofa frames

[5]The 'mahalape' area is not well developed, thus customers rarely go to these stands for business. The 'gombiros' (carpenters' middlemen) are therefore useful to the carpenters in luring and taking customers to these stands. The mass grabbing of stands in the 'mahalape' area corresponds with Nyamwanza et.al, (2014) who argue that some 'land barons' with social capital and connected to some influential political elites acquired land which was meant for future development thereby authenticating the fact that clientelism defined and still define the informal sector in Zimbabwe. The 'land barons' operated in a typical fashion as that of the Big Men at Glen View Complex 8. It should be noted that social capital is a resource available through social networks, the resources that some individuals claim come at the expense of others (Portes and Landolt 1996), which means that social capital may be available to individuals on a very unequal basis. Those who support ZANU-PF have high stocks of social capital whereas those who are anti-ZANU-PF have less stocks of social

[5] Mahalape this term is drawn from the drama by Kapfupi and Marabha the Zimbabwean actors. In the drama the term referred to areas with new stands in Epworth a peri-urban area in Harare, thus the term in this context was used to refer to the new carpenters' stands that were occupied besides the SEDCO shades

capital. In this sense, social exclusion may occur even in societies characterised by apparently high stocks of social capital. Some space seekers have resorted to the tactic of political clientelism and patronage to obtain and secure spaces of operation. Such entrepreneurs openly support ZANU-PF for "giving them land" and get no interference from municipal authorities or police details as they are 'politically backed' (Mandizadza and Nyamwanza, 2014).

8.5 Corruption

There is systemic corruption at the complex which revolves around some well lubricated networks. It involves the Big Men and clients at all levels. The Big Men are the biggest winners in the corrupt transactions. The management committee at the complex was led by ZANU-PF members who were alleged to be corrupt as they allocated stalls based on party affiliation and in the process marginalising the genuine beneficiaries of the stalls with names in the Harare city council data base. Below is an account by Shumba 2, one of the carpenters who lamented the lopsided manner in which stalls were allocated;

> *When I was working under a ZANU-PF elderly woman and I was paying US$30 rent per month. When the truth came out that I was allocated a stall by council, I found out that I owed council a lot of money for rates and tariffs, at that time it was US$1000. The money that I was paying the old woman was not used to pay rates at the council, so the debt had accumulated. Council bills would come with my name but the complex leaders would hide them from me. I started servicing the council debt from 2007 but from 2013 I stopped paying. I found no reason to continue paying since the building where I operated was razed down by fire in 2012. So, I am now working in a makeshift structure made up of wood and corrugated iron sheets. Then council had stopped providing services in the Complex hence there is no justification for them to*

demand payment when there is no service provision. However, during the time carpenters realised that they were duped by the management committee they approached the council officials pleading with them such that they could take over the control of the complex but district city officials were also afraid of the ZANU-PF management committee too (Shumba 2, Interview,2017).

The management committee officials 'Big Men' who were entrusted with the allocation of the stalls did not look at the individual skill and capacity but they considered if one was from ZANU-PF. This is in support of Bourdieu's view that, powerful actors 'Big Men' are able to close a social space to outsiders 'clients' by imposing high exchange rates to different types of capital. As a consequence, only the mobilisation of strong and durable social ties yields access to resources. In this case only those that are connected to ZANU-PF have the social capital to access land for their informal activities. However, the government is to blame for it did not have a fool-proof criterion on the allocation of stalls to see who benefited and who did not. This was identified as one of the major reasons that caused the biased stall allocation process. The committee manipulated networks a necessary condition for access to and use of embedded resources at the complex. The abuse of these networks by the Big Men at complex level was as a result of lack of a tight supervision of stall distribution from the Big Men in ZANU-PF party. They collected the money putting on the ZANU-PF regalia as a way of instilling fear among the carpenters. However, there was no accountability on how the money was used in the complex as they could just share the money amongst themselves.

In addition, politicians 'Big Men' were attracted by the monetary benefits in the complex. They had personal interests and not the desire to develop the complex. If leaders like 'Big Men' in the ruling party had real plans to develop the complex, they could have been

supported by carpenters who were ready to partake in the development of the complex. Carpenters could pay subscriptions towards the development of the complex but the problem was that the political leaders 'Big Men' were only concerned with self-enrichment and not the development of the complex. This neglect plunged the complex into a wretched state. The association representing informal traders accused ZANU-PF of politicising the issuance of operating stalls set up by the government. The Zimbabwe Informal Sector Association (ZISA) said the ruling party officials 'Big Men' at the complex were denying its members a chance to earn a decent living through the partisan allocation of stalls. Operators perceived to be from the opposition party were disenfranchised from accessing stalls to do their business. The ZISA president said that his members were turned away for failing to produce ZANU-PF membership cards. He argues that the de-politicisation of the allocation of operating stalls could ease unemployment which is hovering above 80% (The Zimbabwean, 2012).

Corruption in land grabbing has been seen as a major problem perpetrated by those who claim to be connected to ZANU-PF party at the complex. Lomnitz (1988 notes that these networks mostly encapsulate bureaucratic favours, clientelism, diverse forms of corruption and rent-seeking arrangements meant to acquire material goods and benefits. Generally, the 'socialist phase' in Zimbabwe can be seen as a period in which the growth functions of economic rents, while not completely ignored, normally played second fiddle to the political imperatives of post-conflict redistribution, patronage, and the more fundamental imperatives of self-enrichment (Dawson and Kelsall 2011). During this period, it can be noted that the ZANU-PF government was unable to arrest the situation by confronting and controlling the surging corruption. Dawson and Kelsall (2011) notes that a 'Leadership Code' issued by the party in 1984 acknowledged the problem but did not curb short-term unproductive rent-seeking by party leaders 'Big Men'. While criminal prosecutions over corruption did result in

convictions of many senior ZANU-PF politicians such as Kumbirai Kangai, Maurice Nyagumbo, and Fredrick Shava; ambivalent responses by the party sent a clear message to the nation that corruption was acceptable as one was in favour with the party. Therefore, the corruption that is found in the informal sector is rooted in events that were previously taking place in the formal sector years ago. The ZANU-PF party had entrenched corruption to the extent that it has been normalised and has a negative impact to the country in terms of attracting foreign investors that has the potential to expand the formal sector. One of the management committee members hand this to say;

> *Some people put the name of the party in disrepute by engaging in corruption. ZANU-PF is a good party with the interests of the informal operators at heart as demonstrated by the parcelling out of the land at the complex to the carpenters. However, this noble idea has been hijacked by people in the party whose agenda is diametrically opposed to that of the party itself (Rasta, Interview, 2018).*

The above narration was in stark contrast to what was said by the chairman of the management committee. He said that the issue of corruption in the party has a long history and it starts from the top to the bottom. He further revealed that apart from the parcelling of land in urban areas to party supporters the party also politicises the distribution of aid in drought-stricken areas (Munyanyi, 2005). The party leaders (Big Men) in those areas only give aid to the ZANU-PF card holders. This has been happening but no one has been held accountable. Corruption is permissible as long as one is a ZANU-PF loyalist

8.6 Impact of Political Meetings on Production at the Complex

Carpenters were forced to attend ZANU-PF political meetings at the complex and in areas surrounding the complex. When the meetings were in progress the complex was closed by the

management committee officials 'Big Men'. Below is an extract from one of the operators' John:

> *We are forced to close the complex and attend political meetings. We expect that those that are free should attend and those not willing should be allowed to remain behind and continue working. At times when the complex is closed, carpenters could leave their tools behind and at times these tools are stolen. The complex is also closed during national events such as Heroes and Defence Day and Independence Day. In addition, the Complex is closed when there is burial of a hero or heroine at the National Heroes Acre. The operators have been complaining to the management committee members about their loss of business during these party events but the situation has never changed under the ZANU-PF administration. "Izvi zvinhu zvemusangano, saka munosungirwa ketevedza gwara remusangano" (These programs are for the party and you are expected to follow the party ideology). The operators also pleaded with the committee members to allow a few operators to remain behind in the complex and continue with their business when the rest of the operators attended rallies. All this falls on deaf ears despite the loss of business by carpenters. Some of the clients come as far as Gweru and when they find the Complex closed they are disappointed. Carpenters' are resisting going to these rallies and national events, some of the operators stay at home. When carpenters attended the rallies the ZANU-PF youth could sell their furniture (John, Interview, 2017).*

Interestingly, the activities of most operators are affected by political factors which include being forced to attend ZANU-PF meetings, rallies and related functions. The participants echoed that their continued stay at the complex hinges on their active participation in support of ZANU-PF activities. Thus, the operators felt that political activities seemed to scuttle their business activities. It was noted that carpenters lost business as a result of rallies. These rallies were usually those of the ruling party ZANU-PF, the opposition parties rarely conducted rallies in the surrounding Glenview area and in cases when they conducted rallies, they did not force people as was done by ZANU-PF party. The carpenters had pleaded with

the complex leadership 'Big Men' to allow them to work since shops will be open even on days when heroes and heroines are buried at the national shrine. While some operators complained that political party membership and participation seemed to be a hindrance to their activities, others believed that they had exploited these to their own benefit. This was captured in the following remarks by Masimbo, one of the carpenters at the complex:

> *I do not mind having a ZANU-PF card. Indeed, I benefit from having the card. What do I lose by attending rallies or heroes' burials? I am benefiting as I can now fend for my family. Sometimes I do not attend those rallies or even the heroes' burials. They do not keep attendance registers. In any case no one knows who I vote for. No one follows me into the voting booth. Instead of people saying ZANU-PF is benefiting from me, they should say I am benefiting more from it. Even if I were to vote for it, what is the problem? There are many people in this country who vote for it without benefiting anything, yet I am benefiting in having space here (Masimbo, Interview, 2017).*

Thus, it appears that some people are manipulating the political environment for their own benefit. Moreover, there were genuine supporters of the party who seemed to enjoy the benefits of membership. Such people appreciated attending rallies and heroes' burials.

8.7 Introduction of Party Cards

The introduction of ZANU-PF cards at the complex was a ploy by the Harare Provincial Youth League chairman 'Big Man' to boost support for the party at the complex. However, the scheme backfired as that chairman 'Big Man' was dismissed from the party under unclear circumstances. He was believed to be aligned to a faction whose leaders were fired from the ZANU-PF party in 2014. The carpenters felt relieved because the environment had not been

conducive for production. One of the carpenters explained what transpired at the complex with regard to the ZANU-PF cards in the following extract;

> *When Cde Y was elected as the Harare Provincial Youth Chairman, he threatened the operators and demanded that they should form party cells in the complex. Each cell would be made up of more than 50 people who would occasionally meet to discuss party issues. The process failed because you can never force people to do what they do not want. Even if the ruling party is able to mobilize the people in the complex for political reasons, they still lose the Glenview Constituency to the MDC-T opposition party because they are not yet aware that most of the people in the complex are not from this constituency. Most of the people are not from the local community so when it comes to voting ZANU-PF loses. Almost everyone in the complex is a ZANU-PF card holder for security reasons because there was a call by the ZANU-PF provisional youth chairperson ordering everyone to buy the cards. The then Harare Youth Chairman in 2013 had radical policies because he knew that most of the operators in the complex were from the main opposition party MDC-T. The carpenters were threatened to take these party cards as a security measure. At that time some carpenters left the complex because they feared for their life. The ZANU-PF Youths could unleash violence on the carpenters who resisted embracing the party policy (Simon, Interview, 2017).*

The carpenters were against the youth leadership in Harare as they were forced to do things that were against their interests. The leadership had influence in the administration of funds at the complex as they received their share from the management committee members. This was narrated by one of the carpenters below;

> *I don't think the former Harare Youth Chairman was involved in the development of the cells but it was a result of the conflict that was happening between the chairpersons in the Glenview North Constituency and Glenview 3A district. The operators were not interested in having to be included in the cells but they had no choice except to jot their names down into the cells (Fred, Interview, 2017).*

It may be sufficient to say that there is prevalence of clientelistic linkages and social networks in the informal sector, which in essence, have a strong bearing in giving it shape and direction. This was also supported by Mitlin (2004) who notes that most politicians 'Big Men' have come to regard these growing crowds in the informal sector as 'vote banks[6]'. Concomitantly, due to the transition to multiparty democracy, the urban informal economy in most African countries such as Zimbabwe and even beyond has become a terrain of intense political rivalry. Therefore, the informal sector operators' are manipulated by politicians 'Big Men' to vote for them. However, it should be noted that 'clients' (carpenters') are not always used by politicians 'Big Men' as they sometimes use politicians 'Big Men' too. This is encapsulated by the fact that after clients benefit from stalls from the 'patrons' (Big Men) they must vote for them into political offices. However, in the context of Glenview, the constituency is always won by the main opposition party MDC-T.

Furthermore, one can argue that politicians 'Big Men' view a booming informal sector as a readily available source of votes. As shown above the complex is controlled by ZANU-PF party, which demands not only votes, but maximum participation in its political activities. Brown (2006) and Bates (1981) also postulate that governments and political leaders 'Big Men' in Africa are rational maximisers of their political interests with political survival as their primary priority. Whereas Brown and Bates affirm that politicians are exploiting informal traders, this thesis shows that even the informal operators themselves are exploiting politicians for their own benefit, irrespective of whether or not they genuinely support the ruling ZANU-PF party, that is why Dube and Chirisa (2012) quote the Police Chief Superintendent who observes that in Harare, there are political activists masquerading as vendors, and vendors masquerading as political activists. Thus, both politicians and informal

[6] Places where more votes are expected

sector operators can be seen as rational maximisers who seek to maximise their benefits at the expense of one another.

8.8 Political Victimisation of Operators

It was established that carpenters are subjected to political victimisation at the hands of the complex leadership and the youths. The carpenters who resisted attending the ZANU-PF meetings were labelled as members of the opposition party and the 'mandimba' (bouncers) would be called to deal with them. ZANU-PF uses rent seeking strategies to control the complex. Below is a narration of one of the carpenters, *Sorai, (Interview, 2017),* who was victimised for his inclination to opposition politics at the complex:

> *I am an MDC-T political activist, so during meetings with the management they used to tell me to excuse myself because of my political orientation. My political affiliation affected my business in many scenarios but because of the grace of God the situation changed. In 2008 during the election runoff I ended up staying under the bridge because of politics as they were looking for me dead or alive. I only came back in the complex in 2009, that means in 2008 my business was affected. The owner of the stall I worked with was the one who remained on the shade and he pretended to be from ZANU-PF in order to secure the stand, thus when I came back to the complex in 2009, he was the one who protected me from the ZANU-PF thugs. The complex was made a no-go area to anyone who was suspected to be the opposition party*.

It was also noted that since 2008 carpenters have been threatened for belonging to MDC by the ZANU-PF led management committee. In the same year some operators were expelled from the complex because they were regarded as MDC supporters. They continued with their threats and even said that all MDC members should be expelled from the complex. In order

not to be expelled from the complex carpenters bought ZANU-PF cards. The operators were also coerced to attend the ZANU-PF 'pungwe's) (all-night political meetings) at the complex in 2008 presidential run-off election. These all-night meetings were under the blessings of the Mbare based 'chipangano' group. Chipanagano was a ZANU-PF militia youth group that was known for terrorising members of the opposition party. However, the party denied that they were connected to this group. These rallies were meant to galvanise the ZANU-PF support base at the complex. The organisers compiled the attendance list implying that those who dodged lost their stalls. Some of the operators had to move out of the complex because of the threats they received from the ZANU-PF youths in the complex. Right now, there are 'mandimba' who control the complex and when there is a political meeting, they make sure that everyone is out of the complex and attending the meeting. At the time of data collection carpenters were resisting the payment of monthly rates to the committee members 'Big Men' because there was no security and their goods were often stolen and burnt.

8.9 Politics of leadership at the Complex

It was noted that the leadership crisis at the complex had compromised the production output. The operators were against the leadership that was in place in 2007 because they were ZANU-PF members. It was also the time that saw great political interference in the complex because those were the days when MDC was gaining ground and it was in the build-up to the 2008 elections. Most of the operators are alleged to belong to MDC but the people who owned the shops were from ZANU-PF. The conflicts emanated from the fact that when the complex was constructed it was meant to benefit carpenters, but this was not so as old people from ZANU-PF were the ones who benefited. The management committee that was in office in 2007 was the one that led to the growth of the shades in the areas such as 'mahalape' that were allocated illegally. The owners of the shops were no longer benefiting as the

management committee was now allocating places illegally in the 'mahalape' area to operators. This led to conflict between the management, shop owners and the operators:

> *When we got into office, we saw that it was going to be hard for us to remove these shacks. As the management we ordered every operator to pay an administration fee of US8 dollars per month that was used to pay security, to fix toilets and manage the complex. Politicians saw the huge amount of goods and people in the complex, and then they thought that there was a lot of money being generated at the complex. This has led to conflicts between politicians at the ZANU-PF central committee and provincial level. The money that was generated at the complex, part of it was used to purchase fuel for the politicians or to make chairs (Simango, Interview, 2017).*

Political interference is affecting business at the complex. Some carpenters love ZANU-PF but some of the things that are done in the name of the party are affecting their business. Carpenters expect the complex leadership to learn from such exemplary good principles of management of informal sector at informal sector sites such as Mbare and Machipisa where the situation is considered to be better than what happens at the complex. In other areas there is order, security, good sanitation and water supply. The party has influence in these other areas but the city council collect rates which enables it to provide services.

However, after 2014 the cards were no longer demanded because of the factionalism[7] that was now happening in the ruling party. The cards were now used as a security measure even to those carpenters that belonged to the opposition party:

[7] The factionalism in the ZANU PF party led to the expulsion of some senior party members and this created confusion at the complex because the leadership was also dismissed.

Even when ZANU-PF wins the elections in 2018, we are going to change the way the complex is run. We are going to expel the committee members, youths and the politicians. The president did not say go and rule the complex, but he told the youth to go and work not to harass people at the complex. We once asked the police to give us the power to beat up these youths because we knew that within a week, we would have expelled all of them from the complex. However, the police refused to grant us the permission to beat them up as they warned that we risked getting arrested (Alex, Interview, 2017).

Portes and Landolt (1997) posit that social capital may be available to individuals on a very unequal basis. In this sense, social exclusion may occur even in societies characterised by apparently high stocks of social capital. Government, in some instances, may therefore work effectively in favour of elite groups with better access to social networks, while at the same time marginalising groups with little "voice" (de Renzio 2000).

8.10 Impact of Political Factionalism on the Informal Sector

It has been noted that the factionalism that is happening in ZANU-PF also manifests itself in the complex committee as there are different groups aligned to the different factions in the main party. The division and factionalism that is happening works to the advantage of carpenters as it enables them to be in a position to resist their political manipulation by politicians. Before this the management committee members were united and faced little resistance from the carpenters. Some of the problems experienced by carpenters were rooted in factional politics within ZANU-PF. The fire outbreaks since 2015 in the complex were suspected to have been caused by the opposing groups and they could set the complex ablaze in order to undermine the credibility of the committee in power. When Cde M was evicted

from the party, there were also members of the management committee that were evicted because they were regarded as pro Cde M. This continued even when she formed a political party as those that were regarded to be aligning with her were expelled from the complex. Factionalism had a major impact on the management of the complex. If a carpenter does not belong to the ruling faction he is regarded as an enemy and can be expelled from the complex (Simon, Interview, 2017).

8.11 Conclusion

I looked at the implications of politicisation of the informal sector operations at the complex. The establishment of the complex in 2006 was a government initiative to provide urban land to the carpenters plying their trade in the informal sector. However, this good initiative was high jacked by the ZANU-PF supporters who ended up being the owners of the project. It has been established that there is partisan allocation of stalls at the complex which is biased and favours ZANU-PF supporters and those who are anti-ZANU-PF risk losing their stalls. There is also the problem of stall hoarding which is perpetrated by the ZANU-PF patrons. The complex has become a breeding ground of corruption by the ZANU-PF 'Big Men' who use land as their cash cow. It was also noted that political meetings such as rallies affect the productivity of carpenters at the complex. In some situations, people were coerced to attend these ZANU-PF political meetings even against their wishes. The Zanunisation process has reached a point where the operators are required to be ZANU-PF card holders if they are to work in the complex. Non-compliance with the ZANU-PF 'Big Men' leads to political intimidation and harassment of the carpenters. This situation has been perpetuated by factionalism within the ZANU-PF party itself. However, it has been noted that there are some who pretend to be ZANU-PF cadres as a strategy of accessing stalls but in their heart, they belong to other opposition political parties.

CHAPTER 9: MANIFESTATION OF THE BIG MAN IN THE INFORMAL SECTOR

9.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter I focused on the political dynamics in the informal sector of Zimbabwe. In this chapter I focus on the role of the Big Men in the informal sector. They are the 'patrons' as they control and distribute the stalls and land to the 'clients' that is the carpenters. Thereafter, I focus on the functions of the Big Men and problems they experience in executing their work. The relationship that exists between these actors will be explained so as to understand the working dynamics that take place at the complex. I also look at the relationship between the Big Men at the complex. Social networks between operators and the management committee are also explored. ZANU-PF position holders are the ones that are referred as the Big Men in this chapter. These Big Men are many as some Big Men have their own Big Men. As long as the position holder commands influence over the carpenters that person qualifies as a Big Men.

9.2 The Big Men at the Complex

There are different types of Big Men at the complex and their functions vary depending on their areas of specialisation. At the top of all the Big Men at the complex is the acting Chairman of the complex. The other Big Men pay allegiance to the 'Boss' of the complex. The Big Men are from the ZANU-PF party and when they are at the complex they respect the party positions. The current Acting Chairman of the management committee is the leader of the war veterans at district level and has influence in the party. The ZANU-PF youth rally behind him as they stand to benefit through access to the complex stalls. According to Utas (2001), traditionally, the Big Men owned more cattle, land, spiritual power, education and had rare skills. The Big Men constitute nodes in the networks. Clients in these networks belong to different networks and therefore have several Big Men, who in turn have their own

Big Men. The Big Men dominate other networks because of their privileged access to resources (Utas, 2009). The Complex is in an urban set up and land has proved to be a key resource particularly to the operators. The person who controls the land has more power than anyone else. In that regard that is where the Big Men will determine the distribution of stalls to the operators.

One common characteristic about all the Big Men at the complex is that they command authority and have high status. The Big Men use their social capital as well as political capital to command influence in the complex. Inaba (2007) defined social capital as stable social relations one holds and is able to mobilise in order to obtain other kinds of capital. It has been noted that there is an interwoven relationship between social networks and social capital. The carpenters refer to the Big Men as 'maboss' as they have social capital. Being a Big Man is not something that just comes easily; one has to work for it. They have informal power and are respected in the complex. The acting chairman is a war veteran and when the complex executive was dissolved, he was the one who was asked by the ZANU-PF party to be in charge of the complex. As someone who works in the complex he has stable relations with the carpenters and this has helped him to boost his political capital as well. A Big Man is someone who can create and use social relations which give him leverage over others' (Sahlins 1963:292). A Big Man transforms social relations into strategic power and control (Medard 1992). As an old man the Big Man's role is to ensure that there is peace at the complex. Below is a description of part of his work:

> *I make decisions on the running of the complex and if there are problems, they are referred to me. Sometimes if there are theft cases, they are reported to me and I will send my head of Mandimba (security) to recover the stuff. In most cases we settle our*

issues in the complex and there is no need to report the cases to the police. This is a small community and we know each other very well and maintaining order becomes easy to me (Acting Chairman, Interview, 2018).

In light of the above narration one can argue that the Big Man is a person with high status and power. It has been noted that in terms of management, the complex falls under committees which are traceable to the ruling ZANU-PF party (Tandire et al., 2012). The committees' functions include allocation of stalls, a function they abused since the stalls were allocated to perceived supporters of the ruling ZANU-PF party. Therefore, the Big Man can take advantage of his position to hoodwink people to vote for a political party of their choice. In Zimbabwe War veterans are known for their allegiance to the ruling ZANU-PF party and the appointment of a war veteran was quite strategic to the party as he strives to fulfil the wishes and interests of the party at the complex.

It was established that there was a time when council was charging refuse collection bills to the stall holders yet there was no service that was provided. The Big Men had to bargain on behalf of the carpenters not to pay the bills to the city council. The Acting chairman engaged the district officer to address the issue. However, it was noted that the council authorities insisted that stall holders were supposed to clear their arrears. In light of that the Big Man mobilised the carpenters to ignore the payment of the council bills. The Big Men are connected to senior ZANU-PF politicians and this guarantees safety and protection of the carpenters. The decision of the Big Man helped all operators who are affiliated to ZANU-PF party. It should be noted that Big Men do not generally control followers. Rather, it is in the interest of followers to maintain ties with a Big Man because the Big Man provides economic possibilities as well as protection and social security.

9.3 Dispute resolutions

The Big Man at the complex is involved in resolving disputes among the carpenters who would have wronged each other. It was noted that some carpenters use their political power to evict other carpenters from the complex. In the process the operators are involved in fierce fights defending their stalls. It was established that such incidents occurred towards or during the harmonised elections in 2013. The Big Men resolve such cases in a politically-biased manner and the rulings will be in favour of ZANU-PF supporters. In one of the cases an operator had lost his stall but through the intervention of the Big Man he recovered his workplace. This was captured in the following interview:

> *I was just unlucky that some of the carpenters ganged against me accusing me of not attending rallies. In the process I was beaten up and my stall was snatched. The complex became a no-go area for me for a month. I was tipped by my friend to report my case to the complex acting chairman. I followed that advice and the carpenters who were responsible for my fate were called and asked to explain their case. There was a long deliberation but in the end the committee ruled in my favour. I was very happy to regain my stall. I am a ZANU-PF card holder just like anyone else (Interview, 2018).*

Some become Big Men to enhance their political standing among foes and friends. At the complex there are some Big Men who use the place as a springboard to prepare their political careers. The former Harare ZANU-PF Youth Chairperson 'Big Man' gained political mileage through providing protection to youths at the complex from arrest. These youths could easily evade arrest since the Big Man had influence even at the nearest police station. At one time there were some youths who were stealing and beating up customers at the complex. The police chief at the station deployed police officers who raided and arrested the youths. They

were detained but through the influence of the Big Man they were released. As the former ZANU-PF provincial youth chairperson explains:

> *My role as the former provincial youth chairperson was to provide protection to the youths as they support party activities at both local and national level. The ruling political party is above everything and even police officers listen to directives from the influential party officials. Therefore, there was nothing new in my case when I facilitated the release of the youths (Tino, Interview, 2018).*

The youth chairman was laying a foundation for his political career. In the 2018 elections he won the primary elections and represented ZANU-PF in the parliamentary elections. The youth at the complex propped him up and he established a name for himself. However, the complex is a small area and the carpenters cannot influence the direction of politics in the constituency. During the election the Big Man lost to the MDC Alliance candidate. This confirms that there are also situations where the Big Man can lose support if he does not distribute enough largesse (space) to the clients. In such situations the followers can discard the Big Man and forge commitment and relationships with other Big Men. However, this is in sharp contrast on what transpired at the complex. The carpenters benefited from space but could not reciprocate that good gesture from the Big Man by voting him into office. Big Men have a record of manipulating the clients but in this case such strategies were not effective in winning elections. In other words, the carpenters 'clients' manipulated the Big Man by voting for a different political candidate. The ZANU-PF politicians have proved that politics is above everything and influences how the police force executes its work. This is very bad because it leads to lawlessness in a country.

9.4 Power Base of the Big Men

It was noted that the Big Men at the complex are connected to strong politicians in the ruling ZANU-PF. When they are at the complex, they represent the party's interests. The complex is

a strategic place for the politicians and the Big Men at the complex also take advantage of that in gaining power and status. One thing that is common to the Big Men is that they are more worried about self-aggrandisement than anything else. In some cases, they use their influence for self-benefit. It is as if they are inspired by the Shona idiom:

'*Mbudzi inodya payakasungirirwa' (A goat eats where it is tied).*

The Big Men often take advantage of their privileged positions to pocket money from the operators for their personal use. They are the untouchables as they hide behind the ruling ZANU-PF party. This is supported from the top leadership as they say the party is bigger than the government. Therefore, those with party positions think that they are bigger than the government office bearers hence they don't listen to them on the direction the informal sector should take. This demonstrates the relationship between the patrons and the clients. The ZANU-PF leadership at district level through their chairperson has influence in the selection of the complex chairman. Therefore, the big men in the complex pay allegiance to the ZANU-PF Big Men in the district. In addition, it was established that development should be spearheaded by the Big Men. One of the carpenters Moyo who has been working at the complex for the past 10 years explained his hard feelings about the abuse of power by the Big Men in the discharge of their duties:

> *The job of the Big Men is to steal from the operators. There is no development that they are doing but just stealing from us and the customers. They are stifling our business as they do not bring any development. They are just there to abuse us and we are always in conflict. The administration that we have is the one that has destroyed business. The operators were boycotting and resisting the payment of fees demanded by the committee. The pseudo committee that is there is only mobilizing people to attend political rallies and national events only (*Moyo, Interview, 2017)

The Big Men should work hand in hand with the carpenters but in the above narration the Big Men are egocentric in that they have divided the carpenters. Instead of paying allegiance to the Big Men carpenters have been resisting payment of administration fees and attendance of political rallies. This demonstrates a weak relationship between the Big Men and the carpenters. In addition, this kind of relationship stifles growth of the informal sector.

9.5 Problems faced by the Big Men

It was observed that the Big Men at the complex could not effectively discharge their duties as they faced a myriad of problems. They paid allegiance to the ZANU-PF politicians who appointed them in the committee. Below is an account of one of the former management committee finance officers. He was responsible for recruiting the security personnel at the complex:

> *The main problem that we faced is political interference and it affected our set goals as management committee members. There was conflict in the management committee as people had different views and desires. Operators in the complex were no longer paying the administration fees as they were citing that there is no tangible evidence that showed how the money was used. As the management team we were faced with shortage of funds, we could not finish the blocks that were left at foundation level by SEDCO in 2005. When the complex was opened in 2005 there was no proper fence so goods that belonged to the operators would be stolen by thieves. Party politics also interfered with our work because at times we were made to put aside our plans and provide funds and donations towards the ZANU-PF ruling party conferences and national congresses that are conducted yearly and after five years respectively. We were also scared of being expelled from the management committee, so we had to comply and follow everything that the politicians instructed us because they controlled the complex. Once a month we would close the gate and collect US$3 dollars from each and every operator. The money would be used for the maintenance*

*of the complex; however, some operators would avoid paying this fee and this affected our capacity to carry out our duties (*Wilson, Interview, 2017).

The above quotation is in contradiction to one of the expected roles of the Big Men at the complex. Provision of security to the operators by the Big Men has been compromised and this has left the carpenters vulnerable (Zimbabwean Paper, 2012). It is under these circumstances that the 'clients' will end up ditching one Big Men and pay allegiance to the other who promises them security of their goods.

9.6 Political Problems

The first problem was that when there were political meetings at the complex business came to a standstill. Carpenters goods could be stolen by thieves in situations where these meetings were conducted in places far from the complex. One of the carpenters accused the Big Men in the ZANU-PF party for the problems they were experiencing at the Complex:

> *Our problem here is that of the rude ZANU-PF youths. The Big Men are the ones who brought these youths and they have their own committee that represents them. These youths overcharge the customers but when they come to us, they give us less money for our products. So, their activities affect our business. Our market has been destroyed by the market brokers popularly known as 'gombiro's'. When the complex was opened the 'gombiro's' were not there but they came to the complex in 2014. The 'gombiro's' were initially the youths that were used by the Big Men to campaign and vote for them into the management committee (*Simon, Interview, 2017).

Furthermore, the carpenters at the complex attributed cases of fire outbreak to the political squabbles that were experienced in the country. There were intra-party and interparty political conflicts and these affected the carpenters at the complex. The following is an extract from one of the carpenters who related his experiences:

The fire outbreak is a political manifestation in the sense that the conflicts that exist between the different parties led to the fire outbreak. During the inclusive government, MDC T officials also came to the complex demanding shares. Moreover, there were ZANU-PF politicians from Highfields who had interest in the complex and they clashed with the ZANU-PF politicians from Glenview. Whenever there was conflict between the ZANU-PF Big Men the end result were reports of stolen goods and fire outbreak at the complex (Fred, Interview, 2018).

9.7 Brokers 'Magombiro' as the Big Men

It was established that there were strained relationships between the 'magombiro' and carpenters as they exchange accusations and counter-accusations. One of the operators Mamba accused the management committee of the problems they were experiencing. This is captured below:

The committee brought "magombiros" hooligans into the complex known for terrorising the customers. They sometimes use vulgar language to the customers. This scares away customers from the complex and the carpenters are the ones who will be on the losing end. If they feel the price is high, they reduce it and put their own price and mark up. At first, we resisted, but because of the lack of unity by the carpenters we allowed them to rip us off and we could not resist. We are now working for them as we make low profits, and much of the gains are taken by the 'magombiros'. These 'magombiro' were introduced by the complex chairman as ZANU-PF unemployed youths so it became hard for us to challenge them. Even the police failed to deal with them. They are a big problem because they affect our business. They steal from the operators and customers. They overcharge the customer

*and also, they do not give the agreed money to the operator. They also steal money and valuables from customers, thus business was much better when they were not there. They are affecting the good relationship that was there between the customers and the carpenters. The committee that was there tried to clear these people 'magombiro' but it failed. The factionalism in the committee led to one group supporting the 'magombiro' and the other group against them. So there was conflict between the two and this led to the failure to do away with these people. The police post is there but it is also failing to remove them from the complex. They have support from the Big Men (*Mamba, Interview, 2017).

Some carpenters expressed circumstances that forced them to forge relations with 'magombiro' as they were like people sitting between a hard rock and a hard surface. If they did not keep relations with 'magombiro' their business could be affected, if they forged a relationship with them their business was affected too. The carpenters hoped that one day the 'magombiro's' could be removed so that they could negotiate prices with the customers without any middleman. There are strong social ties between the management and the 'magombiro'. This relationship works in favour of the Big Men and not the carpenters'.

The accusations that were presented to the management committee members for supporting 'magombiro' were refuted by one of the members, who disowned them by saying:

We do not have any relationship with 'magombiro'. We even reported them at Glen View police station and at times we could apprehend these 'magombiro's' and took them to the police but this was to no avail as the 'magombiro's' were always released by the police without any charges levelled against them. We even had a meeting with

one of the police chiefs at Southerton police station to try and address the issue. To our surprise one of the Harare Provincial Chairman then Cde Eno defended these magombiro's because he pocketed kickbacks from them. He physical threatened the police officers but nothing was done to him. (*Moyo, Interview, 2017).*

9.7.1 Big Men as marketing brokers

Marketing of furniture at the complex is controlled by the head of 'magombiro'. Magombiro dominate the marketing of furniture at the complex. Mike is referred to as the 'boss and all furniture has to pass through him. The carpenters who dodge this process are fined and are given warnings when caught. Mike is respected by fellow youths and carpenters at the complex and he is a creative man who has coined some words used by the carpenters in marketing their furniture. Magombiro' are sophisticated people in terms of language use. They use street lingo to trick the customers to buy the goods. They also use the deceiving language to evade police arrest. The following is an account of their marketing language by one of the gombiro's:

The people we call 'magombiro' have a special language of communication that they use which is understood by the operators and not the customers. The language is also used to protect themselves from the police. They call the carpenters 'vanakhule' (uncle) and they view themselves as 'vazukuru' (cousins). They use different terms such as "code" to negotiate a price with the operator then they put their own mark up, without the customer comprehending what is going on. They end up making the operator to change his price. 'Mapuranga mangani' (how many planks) this is a phrase that is also used to ask the operator on the price of the product. 'Inyoka' (snake) this is used to infer that a customer does not have the amount of money demanded by the operator so the 'magombiro' will try to negotiate with the operator

so that he reduces his price. 'Kudhonza ngoro' (pulling a cart) this is a phrase used by the 'magombiros' where they take a customer from Willowvale road to the complex. The 'magombiro' will be taking this customer to the operator or carpenter. 'Kuberekwa pakutengesa' (putting someone at the back) here it means that there are people who were lucky to get stands in the complex. The places with higher market or many customers are where one operator can take some products from other operators who do not have a stand in the complex and put their goods on his stand for display. After the stand owner has sold the product, he is usually given some amount of money as a sign of gratitude. Sometimes the process of "kuberekwa" is done to help a friend and relative to sell his products (Takura, Interview, 2018).

Customer-gombiro-carpenter Relationships

Sometimes the 'magombiros' are helpful to the operator. The operator might approach the 'magombiro' and tell them that he has a wardrobe to sell at a certain price. The 'magombiros' will find a customer and take him to the operator. These guys sometimes are useful in terms of marketing because they help in linking the carpenters with the customers. It suffices to argue that the informal sector thrives as a result of closely-knit social networks among the operators. When it comes to the purchasing and selling of goods, all this is hinged on a web of social networks.

The Big Man brings carpenters together in times of trouble at the complex by putting in place burial society's initiatives. During the time of data collection, I realised that the carpenters who came from Buhera have a burial society. However, a social network or its parts are endowed with the potential of being transformed into a social group in a realist sense

provided that there is enough interaction (Laumann and Pappi, 1976). The formation of a burial society as of form of a social group depicts the centrality of social networks among carpenters at the complex. Social networks have a central place in the study of informal sector activities. Members of the society paid monthly subscriptions of US$10 in January 2018. The burial society had a chairman, vice chairman, secretary and treasurer. On 09 June 2018 one of the carpenters Tapera passed on and there was an ad hoc meeting that was conducted in the morning at around past 9 and transport logistics were arranged, and relatives of the deceased were informed about the arrangements. The body of the deceased was accompanied by fellow carpenters to its final place of rest. These strong social networks that are linked to kinship relations play an important role in uniting people even in bad times. Carpenters proved that they are a united force and this helps them in their day to day activities.

The social capital of the Big Men gives then access to economic capital. The Big Man is responsible for facilitating access to loans to carpenters. It was established that access to loans was based on one's closeness to the chairman of the management committee. He reported directly to the Minister of Youths, Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment. Below is an excerpt from the Acting Chairman of the management committee:

> *This is the place where I exercise my powers on vetting the carpenters to access loans. In doing this job I get help from the other committee members but I have the final say on the beneficiaries. I report directly to the Minister who is my 'boss'. I take directives from him on issues to do with youth empowerment at the Complex. Only active youths in party activities are given first preference (Acting Chairman, Interview, 2018).*

The names of all potential beneficiaries were written but when the money came a few people were picked and given the money. The rest of the money could be shared among the leaders and the rest of the expected beneficiaries did not benefit. The people that were supposed to benefit did not, it was based on social networks and political affiliation. The carpenters that benefited from these loans did not pay back the loans as they claimed that the money was from the ZANU-PF party. There were also loans that did not come from the government, but these loans only benefited the people close to the management because it was the management team that shortlisted the beneficiaries. Social capital is an important tool that is manipulated by carpenters to access scarce resources in the complex.

9.8 Reporting structure

Whenever there are issues at the complex the carpenters report to the secretary. The secretary will also report to the vice chairman and then to the chairman. If the issues cannot be resolved at complex level the issue will be reported to the district secretary, vice chair and then to the chairman. However, all these reporting channels are sometimes bypassed at the complex since the other positions are vacant and there is only the position of the Acting chairman.

In light of the above, the Big Men would have distinguished themselves from the rest of the informal sector operators through their role in party politics. They were elected members of the ZANU-PF party. The Big Men had the powers to close the Glen View Complex whenever there are national events such as Independence Day, Burial of a national heroes or heroines and Defence forces Day. The Big Men in the complex have a huge clientele that helps them in commanding political influence in the affairs of the Glen View Complex in Harare.

According to Godelier (1986: 163), the ability of the Big Man to build power is based on amassing wealth and redistributing it with astutely calculated generosity. It should be noted that loyalty must continuously be reinforced and dissatisfaction among followers may have grave repercussions for his authority (Sahlins 1963:292).

It has been noted that for the Big Man to command support there is a need to develop strong social networks with the clients. Therefore, in the context of the Glen View Complex, for one to access a stall, that person must be connected to the Big Man or friends of the Big Man. In light of the distribution of land for stalls and loans this was influenced by one's political inclination. Hence, only politically correct people accessed stalls in the Glen View Complex than those from the other rivalry political parties such as Movement for Democratic Change.

9.9 Conclusion.

It has been noted that the Big Men distribute resources, resolve disputes, provide protection to the clients, maintain order and market brokers. The Big Men are the 'patrons' as they control and distribute the stalls and land to the 'clients' that is the carpenters. I looked at the problems they experience in executing their work. The relationship that exists between these actors was explained so as to understand the working dynamics that take place at the complex. I also looked at the relationship between the Big Men at the complex. Social networks between operators and the management committee were also explored. In the final chapter I explain the findings in the context of the Big Men concept and social network theory. I will conclude the chapter by referring to issues of further research.

Chapter 10: Conclusion

10.1 Introduction

Clientelism has proved to be a widespread phenomenon in the informal sector of Zimbabwe. Preceding chapters have highlighted lived experiences of various operators, the political dynamics in the informal sector and the issue of bigmanity in the informal sector of Zimbabwe. This concluding chapter brings those arguments together to illuminate a conceptual way of understanding the influence of clientelism in the informal sector of Zimbabwe. Borrowing from the Big Men concept and social network theory the chapter provides an in-depth understanding of how operators respond to issues of access to space and other related problems they encounter at the complex. Such an analysis will help us to understand the various strategies that operators employ to remain viable. The chapter is organised into three broad sections. Firstly, I outline the original contribution of this thesis to conceptual debates on Big Men's role in access and control of space in the informal sector in Zimbabwe. Secondly, I identify how my thesis adds new dimensions to our understanding of the influence of clientelism in the informal sector. Lastly, I provide nuanced views on the lived experiences of operators within a clientelistic environment. I conclude by referring to possible areas of further research. Before doing this, I provide a brief summary of the thesis chapters.

10.2 Thesis Summary

In this thesis, I focused on the important question driving the research and outlined the objectives, focus and methodological approach embodied in the research process. I also defined informal sector and went on to focus on the dynamics of the informal sector in Africa. In doing this I also looked at the development of the informal sector during the colonial and post post-colonial era in African countries. Moreover, I focused on the relationship between the informal sector and the Big Man syndrome.

In addition, I tracked the development of the informal sector in Zimbabwe from the colonial era to post-independent Zimbabwe. I explored the factors that led to the development of the informal sector in Zimbabwe that is from the colonial and post-colonial era. I analysed the

evolution of the informal sector, I focused on the socio-political, legal and economic contexts in which it thrived.

Furthermore, I traced the history of clientelism in Africa. Clientelism has been explored in Africa in countries such as Tanzania, Nigeria and Zimbabwe. It has been noted that even in Zimbabwe clientelism has been a common phenomenon in both the formal and informal sector. Patronage and clientelism are used as synonymous terms in this thesis. I traced this phenomenon of clientelism from independence to the year 2000 and beyond in Zimbabwe.

As the thesis progresses, I focused on the theoretical underpinnings of this research –notably how this study is influenced by the concept of Big Men and social network. The chapter identifies how the Big Men access and control space in the informal sector of Zimbabwe and how the operators depend on them for working space. Just after this, I briefly explained the study site, Glenview Complex 8, the methodology, research methods and sampling techniques used.

Following the above, I explored the livelihood strategies that are employed by operators in Zimbabwe in general and at Glen View 8 Complex in particular. I outlined the problems that affect the operators and these range from poor sanitation, poor infrastructure, capital constraints, stiff competition, lack of social security, outbreak of fire and lack of adequate space. It has been noted that the source of these problems is rooted in political interference by the ZANU-PF Big Men. Therefore, a political solution is required to address these problems. The operators use their agency to remain in business despite a plethora of the outlined problems.

Lastly, I presented and analysed the political dynamics in the informal sector and explored the manifestation of the Big Men and social networks in the informal sector of Zimbabwe.

10.3 Theoretical contributions of the study

10.3.1 Bigmanity and clientelism

The informal sector in Zimbabwe is influenced by clientelistic relations. Several informal operators use their political power and connections to secure working space at the complex. The Big Men 'mashefu' 'Big Men' use their political and social capital to distribute land to their supporters 'clients'. In this study the ZANU-PF supporters were found to be the beneficiaries of urban space at the Glenview complex. The carpenters who are anti-ZANU-PF are excluded from accessing space at the complex. Work relations at the complex are sustained through the manipulation of the entrenched social networks that exist between the patrons and the clients. These relationships should be voluntary but there is sometimes the use of coercion by the patrons to garner political support. However, data has revealed that use of intimidation has not yielded results to the ZANU-PF Big Men as the political party has been losing elections in the Glen view Constituency since 2000 to the opposition party MDC. Therefore, there is no linear pattern in the relationship between the Big Men and the clients as the clients can also manipulate the patrons by deceiving them in elections. Parcelling out of urban space has been used by the Big Men as a trump card against other opposition political parties. However, the beneficiaries of urban space renege on their commitment to support the Big Men in times of elections. My major contribution is that the above observation is in sharp contrast to the traditional Big Men who never used force to extract influence.

A Big Man is someone who can create and use social relations which give him leverage over others' (Sahlins 1963:292). The views of Sahlins are in contrast with the reality at the complex where the clients resist the influence of Big Men. The clients are fed up of being used by the Big Men for their selfish political gain. The clients use the cost-benefit analysis when making decisions and this shows that they are not passive or docile beings. Instead, they are very active and rational beings who can decide their own destiny. The rural folk can be used by politicians however the urban folk are challenging the status quo.

The Big Men particularly those from the ruling party ZANU-PF are involved in the mobilisation of strong and durable social ties from their supporters and in return they facilitate access to resources to operators in the complex. It has been noted that the concept of Big Men in general refers to men because of the patriarchal nature of societies, but can include women in certain cases. In general the concept is gender blind as it is commonly used for men however, at the complex there are some old women who possess political and social

capital. These old women from ZANU-PF parcel out space to the party supporters in the same way as their male counterparts. They are also influential figures when it comes to complex affairs. Therefore, instead of talking about the Big Men one has to refer to clientelism as a way of avoiding the gendered nature of the Big Men concept. Clientelism as a concept can accommodate both men and women in its application.

Bigmanity is revealed in the access and control of space at the complex. As a ZANU-PF project the complex is controlled by a management committee who are aligned to the party. Masunungure (2006) notes that the distribution of the stalls is biased in favour of ZANU-PF sympathisers and those who are anti-ZANU-`PF risk losing their stalls. Therefore, it is clear that there was an intricate social network of politicisation of stall allocation at the complex. The Big Men dominate other networks because of their privileged access to resources (Utas, 2009). Those with strong networks (perceived ZANU-PF supporters) were rewarded with stalls whereas those with weak networks (perceived opposition supporters) were marginalised in stall allocation. However, it has been noted that there are some who pretend to be ZANU-PF cadres as a strategy of accessing stalls but in reality, they belong to other opposition political parties. Here again. The carpenters use their agency to access resources. It was established that there is a strained relationship between the operators and the Big Men. Therefore, the best description that can be given to the Big Men at the complex is that they are ZANU-PF political thugs who are bent on exploiting the carpenters' at the complex.

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10.3.2 Social network analysis

It has been shown that social networks play a critical role in opening opportunities to operators at Glen view complex. These networks are manipulated by those who have social capital and in the process stand to benefit more than anyone else. 'Mashefu' literally meaning the 'Big Men' extract political allegiance from the operators (clients). This is supported by Portes and Landolt (1997) who posit that social capital may be available to individuals on a very unequal basis. This points to the fact that there is an always asymmetrical exchange between the Big Men and the clients. In this sense, social exclusion may occur depending on the level of stocks of social capital one possesses. 'Mashefu' have high stocks of social capital whereas the operators have low stocks of social capital. This gives them the leverage to dominate the social networks at the complex.

In addition, kinship-based groups are part of the working arrangements in the complex. A notable example is the Johanne Masowe apostolic carpenters. The senior carpenters recruit

relatives and friends from the rural areas to town. These social relations and networks help the carpenters to resolve some of the problems they encounter at the complex. Therefore, kinship networks sustain the informal sector at the Complex. In this context, it has been noticed that social networks cuts across the political, cultural and economic domains of the informal sector operators (Coleman, 1990). The point raised by Coleman, corroborates well with my observations that shows that the operators have different political, cultural and economic backgrounds but are connected by a web of networks. However, what is unique about this study is that religious networks play an important role in the informal sector of Zimbabwe. In the existing literature more attention has been given to socio-political and economic networks as the driving force behind informal sector growth in Africa at the same time trivialising the role of religious networks in shaping the direction of the informal sector at the complex.

The formation of a burial society as of form of a social group depicts the centrality of social networks among carpenters at the complex. It is worth noting that these social networks are not restricted to the complex as the carpenters have time to visit the bereaved family in Harare and they also spare time to go to rural areas to bury their fellow carpenters. However, these burial societies are tribal based. The Manyika from Manicaland have their burial society where as the Zezuru's from places around Harare have their own burial society. Despite the tribal based burial societies the carpenters contribute money for food and transport to fellow burial society members. Therefore, social networks have a central place in the study of informal sector activities in Zimbabwe.

The mass grabbing of stands in the 'mahalape' area corresponds with Nyamwanza et.al, (2014) who argue that some 'land barons' with social capital and connected to some influential political elites acquired land which was meant for future development thereby authenticating the fact that clientelism defined and still define the informal sector in Zimbabwe. The 'land barons' operated in a typical fashion as that of the Big Men at Glen View Complex 8. It should be noted that social capital is a resource available through social networks, the resources that some individuals claim come at the expense of others (Portes and Landolt 1996), which means that social capital may be available to individuals on a very unequal basis. Those who support ZANU-PF have high stocks of social capital whereas those who are anti-ZANU-PF have less stocks of social capital. In this sense, social exclusion may occur even in societies characterised by apparently high stocks of social capital. Some space

seekers have resorted to the tactic of political clientelism and patronage to obtain and secure spaces of operation. Such entrepreneurs openly support ZANU-PF for "giving them land" and get no interference from municipal authorities or police details as they are 'politically backed' (Mandizadza and Nyamwanza, 2014). In this case it is clear that the clients are not passive beings but use their agency to benefit from the Big Men.

The findings of this thesis reveal that the informal sector has a lot of potential to transform the livelihoods of the majority of the urbanites through employment creation and revenue generation. It has been revealed that, despite the numerous problems that the operators' face, they have shown resilience and managed to remain in business providing for their families. Data has shown that informal trade is the mainstay of peoples' lives at the complex. The operators' counted the losses and benefits they experienced but over and above the majority have applauded that their lives have been transformed. There are operators' who have managed to build houses and bought vehicles. Majority have managed to send their children to school from the proceeds they realised from their sales. The success of operators is attributed to the intricate social networks that have been built and sustained over time at the complex.

10.4 Empirical contributions of the study

10.4.1 Everyday experiences of the informal sector in Zimbabwe

It has been revealed that the operators engage in multiple livelihoods strategies at the complex. However, they experience a plethora of problems such as lack of security, poor sanitation, stiff competition, poor infrastructure, lack of insurance and fire outbreaks. These problems appear to be common in most informal sites in Africa however; the unique feature about the source of these problems is that they are a result of the politicisation of the informal sector particularly by the ZANU-PF party. The Big Men abuse their influence by blocking council officials from taking over the management of the complex. It is worth noting that when control of the complex is surrendered to council officials chances are high that the problems experienced by the carpenters can be addressed. Operators at the complex have described the politicisation of the informal sector as a major drawback to their efforts of realising maximum benefits from their work. Therefore, de-politicisation of the informal sector can help the operators in performing their work with success.

The complex has experienced fire outbreaks for several times every year and this is a common problem in most informal sites in Africa. However, the only difference is on the cause of the fire outbreak where in other informal sites it is attributed to poor electrical connections among other causes. At the complex, foul play by different political actors has been singled out as the major cause of fire outbreak. The ZANU-PF political thugs are accused of setting fire at the complex sometimes in order to conceal some theft cases or in order to apportion the blame to the sitting management committee such that they can be removed from office.

Lack of social protection at the complex is traced form lack of political will by the ZANU-PF management committee. However, carpenters have interest in joining some insurance companies as a way of cushioning themselves in events of fire outbreak. This is supported by Diko (2014) who argues that social protection schemes for informal workers are critical for fulfilling the rights of urban informal workers to earn a decent living.

10.4.2 Class, gender and age dimensions of the clientalism

Class and gender configurations are important in understanding how various social and political actors relate and interact at the complex. In that vein, issues of inclusivity and exclusivity in resource accessibility based on gender lines needs to be attended to as well. The patriarchal nature of the Zimbabwean society has ensured that women are marginalized in influential decision making positions. The management committee at the complex has no female representative as all positions are dominated by men. The majority of women does not own space but participate in informal activities as workers and not as entrepreneurs.

Class is thus is a form of social capital in that it leads to inclusion and exclusion of groups. The ZANU-PF women who have some links to the liberation struggle have more access to resources compared to the other women who are just ZANU-PF supporters. Despite the issue of class, it was shown that there is perpetuation of gender inequalities on issues to do with resource accessibility. The social position excludes them from important networks which can improve their livelihoods. In other words they do not possess the necessary social, political or economic capital to ensure access to land.

10.5 Conclusion

It has been established that issues of clientelism are critical in unpacking the political dynamics in the informal sector of Zimbabwe. The Big Men use their socio-political and economic capital to wield influence at the complex. They manipulate the carpenters to vote for the ruling ZANU-PF party by distributing space to their supporters. However, the carpenters have shown that they are not passive beings instead they are active and rational. They have resisted to be used as vote banks in favour of ZANU-PF. The ZANU-PF party always lose elections in Glen view where the complex is situated. The zanunisation process of the complex is inimical to informal sector growth hence the urgent need of de-politicisation of the complex. Social networks have facilitated carpenters to access space at the complex. Apart from social networks there are other networks such as political, economic and religious ones. In face of a myriad of problems at the complex the carpenters employ various networks to resolve these problems.

Issues of Further Research

The involvement of women in the carpentry industry as ancillary staff should be explored in future. The participation of women should not be overlooked as they also eke a living from the informal sector activities.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Interview Guides

Livelihood Strategies Employed by Informal Sector Operators in Zimbabwe, Harare

Name

Gender

Age

1. What is the nature of your business?

2. How long have you been in this business?

3. What resilient strategies have you put in place?

5. What challenges do you face in your business?

6. What caused the fire at the Complex in 2015?

7. Did you lose stuff as a result of the fire?

8. What strategies do you employ to counter those challenges?

9. What benefits did you accrue from the business?

10. How do you market your stuff?

Strategies Employed to Overcome Problems Experienced by Informal Sector Operators as a Result of Political Manipulation, Clientelism and Patronage

Name

Age

Gender

1. How do you deal with cases of political manipulation at the complex?

2. Do you rely on the Party politics on this place?

3. Do you comply with the orders issued by the management committee?

Political Dynamics in the Informal Sector

Name

Gender

Age

Carpenters

1. What is the nature of your business?

2. What influenced you to start this business?

3. When did you start this business?

4. Where did you get the money to start your business?

5. What were you doing before starting this business?

6. How did you access space to do your business?

7. Did you benefit from the youth loans facilitated by the Ministry of Youth and Indigenisation?

8. If yes, how did you access the loan?

9. If no, what might be the reasons for failing to access the loan?

10. Do you know of anyone in this Complex who accessed the loans?

11. What sort of influence does the state or local authority have on your business?

12. How does party politics influence your business?

13. Do you attend meetings and under what circumstances?

14. What challenges do you face in your business?

Politicians and Councilors

1. What are your views of the State on informal activities in Zimbabwe?

2. Who control the informal sector activities at the complex?

3. How did people access space at the complex?

4. What are your perceptions on the State led Operation Murambatsvina in 2005 on the informal sector?

5. What do you think has caused the outbreak of fire at the complex?

6. How does politics influence informal sector activities?

7. What criterion was used by the Ministry of Youth, Indigenisation and Employment Creation officials in selecting beneficiaries?

8. How does the ZANU PF led government manipulate the informal sector?

Police Officers

1. When was the police post established at the complex?

2. What factors led to the establishment of the police post?

3. What cases are commonly reported to the police officers?

4. How do the police officers relate with the management committee members?

5. How do politicians interfere in police duties?

6. What problems do police officers face at the complex?

Customers

1. What problems do you face at the complex?

2. What do you think should be done to address your problems?

Officials from Municipality

District Officer

Councilor

1. How did the complex come into being?

2. Who manages the complex?

3. What problems do you encounter as city officials from the complex?

4. What services do you provide to the complex?

5. What are your plans in addressing the incessant problem of fire outbreak?

6. What are your future plans with the complex?

ZANU PF Officials

1. How did the complex come into being?
2. Who manages the complex?
3. How are stalls allocated at the complex?
4. What are your plans with the complex?
5. What problems are faced at the complex?
6. How should the problems addressed?

Manifestation of 'Big Men' and Social networks in the Informal Sector

Name

Gender

Age

1. What is the nature of business?
2. How did you access space in the complex?
3. Where did you get the money to start your business?
4. What relationship exists between you and the person who facilitated you to get space?
5. Who are the 'Big Men' in this Complex?
6. Who manages the complex?
7. How can you explain your relationship with the management team?
8. How does politics influence the affairs of the complex?
9. How do you access the raw materials for your stuff?
10. Where do you sell your stuff?
11. What networks exist in this Complex when conducting your business?

Appendix II: Request of project approval

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SOCIOLOGY DEPARTMENT UNIVERSITY OF ZIMBABWE

03 January, 2017

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE: DATA COLLECTION FOR THESIS

This serves to confirm that **Tandire Justin**, student registration number (**14T0002**), is a PhD student in the Department of Sociology, Rhodes University South Africa. Tandire Justin is a University of Zimbabwe employee, EC Number 9509900. It is a requirement of the University that students studying for the PhD in Sociology produce a research project. We are therefore kindly asking you to help with information relevant to the student's research area: **The Influence of Clientelism on Informal Sector in Zimbabwe. A Case Study of Glen view 8 Complex**

We would like to assure you that the information you give will be used for academic purposes only.

Your assistance in this regard is highly appreciated. For more information, do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

PROF C.G. MARARIKE
A/CHAIRMAN, SOCIOLOGY DEPARTMENT

SOCIOLOGY OFFICIAL

cc: Dean, Faculty of Social Studies

CGM:dn

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ZIMBABWE

Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises and Cooperative Development
Cecil House
4th Floor, Room 413
95 Jason Moyo Avenue
Harare
Zimbabwe

11 January 2017
The Management
Glenview Furniture Complex
Harare

RE: REQUEST TO CARRY OUT A RESEARCH PROJECT

This letter serves to confirm that **Tandire Justin ID no.13 158883 H 13** is a PhD student in the department of Sociology, Rhodes University South Africa and is carrying out a research entitled **" The Influence of Clientelism on Informal Sector in Zimbabwe. A case study of Glenview Furniture Complex".**

The Ministry will be grateful if you could furnish him with the information that he requires for the purpose of completing his project.

Your usual cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

Yours Sincerely

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11 JAN 2017
BAG 7740, CAUSEWAY
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P. Manja
For: Secretary of Small and Medium Enterprises and Cooperatives Development