MEN AT THE MARGINS: DAY LABOURERS AT INFORMAL HIRING SITES IN TSHWANE

by

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I declare herewith that:

**MEN AT THE MARGINS: DAY LABOURERS AT INFORMAL HIRING SITES IN TSHWANE**

is my own work and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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SIGNATURE DATE
(H Louw)
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There is a Ugandan proverb “Ba alu pamvu siri (a) ru”, which says: the footprint or track of only one person is narrow. This proverb acknowledges the “fact that someone working on his own does not achieve as much as those who work together to achieve success” (Stewart 2005:65). The footprints of many individuals and institutions can be found along the track of this thesis that I herewith want to acknowledge and thank for their academic and supportive footprints.

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SUMMARY

In 2004, day labourers at informal hiring sites were becoming an increasingly familiar but unknown sight in Tshwane. This was the motivation for this study which included a survey to determine the social and economic conditions and experiences of day labourers at informal hiring sites in Tshwane?

A literature review showed that day labourers at informal hiring sites is a widely spread, age old phenomenon and well-researched in the USA where most day labourers are Latino immigrants. The survey in Tshwane showed that the majority of the men were unable to secure permanent employment and were seeking “piece jobs”. They were all African, mostly South African citizens, mostly temporary residents in Tshwane, from rural areas and with family responsibilities.

They were “full time occupied” if not employed, marketing their labour. They performed a variety of low paid, low skilled, jobs, mostly in the construction industry, gardening and home maintenance sectors. Their formal educational qualifications and skills were generally low. For survival support and protection many were members of groups, shared food, sleeping place and income.

In Tshwane the increased presence and visibility of day labourers seems related to high unemployment, high poverty rate, urbanisation of poverty, the lifting of legislative restrictions on the movement of people, the myth of more possibilities of finding paid employment in urban areas and the tradition of urban rural labour migration in South Africa. Consequently the study included a further literature review on Tshwane as socio-economic-political context, poverty, urban poverty, unemployment and labour migration to increase understanding of the day labour phenomenon.

The thesis concludes with a reflection, general guidelines for action and recommendations for action in Tshwane.
KEY TERMS

Day labour
Day labourers
Cluster sampling
Fundamental human needs
Hiring sites
Job searching
Labour migration
Max-Neef
Unemployment
Tshwane
Poverty
Poverties as unmet fundamental human needs
Urban poverty
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BIG Basic Income Grant
CBD Central Business District
CHIRLA Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights in Los Angeles
CTMM City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality
EAP Economically Active Population
HDI The Human Development Index
HSRC Human Science Research Council
IASSW International Association of Schools of Social Work
IFSW International Federation of Social Workers
IDP Integrated Development Program
MSR: Men at the Side of the Road
NDLON National Day Labor Organizing Network
NDLS National Day Labour Survey
NRF National Research Fund
NGO Non Governmental Organisation
PCA Person Centred Approach
SABC South African Broadcasting Corporation
SADC Southern African Development Community
UCLA University of California, Los Angeles
UNDP United Nations Development Program
UNISA University of South Africa
USA United States of America
YMCA Young Men's Christian Organisation
PROLOGUE

A biographical comic:

“Alien Nation”

D du Plessis

2004
ALIEN NATION

Take care of yourself son, and don't forget about us.

I'll never forget, mama, and don't cry. I'll work hard and make you very proud of me.

Goodbye Zimbabwe. I promise to return to you, someday.

Welcome my glorious future... where are all the people?

Heita Boetie. What are you doing out here all alone? Are you lost?

Hello brother. I'm on my way to the city. Do you know the way?
Hey boy, take care your eyes don't fall out, you must be new to the city.

Yes, indeed, I've travelled far to seek my fortune here.

Ah yes, the city is a wonderful place of lights, life and opportunity, but also of many strange wonders and danger. Yes, great danger.

You must beware at all times. Great peril awaits you around every corner. You must watch out for the tsotsi's!

They greet you like an old friend, and call you closer. They touch you here, like this, and bite you like a snake, and steal everything you have.

Oh, many times I have seen this happen. Many times...

Remember! Like a snake!
HI. HELLO. Ahem. I AM NEW HERE, AND I NEED A PLACE TO SLEEP.

AY, CERTAINLY. CERTAINLY. YOU CAN HAVE ROOM 3003, OUR SPECIAL SUITE, AND we WELCOME to our fair city. Heh heh.

WE'RE ALL BROTHERS HERE, WE LOOK OUT FOR EACH OTHER. IF YOU NEED ANYTHING, DON'T HESITATE TO ASK, O.K.?

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

AAAAA!

aaawof! WOOF WOOF WOOF WOOF WOOF WOOF WOOF!

PLEASE BOSS LET MEGO PLEASE NONSTOP PLEASE!

AAAAAAAAAAAA!!

AAAAAAAAAAAA!!
KABOOM! BWA-HA HA HA HA!

AND THAT'S WHY A BOER ALWAYS HAS TWO TOOTHBRUSHES, SEE?

ha ha ha ha!

EXCUSE ME, SIRS, GOOD MORNING TO YOU BOTH.

GOOD DAY, SIR.

SIR, GOOD DAY.

MY NAME IS ISAAC, AND I'M LOOKING FOR WORK. PERHAPS YOU COULD HELP-

YOU CAME TO THE RIGHT PLACE. MY NAME IS MFOLOSI, AND I WORK ON TOP OF THE WORLD, BUILDING SKYSCRAPERS. EVERY DAY I SEE ANGELS FLYING BY, SINGING TO ME.

MY FRIEND HERE IS LOOKING FOR TROUBLE. HE WOULD DO WELL TO REMEMBER THE TOWER OF BABEL.

MY NAME IS ELVIS. I WORK UNDERNEATH THE WORLD. THE SEWERAGE SYSTEM IS THE VEINS, AND THE PIPES THE ARTERIES OF THE CITY. IN A WAY I AM A DOCTOR WHO HEALS THE CITY.

UNDERGROUND IS WHERE THE DEVIL LIVES! THAT'S WHY IT'S SO HOT DOWN THERE!

WE ARE EXPERTS IN OUR RESPECTIVE FIELDS. IF YOU ARE SKILLED...

WE'LL TAKE YOU TO 'JOB CORNER', THERE YOU'LL MEET AN EMPLOYER WHO WOULD PAY WELL FOR YOUR SKILLS!

AND SO:

HEY, YOU THERE! ARE YOU LOOKING FOR WORK? COME HERE!

YOU SA, AT POLICE SERVICE!
You look like a strong one. Let's see you pick up that rock over there.

This one? Like this?

Good, good! I can use you on the site, but you sound strange. Where are you from? Show me your papers. Where's your I.D.?

...uh...

Zimbabwe? Or Mozambique? I've gotten in trouble employing one of you. I can't give you a job. Better go back. Your own country, you don't belong here, boy. ...but.

No.

No.

No.

No.

No.

Having a bit of trouble? I can help, and I won't ask any questions.

Months Later:

Dear mama,

How are you? And how is Sissie? And how is grandfather? Sorry I haven't written earlier, but since I arrived I haven't had a moment to rest.

The city is so very different from home. I am only now starting to get used to it. There are many different kinds of people here, and I meet so many new ones that I have trouble remembering all of them. I know maybe fifty by name.
I'm a very popular guy here. Almost everybody knows me. I'm never alone, there is always someone to talk to, or some business to be done.

I quickly found work here. I'm a kind of doctor. Sometimes people feel really bad, and I help them feel better. I'm a humanitarian, kind of.

It's very important work. Many people depend on me, and I work very hard. Sometimes up in the clouds, sometimes under the ground. It's hard to explain.

In the evenings, I visit with my friends. We sit around discussing politics, current events, sport. I also have a ladyfriend, called Lee. Sometimes at night we walk and look at the stars, and talk.

Maybe we'll get married, and have many children. We'll come home where I can look after you and you can get to know her. She likes to cook and she is very friendly. I'm sure that you will like her, Mama.

She has never been outside of the city. When I tell her about home, she doesn't believe me! The city is so different, and she doesn't know anything else. All she knows is the cars, buses, all the people, concrete sidewalks and shopping centres. She's never been there where she-

POW!

Mama, I have to go. My friends are calling me. There is always something going on here. Perhaps there is a party, or someone needs my expert advice.

Your loving son,

Isaac.

P.S. Please use the money to buy Sisie some nice new shoes for school and send her my love.

Fin.
SECTION A

SETTING THE STAGE

"A class that is silent and mute"

All that the landless Indian can rely on for survival is the power of his arms... a long line of landless Indians—the day labourer—stretches like a frieze from the tiny door of the mountain hut to the solid doors of the city, which open onto exploitation......

“Day labourer is he who owns no land for cultivation, habitation, profession, little or no instruction, but many children, privations and needs. When he arrives in the city he accommodates himself to live- if it can be called that- in miserable shanties, in infra-human conditions without any comfort and abandoned to his own destiny, without any hopes of vindication. It is a class that is silent and mute, just drifting and drugged with resignation. He does not know, when he wakes up, if he will be able to conquer the day’s bitter bread to take to his malnourished and ragged family.

The day labourer has a pay of ten sucre a day without food, and eight sucre with it, if he works in town. But when they work in the hacienda the salary is six sucre with food. Annually every man must work three days of ‘yanapa’ (compulsory free labour) in the hacienda closest to his community, for having used roads, grass and wood from the mount.

(Max-Neef, 1992:84)
INTRODUCING THE STUDY

1 INTRODUCTION

This study is a voice for and in honour of the day labourers and others like them as introduced in the following vignettes. In a parable from the first century we read:

[An estate manager went out early in the morning to hire workers for his vineyard. They agreed on a wage of a dollar a day, and went to work. After about nine o'clock, the manager saw some other men hanging around the town square unemployed. He told them to go to work in his vineyard and he would pay them a fair wage. They went. He did the same thing at noon, and again at three o'clock. At five o'clock he went back and found still others hanging around. He said “Why are you standing around all day doing nothing? They said, “Because no one hired us.”

(Peterson 2002:1801).

The following is a present day voice of a similar situation:

Joseph Bacela is in his forties and he “works” close to the fire station in Epping. Every morning he stands on the side of the road in the industrial area, not to beg or sell clothes hangers. He is waiting in case someone will stop and offer him a job for the day.

(Beeld 17 August 2004).

The intention of this chapter is to provide a background to the origins of this study, the motivation and purpose, the method and theoretical approach.

2 BACKGROUND TO STUDY

The background to this study can be traced to a number of sources which will subsequently be explained. Briefly, these sources include my growing awareness of the presence of day labourers in Tshwane, the unfolding opportunities, a social concern
about poverty and involvement, an intention and inclination towards a people-centred and participatory way of working, a growing indebtedness towards day labourers to make their plight known, my experience of ongoing collegial co-operation and some personal reasons. Although these origins are intertwined I will attempt to distinguish between them.

2.1 A growing awareness of the presence of day labourers

In a SABC (South African Broadcasting Corporation) News Bulletin (2003) it was reported, that “hundreds of unemployed men and women wait on busy street corners hoping to make just a few rand a day. They hope to be picked up by people looking for labour”.

When this study on the day labourers in Tshwane was being planned in 2004, men gathering at what have become known as informal hiring sites was becoming an increasingly familiar sight. These day labourers were hoping to sell their labour for a day or longer or for a specific job in order to earn some money. These temporary jobs are known as “piece jobs” in Tshwane and Gauteng. Other places use other terms, e.g. in the Northern Cape one may hear of men asking for a “skroppie” (Clark 2006: personal communication). Simultaneous to the increase in the number of these hiring sites, was an increasing concern amongst residents in the suburbs and businesses about the numbers of people standing around.

During 2001, I the researcher and my colleague and study leader Prof Schenck, from the Department of Social Work at University of South Africa (Unisa), who both resided in the same area, became involved with the men on the street after a church in Elardus Park, an eastern suburb of Tshwane had approached us. They had become aware of these men who seemed homeless and hungry and wanted to organise some form of assistance for them. Their concern was actually twofold. Firstly, these men seemed homeless as they were said to be sleeping in the bushes of the Wolwespruit area, which borders on Elardus Park. Secondly, the crime rate in the area had increased and there had been some serious incidents. There was a growing concern that there could be a connection between the increasing crime rate and the people on
the streets. A residents’ association had been formed recently and different actions had been taken concerning the strangers on the streets. From time to time, these men sleeping in the open had been removed by the Metro police. The police were also called in by the local high school to clear the area of these men whenever scholars went out for environmental field study excursions along the Wolwespruit.

2.2 A people-centred and participatory approach

As social workers, we (Schenck and Louw) were concerned that the assistance planned by the churches might be based only on the benefactors’ perception of what the men needed without any participation by the men themselves (Schenck & Louw 2005).

In what we hoped would be a more people/person-centred approach that would eventually be more participatory, we decided that it was necessary to first get to know and consult and build relationships with some of these men before organising anything. We were joined by a local pastor and social worker and for the next few months, we walked the streets early on Friday mornings to observe and meet the men as they stood around from about 6.00 to 10.00 hoping to be hired for “piece jobs”. We acquired some valuable information, but also realised that there was information we could not access because of language differences. They were all African men and many of them could hardly speak English or Afrikaans. Some came from Mozambique and Zimbabwe (neighbouring countries to South Africa) and spoke very little of the local African languages. We unfortunately could not speak any African languages; we only spoke English and Afrikaans (Schenck & Louw 2005).

Five fourth year social work students from Unisa, who are required to complete a research project as part of their course, became involved. Being fluent in a number of African languages they were able to interview 100 men over a period of six weeks, using a loosely structured interview schedule.

2.3 The increasing awareness of day labourers

This preliminary study showed that the majority of the men on the street were
seeking “piece jobs”. They performed a variety of low paid, low skilled, dangerous and dirty jobs, mostly in the construction industry, gardening and other home maintenance sectors. They were all African and most of them were not permanently resident in Tshwane as they had homes elsewhere, mostly in rural areas. They chose to launch their search for employment from the hiring sites in Elardus Park because there were more employment opportunities and they were paid better than in some other areas of Tshwane. A great majority felt a responsibility towards their families, although only about half of them were married or had a partner and children. Their formal educational qualifications varied, ranging from no formal schooling to grade 12, although the majority had little formal education. They usually formed groups, mostly according to places of origin, for general support and protection. In order to survive they shared food, sleeping place and income. When possible they contributed financially to their families’ support. Some indicated that they would prefer more permanent jobs but others argued that they were able to earn more per day than if they were more permanently employed as unskilled workers. Many told stories of exploitation, harassment and abuse. Most of them felt their situation would be improved if they had some or a better qualification. Some indicated that they would like assistance in marketing their labour, e.g. formalising hiring sites. They viewed themselves as self-employed, not necessarily as unemployed. From their perception, they were “full time occupied”, even if not employed, busy marketing their labour for eight hours a day (Schenck & Louw 2005).

These job seekers are mostly temporarily homeless surviving under harsh conditions. They live ingeniously and demonstrate a tenacious ability to meet their basic human needs sufficiently to survive under very harsh conditions. They evoke different responses from local residents (Muller 2003; Stiehler 2001:9). Some residents feel threatened by their presence and regard them as a security threat as they may resort to crime in their attempts to survive. Other residents attempt to be of assistance and give them food, blankets and clothing. However, there seems to be a need for such a category of labour because local residents and employers and people from elsewhere employ them and thereby maintain the situation. They can be accessed easily and start to work immediately for a short period. Their circumstances necessitate
them being willing to work for low wages. They can also be employed without the employer complying with labour and employment regulations that could offer some protection against exploitation. There also seems to be an absence of policy, strategy and programmes to address the situation of day labourers holistically and comprehensively. A need therefore seems to exist to develop a better understanding of the day labourer's situation, to have available information to contribute to discussions on formulating policies and plan programmes to address many of the complex issues surrounding day labourers.

The increase in the visibility of day labourers at informal hiring sites seeking employment seems to be related to the increase in unemployment and increase in the number of people living in poverty in South Africa. The lifting of legislative restrictions on the movement of people, the so-called influx control regulations, as well as the myth of more possibilities of finding paid employment in urban areas and possibly other unknown reasons, have contributed to the constant flow of people from rural to urban areas.

What was becoming clear was that the situation of day labourers was a real-world problem. "The real-world is not easy to live in. It's rough and slippery." Real world problems are complex with "multiple facets or dimensions that include economic, biophysical, cultural, social, political and personal elements" (O'Leary 2005:11).

In preparing a conference paper and an article on the above research, we initially experienced problems finding any literature, because we did not know what terminology to use for "the people looking for a piece job". At that stage we were referring to them as "piece jobbers". Eventually we found the term we could use. Prof. Valenzuela from the Centre for the study of Urban Poverty, at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) used the term "day labourers", also known as "jornaleros" (Spanish), to refer to the people, mostly men gathering at informal hiring sites or pick up points, hoping to sell their labour for a day or longer or for a specific job in order to earn something. (Valenzuela 2002:5). In Brazil the day labourers are referred to as "The people who eat cold food" (Roelofse personal communication). In our contact with Prof. Valenzuela he confirmed the scarcity of literature on day
labourers. In the United States of America (USA), in the past, the literature has been mainly negative media coverage. Lately the research by Valenzuela seems to have created a wider interest in the topic. He also invited us to access his research on day labourers.

2.4 Paucity of information

With the assistance of the subject librarian Mrs T Burger at the Unisa library, a systematic library search was conducted by utilising numerous databases (Oasis; Unisa library Online, psyclINFO, Newspaper Source, Academic Search Primier, SocINDEX with full text, Business Source Primer, NEXUS database of current and completed research in South Africa, PIMS, BiblioLine- NISC and on South African Studies, MagNet database of references to material in South African libraries, Internet). Most of the literature that was traced on day labourers was journal articles by or in collaboration with Valenzuela (2001a, 2003, Melendez and Valenzuela 2003, Valenzuela, Kawachi & Marr (2003) and also Theodore (2003). There were a small number of articles not directly related (Quesada 1999, Borchard 2000) and a review of a study by Gill, "Men of uncertainty: The social organization of day labourers in contemporary Japan" that could not be traced (Kliauer, 2004). There were numerous press reports that had appeared in the USA. Two slightly related articles about unemployment in South Africa were by Haines and Wood (2002) and Blaauw and Bothma (undated unpublished manuscript). There had been very few press reports in South Africa.

The literature search clearly revealed the lack of information on the day labourers at informal hiring sites in Tshwane.

2.5 Personal concern and involvement

After the preliminary exploratory study in Elardus Park, a small group of concerned citizens, which included Schenck and Louw, in Elardus Park, tried to initiate some form of assistance to day labourers. However they realised the issue was much too big to be addressed merely by relief activities. It became clear that there was a need for further research. The day labourers at the informal hiring sites in Elardus Park
were obviously only the "ears of the hippopotamus" and the actual size of the problem was unknown. In response to an internal e-mail at Unisa during February 2004, stating that the Department of Social Work as planning a study on day labourers at informal hiring sites and asking for information on possible hiring sites, we received information of 54 hiring sites in Tshwane. The site at Elardus Park was clearly only one of many in Tshwane. It became evident that during the last few years the number of men at informal hiring sites has gradually increased and become a familiar and regular feature. It has become a visible manifestation of the effects of poverty and unemployment. Simultaneously it has become an increasing concern for residents. We realized that we needed a better understanding of the situation of day labour. We also needed to know more about possible stakeholders in order to facilitate networks to address the situation holistically and comprehensively.

In the meantime, we from Unisa were also exploring the possibility of further research on day labourers in the whole of Tshwane. An intensive literature search once again showed that no research other than the preliminary research on the day labourers in Elardus Park had taken place. We found that there had been very little media coverage of day labourers at all (SABC News 2003; Stiehler 2001:9).

2.6 Unfolding opportunities

In 2004 Prof Rinie Schenck received a Thuthuka grant from the National Research Fund (NRF) to co-ordinate the research on the day labourers gathering at informal hiring sites in Tshwane. I was to be a co-researcher in the project.

The aim of this study was exploratory research on day labourers at informal hiring sites in Tshwane. This research was divided into three separate research projects viz.

- The identification and description of the informal hiring sites in Tshwane.

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1 The Thuthuka (isiZulu word for develop or advance) programme of the NRF (National Research Foundation) intends to redress previous policies of Apartheid and build the capacity of individual, women, black and young researchers within the research arena in South Africa by increasing the number of NRF rated researchers and in so doing contribute directly to the skills and competencies needed for science and technology development (The Thuthuka programme).
• An exploration and description of the context of the informal hiring sites in Tshwane. This includes the perceptions and experiences of the people affected by and affecting the hiring site.

• An exploration and description of the social and economic conditions of the day labourers at the informal hiring sites in Tshwane.

I decided to embark on the last project as the subject of study for this thesis. The other two projects were to be completed by two master’s students in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of MA SS (Mental Health).

Early in 2004, Valenzuela invited us (Schenck & Louw) to attend the training of field workers for a planned national survey on day labourers in the USA in June 2004. We attended the training and accompanied the field workers for a few days of the national survey. This experience and Valenzuela’s approach was valuable preparation and experience for the survey in Tshwane. The research questionnaire used Valenzuela’s national survey was adapted to accommodate the differences in contexts and foci between South Africa and the USA.

2.7 Indebtedness towards day labourers to make their plight known

As my involvement with the day labourers continued I experienced a growing indebtedness towards them to make the detail of their plight known. I decided that one way of contributing to changing their situation would be to disseminate the research results to whoever could use them to initiate change.

2.8 Ongoing collegial co-operation

The use of the plural personal preposition “we” in the outline of the background is intentional to emphasise the collegial cooperation between Prof Schenck and myself in many academic ventures over an extended period. Working together with Prof Schenck has served to maintain a high level of motivation for me to continue this study.

3 MOTIVATION FOR THIS RESEARCH

Even though through the research on the day labourers in Elardus Park some
knowledge had been gained about day labourers in one area in Tshwane it was too limited to be applied generally to Tshwane or to motivate services for day labourers in shwane. The information gained on day labourers in Elardus Park had made us aware of the existence of day labourers standing all over Tshwane but little was known about them. If services were to be developed for them it was clear that they would have to be research based but none existed. The motivation for the research was to know more about day labourers in Tshwane and with this attempt to influence a beginning decision-making to establish services that would better the conditions of day labourers at informal hiring sites.

4 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

The conceptual framework and language of this study is in the first place that of the social work profession, a specific approach within social work which is people and person centered and community and development orientated. This includes a needs perspective of poverty and a recognition of an African worldview deemed relevant for the understanding of day labourers which is more full explained in chapter three.

5 THE AIM OF THE STUDY

O’Leary (2005:147) writes that in order to address real world-problems they need to be understood in terms of their prevalence, causes, and effects.

without knowing prevalence ..it’s impossible to argue the need for a solution .... Without understanding effects ... you cannot work on remediation .... Without understanding who’s at risk you won’t know who to help.

From this statement it logically follows that when researching real-world problems a clear consistent and worthwhile goal is “to find out more” to gather data required for evidence based decision making. Firstly, the aim of the research was to increase informational knowledge- “find out more”-, to understand the social and economic situation of day labourers at the informal hiring sites in Tshwane.

Secondly, the aim of the research was to contribute to the public good by making the knowledge available for use in developing policies and services that could
contribute towards the transformation of the situation of day labourers (Mouton & Muller 1997:13-15). In so doing I trust that the voice of the day labourers and their plight will be heard and respected.

The possibility for the information gained through the research to be put to use happened earlier than I anticipated. The survey was completed in September 2004. In March 2005 while the data was still being processed, concerned residents of Elardus Park were looking for a venue from which to launch a training workshop for day labourers. These concerned residents made contact with the director of community development of the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality (CTMM). The director mentioned that they were about to embark on research on the day labourers and were interested in the research that was done in Elardus Park. A preliminary report on the findings was presented and made available to them. Their further planning and action has been based on the findings in that report (Louw 2005).

The research findings were also made available to MSR (Men at the Side of the Road) a Cape Town based organisation serving men standing at hiring sites. They have used the research in promoting their work and also became operational in Tshwane in November 2005.

6 RESEARCH QUESTION

With the above explanation on the purpose of this research in mind, I have chosen to formulate my research question as:

What are the social and economic conditions and experiences of day labourers at informal hiring sites in Tshwane?

This research question will be explored using the following guiding questions. These will be developed further in the research questionnaire.

- Who are the day labourers?
- Where and how do they live?
- What is their experience of work and their economic situation?
What are their non-work activities, experiences, conditions?

What is their social interaction and with whom do they have relationships?

7 RESEARCH DESIGN

As there was no existing information on day labourers in Tshwane design of the research was planned to be primarily exploratory as well as to a lesser extent, descriptive. Both quantitative and qualitative methods of inquiry were used. (See chapter three for more detail).

The research design followed was largely an adapted version of the design used by Valenzuela for the National Day Labour Survey (NDLS) in the USA in 2004. As the process unfolded after the survey it became apparent that the survey as part of a process that could broadly be likened to an action research process.

7.1 Constraints

In the previously mentioned conducted by Valenzuela in the USA most day labourers are on the streets from about 6.00 to 10.00 hoping to be hired. Researchers had to be at the hiring sites very early and mostly relied on once off interviews. Some men, even though included in the sample, might be hired before they could be interviewed. After 10.00 they might leave the hiring sites for various reasons. While the men are waiting to be hired they would not want to become engaged in conversations for too long as this could jeopardise the opportunity to be hired. They also might not remain at the same site for long. All these factors required adapting the research to the situation using creative research approaches. In the USA they paid the day labourers a day’s wages for them to be interviewed, in case they lost the opportunity to be hired (Valenzuela & Melendez 2003). Exactly the same conditions were encountered in the study in Elardus Park (Schenck & Louw 2005) and in this study.

7.2 Research instruments and data collection

Survey and to a much lesser degree case study, two alternatives for the design of both descriptive and exploratory research (Bless & Higson-Smith 1995:43-44), were
thus used. The survey questionnaire was based the questionnaire used by Valenzuela for the NDLS in the USA in 2004. This questionnaire had evolved from the experience gained in the various studies previously undertaken by Valenzuela (Valenzuela: 1999, Valenzuela 2002, Valenzuela, Kawachi & Marr: 2003 Valenzuela & Melendez 2003) contributing to the validity of the questionnaire as measuring instrument (Delport in De Vos, Strydom, Fouche & Delport 2004: 167). The NDSL questionnaire was edited, adapted and shortened for the South African context after which the questionnaire was tested in a pilot study.

In the actual survey a 10% sample of 240 day labourers from different hiring sites were interviewed over three days in September 2004.

Data obtained from the completed questionnaires was processed by computr to obtain descriptive statistics that are presented in chapter six to obtain a profile of day labourers in Tshwane. The statistics are illustrated by quantitative descriptions obtained from a small number of individual and group interviews were conducted in 2005. This qualitative information being too little to identify trends was used to illustrate and enhance the quantitative data gained through the survey.

7.3 Fieldworkers

During the research in Elardus Park (Schenck & Louw 2005) it became apparent that all the men were African and were limited in their ability to speak English or Afrikaans beyond simple phrases needed for job negotiation. Therefore in this study 20 fourth level Unisa Social Work students fluent in one or more African languages were used as field workers to conduct the survey on the hiring sites, and later to conduct the interviews with the day labourers. The fieldworkers made use of public transport, mostly taxis, to reach the different hiring sites. They were reimbursed for traveling expenses incurred and were paid per completed questionnaire.

7.4 Sampling

Day labourers are employed by many different employers for a variety of jobs. The period of employment may range from a few hours to several weeks. The
unpredictability of employment and availability of the day labourers means that the position of the day labourer is one of constant change, ranging from job search at the hiring site to being employed, usually in the informal market. After the optimal time for searching for a job, time may be occupied by begging, sleeping, attending to other survival chores or involvement in recreational activities, e.g. games, (including gambling) and drinking. This means that a person’s luck, the demand for day labour, the season and time of day influence the day labourers’ availability to be interviewed. This makes a formal sampling frame impossible unless a researcher is able to pay a person a day’s wage to perhaps secure his availability. We did consider paying the day labourers for their participation in the research, as was done in the National Labour Survey in the USA, but this was not possible due to the budget constraints and the security risk it posed for the field workers to be carrying money on them to pay the day labourers. As it was not possible to ensure day labourers repeated presence to do formal sampling, the sample of people interviewed depended on their availability at a specific place, date and time.

To accommodate the conditions of day labourers cluster sampling, a variation of random sampling was used under the guidance of Prof Lizelle Fletcher from the department of Statistics at Unisa. (See chapter three section 4.3.2).

8 VALUE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Day labourers at informal hiring sites is a new area of interest and other than the small research on the day labourers in Elardus Park there is no previous research in South Africa on this manifestation of unemployment and job search. The exploratory research on day labourers at informal hiring sites in Tshwane is important as the first research in a sequence of studies on day labourers in South Africa as it will be breaking ground and could yield new insights for the development of (grounded) theory on day labourers (Rubin & Babbie 1997: 22,108,109).

This study is also a contribution from Social Work to the pool of knowledge on poverty and unemployment in South Africa.

As mentioned in point four (4) the data on the conditions of the day labourers in
Tshwane collected from this study has already been used by the department of community development of the Tshwane municipality and MSR.

A further envisaged outcome is the development of research skills of 20 fourth level social work students who through their involvement will gain experience in research and interviewing.

A limitation of the study is that it is a very general overview of the social and economic conditions and experiences of day labourers at informal hiring sites in Tshwane based largely on the research by Valenzuela. The subject is interdisciplinary and could be studied from an economic, sociological, anthropological, developmental and social developmental (social work) perspective. Although the literature study touches on all these aspects, this study, emulating the research by Valenzuela tends to have an economic emphasis.

The budgetary constraints did not make it possible to spend more time on the training of the field workers, which affected the quality of the interviews and data collected. If it had been possible to pay the day labourers for their contributions it would have been possible to complete more of the questionnaires.

9 MEANINGS OF TERMS USED

The following terms are explained to help communication in cases where the reader may not have a shared meaning of the terms.

Day labour refers to temporary employment which is not formalised. It is distinguished by the daily search for employment, one of the ways being from informal hiring sites at the side of the road.

Day labourers are mostly men gathering at informal hiring sites or pick up points, hoping to sell their labour for a day or longer or for a specific job in order to earn something. They are also known as "jornaleros" and street unemployed.

Informal hiring sites are places where men congregate informally to sell their labour for a day. These sites are visible, e.g. on the side of the road, street corners, parking
areas, shop fronts, empty open spaces. Some are “connected” and close to some industry or a traffic or transport hub.

**Formal hiring sites and worker centers** are terms that used interchangeably to refer to formal, regulated and central places where employers and day labourers meet in an orderly way and temporary employment negotiations take place. These formal hiring sites are either controlled by a city or county or managed by a community-based organisation (Valenzuela & Melendez 2003:3-4).

**Tshwane:** (also known as the greater Pretoria). At the time of doing the research and writing of the thesis the name Pretoria is in dispute. The town was proclaimed in 1855 and named after the Voortrekker leader Andries Pretorius and Marthinus Wessels Pretorius, his son, who was the first president of the Voortrekker Republic of Transvaal. The land had been acquired from the Ndebele people who had settled there from around 1824. Tshwane as environment of the day labourers and context of the research is discussed in chapter 11 (Erasmus 2004:330).

**10 FORMAT OF THESIS**

The chapters of the thesis are thematically grouped in five sections. Except for section A all sections are prologued with a cameo of day labourers.

**Section A** sets the stage of the study and includes the following chapters:

**Chapter 1** introduces the thesis with a background to the study, provides the rationale, research design, and research method to be followed in the study.

**Chapter 2** provides the conceptual framework of the research and the social and economic approach to the phenomenon of day labourers at hiring sites.

**Chapter 3** outlines the research design of this study. Prior to the research the literature studied was about day labourers at informal hiring sites only. This is presented in chapters four and five.
Section B presents the preparatory literature review on day labourers and includes the following chapters:

Chapter 4 provides a social perspective on day labourers and outlines who they are and how they exist. It makes use of literature on the day labourers in the United States and other related literature that mainly mentions day labourers in passing.

Chapter 5 is also a literature review and provides a work and employment perspective of day labourers and day labour.

Section C consists of a single chapter and presents the research results:

Chapter 6 presents the results of the survey.

Section D consists of further literature study stimulated by the research results to gain a further understanding of the findings to explain the phenomenon of day labourers at informal hiring sites in Tshwane. The following chapters ensued:

Chapter 7 provides a background on Tshwane, as a living and employment context of day labourers at informal hiring sites.

Chapter 8 is a literature review on understanding poverty as a subject of study, but also as an experience shared by day labourers.

Chapter 9 is a literature review on urban poverty. Day labourers in this study are an urban appearance of poverty often emanating from rural poverty.

Chapter 10 is a literature review on unemployment.

Chapter 11 is a literature review on labour migration.

Section E consists of Chapter 12 which reviews the study and offers recommendations.
11 CHAPTER REVIEW

In this chapter I have introduced this study with vignettes on day labourers, explained how the study found me rather than how I decided on the study and explained that the intention of the study is to explore the social and economic conditions and experiences of day labourers at informal hiring sites in Tshwane.
CHAPTER 2

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

1 INTRODUCTION

This study is not approached from a particular theory, but does have a conceptual framework with which I will be making meaning as I interact with literature and the day labourers through the research. In this chapter, to the extent that I am aware of my conceptual framework, I want to position myself.

I am aware that the approach I choose intentionally or unintentionally will influence this socio economic study on day labourers at hiring sites in Tshwane. In the first place I approach it as a social worker working from a specific approach that will be outlined in this chapter. I will situate the study (1) within the field of social work, (2) outline my perception of a "people and person centered approach" that is (3) a social development approach, (4) introduce a human scale development approach on needs and poverty and provide a brief outline of aspects from an (5) African worldview that are deemed relevant for the understanding of day labourers in South Africa. These concepts overlap and cannot be clearly separated as will be shown in the descriptions that follow.

2 SOCIAL WORK

In July 2001 the major international social work bodies, the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) and the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) agreed, on a definition of social work (van Dyk 2006:1):

The social work profession promotes social change, problem solving in human relationships and the empowerment and liberation of people to enhance well-being. Utilising theories of human behaviour and social systems, social work intervenes at the points where people interact with their environments. Principles of human rights and social justice are fundamental to social work.
Some of the elements of this definition of Social Work will be used to explain the position of the day labourers as subject of this study and the approach and content of the study within the scope social work.

The social in social work is not always clear. Kaplan (2002: xiv paraphrasing Shon) writes that:

[the realm of the social is not concerned with solving clear and bounded problems by applying theories and techniques derived from scientific knowledge, rather we tend not to be presented with problems at all but with messy indeterminate situations.

O'Leary (2005:11) agrees that social work operates in a real world and "the real world is not easy to live in. It is rough, it is slippery" (Clarence Day in O'Leary 2005:11). To add to the messiness Van Dyk (2006b:63) makes a distinction between personal and social problems responded to in social work. Some problems are personal and relational. Social problems are more societal and have societal context. Social problems are social situations "that call for some kind of response." Problems are also not an objective reality. Their definition is subjective and contextual.

Problems are ... socially constructed, and the patterns of relationships in society shape the circumstances that lead to a problem, the way the problem is understood, and the extent to which it is perceived as a problem.

(van Dyk 2006b:62)

Real-world social problems are complex with "multiple facets or dimensions that include economic, bio-physical, cultural, political and personal elements" and they "are nested in real world complexity" that tends to be messy and not a controlled environment." (O'Leary 2005:11-12).
One of the stated purposes of this study is that it will be used to promote social change. At the time of writing the thesis, the data obtained through the research has already been used in the development of programmes for the day labourers in Tshwane.

This illustrates Dodds' (2005a:7) statement that social workers' knowledge, whether gained through study, experience or research is important in promoting change. In this regard social workers have a specific responsibility to use the unique knowledge and experience possessed by the profession on how people live and communicate this to the rest of society, be it policy makers, media or the general public. We need to work with the existing power structures to promote and implement needed changes in policy, planning and social rights issues.

This study is motivated by the value of social justice in Social Work. Simply stated "social justice encompasses meeting basic human needs and the fair distribution of material resources" (Van Dyk 2006a:68). Social workers therefore need to respond professionally on behalf of vulnerable and of marginalized people experiencing social injustices that amongst others include wage labour, unemployment, poverty, hunger, homelessness, inadequate health care and inferior education (Gill 2002:35). These describe the situation of day labourers standing at informal hiring sites. Ways of pursuing change include promoting sensitivity and knowledge about the situation. Patel (2005:149) points out that when unemployment is high and the opportunities to earn a livelihood are restricted it is a necessary function of social workers to assist individuals and communities to access existing relief resources, to facilitate community development to enhance peoples' self reliance and to advocate on behalf of people for access to services and benefits. This study is advocacy on behalf of day labourers standing at informal hiring sites in Tshwane who are experiencing extensive poverty (see discussion of Max-Neef, Elizade & Hopenhayn's (1989) perspective on poverty (in paragraph 5.3.1.5 of this chapter) and are in a marginalised position. It is one of the aims of the study in accordance with social work, to contribute to alleviation of their poverty and promote their social inclusion.
This study is also in accordance with the practice of Social Work to respond to social problems and to address these inequities and injustices existing in society. In an attempt to understand the context of day labourers more holistically the literature study includes discussion on poverty in general (chapter 8), urban poverty (chapter 9), unemployment (chapter 10) and migration (chapter 11). The recognition of the situation specific nature of social work practice influenced by cultural, historical, and socio-economic conditions, provides motivation for the inclusion of a brief overview of the African world view (section 6) in this chapter and a chapter on Tshwane as context (chapter 7).

According to Sewpaul and Hölscher (2004:76, 88) when post apartheid welfare policy was initiated, social work in South Africa found itself on the brink of marginalisation in welfare in the particular interpretation of Social Development, welfare policy and developmental social work. Addressing poverty was given central stage but the meaning attached to poverty relief was limited and narrow and was mainly directed towards increased social security and job creation. This was illustrative of how a managerial/ market discourse had become dominant in welfare and affected the expectations of the role of social work (Sewpaul & Hölscher 2004:91). They also illustrate this with an example of a social worker saying that social work is being forced to move away from a person centered approach which emphasises warmth, empathy and genuineness which actually serve clients, to a commercialized approach.

Patel's (2005:4) view on social work from a social development perspective supports the change of which Sewpaul and Hölscher are critical. She describes it as:

[the practical and appropriate application of knowledge, skills and values to enhance the well-being of individuals, families, groups, organisations and communities in their social context. It also involves the implementation of research and the development and implementation of the social policies that contribute to social justice and human development in a changing and global context.]
South Africa has also been described as an increasingly, deeply divided two-thirds society, consisting of two worlds: one world is a developing country ... modern, smart, professional, efficient, and globally oriented; the other neglected, messy, unskilled, downtrodden, and thriving on crime and violence. In such a situation social work of necessity also has a strong economically related task, which should be developmental which I choose to interpret as an inner movement of growth (Terreblanche in Sewpaul & Hölscher 2004:3).

The human behaviour theory used in this study is the humanistic, person centred approach (PCA) of Carl Rogers (expounded in Grobler, Schenck & du Toit 2003) which will be briefly outlined because it fits with the particular tradition in social work that places emphasis on concepts like the dignity of the client, growth and development potential, practices of respect and empathy, subjectivism and social justice which oppose the objectification of the client as "the other" (Sewpaul & Hölscher 2004:99). My choice is to constantly keep in mind the personal experience and voice of the day labourers and not objectify them as mere statistics of the unemployment situation in Tshwane.

3  A PEOPLE-CENTRED APPROACH

As stated in Chapter 1, regarding the initial outreach to the day labourers in Elardus Park, there was concern that the assistance planned would be based only on the benefactors’ perceptions of what the men needed without any participation by them. The research team wanted to approach the situation in a more people centred way (Schenck & Louw 2005).

The people centred approach followed in this study is the application of the humanistic person centred approach first expounded by Carl Rogers for individual counselling but which has developed a much wider application (for examples refer to Kirchenbaum & Henderson 1990:436-501) and the human orientation to development.
A person centred approach (PCA) is “a way of being” in interaction with and understanding individuals, groups and communities (Grobler et. al. 2003:88). Basic assumptions of the approach are that it is phenomenological and subjective “the best vantage point for understanding behaviour is from the internal reference of the individual himself” (Rogers 1951:494); an acceptance of peoples’ tendency towards growth and development and their potential to change because of their ability to symbolise (becoming self aware) and make decisions. PCA is practiced by living out values of respect, individualization, self-determination and confidentiality (Grobler et. al. 2003:85-119). These values are put into practice through the core conditions of empathy, congruence and positive regard which create a conducive relationship and conditions in which a person can risk changing or growing.

In the field of development, the so-called human orientation or humanist approach to development is a micro level approach which is holistic (Swanepeol & de Beer 2006:27). It is meant to ensure that people’s abstract needs for happiness, self-reliance and human dignity are met simultaneously with meeting their concrete needs for food, clean water, clothing and shelter through the way in which the concrete needs are met. It is also meant to see and meet needs in an interrelated way, e.g. social and educational needs. Davids, Theron and Maphunya (2005:25) extends the concept of holism to the development context, “the world” where people work for social change. The context is an integrated ecological system of interacting subsystems- the natural, political, social, economic, cultural and psychological aspects- or a world.

[m]ade up of other worlds as well, the economic, political, technological and scientific. These worlds are not separate, they interact and penetrate each other, each aspect affecting every other aspect. The social runs through them all.

(Kaplan 2002:xi).

This holism is in line with The Human Development index (HDI) of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) used to measure economic and political, social,
cultural and environmental dimensions of a country.

Burkey’s (1996:35) view of human development as personal development of the individual person that begins with and within the individual is similar to the Rogerian person-centred approach. He states that people develop self-respect, become more confident, self-reliant, cooperative and tolerant of others through becoming more self-aware of strengths and challenges. This is fostered through collaboration, participation and acquisition of new knowledge and skills. Human development is an achievement in itself, but it is also a means to foster economic growth. Increasing capability may require changing technologies, institutions and social values to release people’s creativity.

Coetzee (cited in Davids, Theron & Maphunye 2005:106) described the following core values of people centred development.

- "People can be more than they are" recognises the potential and ability of people to improve their lives.
- "People have a subjective experience of the social reality and a will to lead a meaningful life" implies that development initiatives should affirm people’s meanings and they should socially construct and participate in their development.
- "The experience of the life world or micro social reality experienced by individuals is important."
- The people’s own experience of their reality prompts the direction of a development initiative.
- Consciousness (awareness). People create a world of meaning that enables them to understand their social reality and make choices and in so doing becoming the tools of their own development.
- Participation and self reliance means that people’s right to agency of change must be recognised. People control their development themselves.
These values correspond with the basic concepts of PCA, previously mentioned.

It is important to maintain a people-centred approach in the research and study to avoid objectifying the day labourers, becoming problem centred and forgetting that day labourers at informal hiring sites are people to be respected and regarded.

4 DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH TO WELFARE

The approach to welfare in South Africa that also encompasses social work is a developmental approach. The South African situation with its vast under-developed sectors with many people living in poverty calls for a developmental approach of planned social changes (programmes) designed to promote people's welfare in conjunction with progressively comprehensive economic development. Its objective is to bring about sustained improvement in the well-being of the individual, family, community and society at large, as well as the reduction of poverty, inequality and inferior conditions. Social development programmes are multi-sectoral and embrace social welfare, health, education, housing, urban and rural development and land reform (Midgley cited in Department of Welfare:1997). Research on day labourers by social workers is therefore highly appropriate as they are concerned with the social aspects of a primarily economic condition.

5 HUMAN SCALE DEVELOPMENT APPROACH

5.1 Introduction

Human scale development originated with Max-Neef, a Chilean economist who worked for many years with the challenges of development in the Third World, especially in South and Central America. He was critical of conventional models of development that aimed to decrease poverty through economic growth and did not alleviate but actually
increased it. This is similar to the situation in South Africa where economic growth has been accompanied by an increase in poverty and inequality (May 2002; Clark in Swart 2002:6).

The Human scale development approach is a post field-work inclusion to this study. The survey itself had a strong economic focus on poverty. Subsequent to the survey, it became clear that the human scale development approach which is more comprehensive and inclusive, with a focus on human well-being rather than only on economic indicators would have been appropriate as a guideline for developing categories of questions that could have covered the whole spectrum of poverty.

Human Scale Development views economic growth alone as insufficient to alleviate poverty. The basic postulates of Human Scale Development are that:

- Development is primarily about people and not about objects (Max-Neef et. al. 1989:19). This transformation of an object-person to a subject-person process is participatory and of necessity small scale (human scale) and stimulates local self reliance (Max-Neef et. al. 1989:13-15). Development is about creating situations where people can be the protagonists of their own future.

- Development is about improving peoples’ quality of life, and quality of life depends on the possibilities people have to adequately satisfy all their fundamental human needs and not just economic needs.

An understanding of what is meant by fundamental human needs is, therefore, essential to understanding Human scale development.
5.2 Fundamental human needs

Needs perceived as "an acute sensation or experience that something is lacking" is a narrow perception of needs. Max-Neef et. al. (1989:26) state that needs are much more than absence. The essence of human beings is expressed through needs; either as deprivation or as potential. Needs can be perceived as a complementarity: needs are simultaneously also potential. Needs are a resource in the sense that they motivate and direct behaviour which is the goal-directed attempt of the organism (person) to satisfy its needs as experienced (Rogers in Grobler et. al. 2003:58). Needs engage, motivate and mobilise people. For example, the need to participate is a potential for participation.

The way in which Max-Neef et. al. use the term "fundamental human needs" makes a definite distinction between fundamental human needs and basic needs. The concept "fundamental human needs," is more comprehensive and inclusive than the generally accepted list of basic needs of food, water, shelter, health care and education. Fundamental human needs are the needs of subsistence, protection, affection, participation, leisure, creation, identity and freedom and possibly transcendence (Max-Neef et. al. 1989:29). This resonates with Rahman (1993:187) who proclaims a creativist view of human needs that includes, but is more than basic needs. He maintains that the so called basic needs are not only human but to a large extent in some form or another, they are also the basic needs of animals. He states that the distinctive humanness is not in needing elementary means of survival, but in a basic human need to create. The basic needs are not only the objects (water, food, shelter etc.) but also the means of satisfying our needs according to our own priorities. It is through the creative process of meeting those needs that humans fulfil their creative potential in increasingly novel ways. This implies that poverty is more than that which can be indicated by economic measures.
Max-Neef et. al. (1989) make a number of useful postulates about needs and satisfiers, pathologies and unemployment that are relevant for understanding day labourers.

5.2.1. Fundamental human needs and satisfiers are not the same

Needs and satisfiers are fundamentally different. What is generally referred to as basic needs, e.g. water, food and shelter, are in reality satisfiers of needs and not needs. Food, water and shelter are not needs but satisfiers of the need for subsistence. Other examples are health care services, immunisation, a trustworthy police force, laws which prevent exploitation, burglar bars, karate, trade unions and trust in God, which can all be regarded as satisfiers of the need for protection.

There is also no one to one correlation between needs and satisfiers. A single satisfier may contribute simultaneously to the satisfaction of more than one need or a need may require more than one satisfier.

Because of the clear difference between needs and satisfiers, it is logical that fundamental human needs are few, finite and classifiable, as distinct from the conventional notion that needs (wants) are infinite and unsatisfiable. However what are numerous, are the possible satisfiers for a particular need.

5.2.2 Fundamental human needs are classifiable

Human needs can be classified into two categories, namely existential and axiological. Existential needs that maintain life are those of subsistence, protection, affection, understanding, participation, idleness, creation, identity and freedom. Axiological needs that refer to ways in which existential needs can be actualised, are those of being, having, doing and interacting. With reference to the matrix, “being” indicates the essence
or nature, qualities or attributes, the things we are, personally or collectively and are expressed as nouns, e.g. being healthy; "having" indicates things we possess or have access to such as institutions, norms, mechanisms, tools (non material) and laws, that can be expressed in one or more words; "doing" refers to actions, personal or collective that can be expressed as verbs; “interacting” refers to a reciprocal process, settings of opportunity to interact with other people: locations and milieus (as times and spaces (Max-Neef et. al. 1989:33).

These two categories of needs can be displayed in a matrix to demonstrate how they interact and the possible satisfiers that satisfy the existential and axiological requirements.

**TABLE 1: MATRIX OF NEEDS AND SATISFIERS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Needs according to existential categories\needs according to axiological/activity categories</th>
<th>BEING</th>
<th>HAVING</th>
<th>DOING</th>
<th>INTERACTING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SUBSISTENCE</td>
<td>Physical health, mental health,</td>
<td>Food, shelter and work</td>
<td>Feed, procreate, rest and work</td>
<td>Living environment and social setting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subsistence</td>
<td>equilibrium, sense of humour and adaptability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROTECTION</td>
<td>Care, adaptability, autonomy,</td>
<td>Insurance systems, savings,</td>
<td>Cooperate, prevent, plan, take</td>
<td>Living space, social environment and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>protection</td>
<td>equilibrium, and solidarity</td>
<td>social security, health systems,</td>
<td>care of, cure and help</td>
<td>dwelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFFECTION</td>
<td>Self-esteem, solidarity, respect,</td>
<td>Friendships, family, Partnerships</td>
<td>Make love, caress, express</td>
<td>Privacy, intimacy, home and spaces of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tolerance, generosity, receptivity,</td>
<td>and relationships with nature</td>
<td>emotions, share, take care of,</td>
<td>togetherness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>passion, determination,</td>
<td></td>
<td>cultivate and appreciate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sensuality and sense of humour</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs according to existential categories</td>
<td>BEING</td>
<td>HAVING</td>
<td>DOING</td>
<td>INTERACTING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>needs according to axiological/activity categories</td>
<td>Critical conscience, receptiveness, curiosity, astonishment, discipline, intuition and rationality</td>
<td>Literature, teachers, method, educational policies, communication and policies</td>
<td>Investigate, study, experiment, educate, analyse and meditate</td>
<td>Settings of formative interaction, schools, universities, academies, groups, communities and family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDERSTANDING</td>
<td>Adaptability, receptiveness, solidarity, willingness, determination, dedication, respect, passion and sense of humour</td>
<td>Rights, responsibilities, duties, privileges and work</td>
<td>Become affiliated, cooperate, propose, share, dissent, obey, interact, agree on and express opinions</td>
<td>Settings of participative interaction, parties, associations, churches, communities, neighbourhoods and family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PARTICIPATION</td>
<td>Curiosity, receptiveness, imagination, recklessness, sense of humour, tranquillity and sensuality</td>
<td>Games, spectacles, clubs, parties and peace of mind</td>
<td>Daydream, brood, dream, recall old times, give way to fantasies, remember relax, have fun and play</td>
<td>Privacy, intimacy, spaces of closeness, free time, surroundings and landscapes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDLENESS</td>
<td>Passion, determination, intuition, imagination, boldness, rationality, autonomy, inventiveness and curiosity</td>
<td>Abilities, skills, method and work</td>
<td>Work, invent, build, design, compose and interpret</td>
<td>Productive and feedback settings, workshops, cultural groups, audiences, spaces for expression and temporal freedom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CREATION</td>
<td>Sense of belonging, consistency, differentiation, self-esteem and curiosity</td>
<td>Symbols, language, religion, habits, customs, reference groups, sexuality, values, norms, historical memory and work</td>
<td>Commit oneself, integrate oneself, confront, decide on, get to know oneself, recognise oneself and actualize oneself</td>
<td>Social rhythms, everyday settings, settings which one belongs to and maturation stages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDENTITY</td>
<td>Autonomy, self-esteem, determination, passion, assertiveness, receptiveness, openmindedness, boldness, rebelliousness and tolerance</td>
<td>Equal rights</td>
<td>Dissent, choose, be different from, run risks, develop awareness, commit oneself and disobey</td>
<td>Temporal/spatial plasticity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Max-Neef, et. al. 1989:33).
Swart (2002:15) expanded the above matrix as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Need</th>
<th>Being</th>
<th>Having</th>
<th>Doing</th>
<th>Interacting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Connectedness to an ultimate reality and others spirituality, humility, gratitude Hopeful</td>
<td>four basic relationships to “god” to self, others and creation (Holt 1993:16) meaning and purpose to life / inspiration, set of beliefs/traditions</td>
<td>Practices Rituals Ways of interacting</td>
<td>Interacting in four basic relationships, to “god” to self, others and creation (Holt 1993:16) Religious gatherings and rituals.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to the above the following is added because of the relevance of these aspects to the existence of the day labourers encountered in Tshwane.

With reference to the need of leisure, Maree (2005:133) writes that play is a universal human activity. It is linked to relaxation and pleasure and enjoyment. It also promotes the forming of social groups.

Max-Neef et. al. (1989:29) considered including the need of transcendence but did not because of uncertainty as to whether it was a universal fundamental human need. It does, however, seem that various authors recognise the need for transcendence, spirituality or religion meaning more or less the same thing (Chile & Simpson 2004:318, Culliford 2002:249; Swart 2000:15). Payne (2005:181) explains that spirituality, which is related to humanism and existentialism, is an “aspect of humanity concerned with the common, some would say universal, human need to find in our lives meaning and importance that transcends, that is, rises above, mere survival.” It is particularly significant for this study that it is accepted that Mbiti (in Maree 2005:93) states that African people are fundamentally spiritual in nature; they live in a religious world. Payne (2005:206) agrees that it is important to understand and accept the role of culture and spirituality and the phenomenological social experience in attempting to understand the particular experiences of people especially those who experience oppression and exclusion.
5.2.3 Fundamental human needs are constant

Needs are the same in all cultures and in all historical periods. What is different is the means of satisfying a need at different times, in different contexts and within different cultures. Culture as the way people live, can be seen as their choice of satisfiers. Each need can also be met with different intensities and within the contexts: the individual, the social group and the wider community/society.

5.2.4 Fundamental human needs are a system

Fundamental human needs are not isolated; they form a connected whole. According to this theory there is no particular hierarchy of needs, as in Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, rather, all needs are regarded as equal with the exception of the need for subsistence in order to remain alive. Therefore in the process of need actualisation there are simultaneities, complementarities and trade-offs. In the case of subsistence needs, and at times of other needs, there is a threshold below which the experience of a particular deprivation may be so severe that the compulsion to meet that need may paralyse and overshadow any other impulse or alternative. All other needs are then ignored and only an intense drive to actualise that particular need persists. This extreme focus on the satisfaction of the particular need to the exclusion of others equally important for survival may then actually lead to destruction because of the disregard of the wholeness of the system (Max-Neef et. al. 1989:19, 44).

5.2.5 Fundamental human needs not adequately satisfied reveal a human poverty

Whereas a strictly economic concept of poverty refers to an income below a particular threshold, a fundamental human needs approach speaks not of poverty but of poverties. Different poverties may exist, for example, the poverty of subsistence (due to insufficient income, food, shelter), the poverty of protection (due to bad health systems,
violence, etc), the poverty of affection (due to authoritarianism, oppression, exploitive relations with the natural environment), the poverty of understanding (due to poor quality of education), the poverty of participation (due to marginalisation and discrimination) the poverty of identity (due to imposition of alien values upon local and regional cultures, forced migration, political exile) (Max-Neef et al. 1989:21) and the poverty of transcendence (due to lack experience of connectedness, having connections, acting connected). Hope and Timmel (1995a:86) has represented the fundamental human needs as a wheel.

Figure 1: Wheel of fundamental human needs

5.3 Satisfiers

Satisfiers are the means by which needs are realised, experienced or actualised. They are not the available economic goods but represent forms of being, having, doing and interacting in a culture or society that contributes towards the realising, experiencing or actualising of human needs. With reference to 5.3.1.2 where being, having, doing and interacting are explained, we see that satisfiers may thus include forms of organisation: political structures, social practices, subjective conditions, values and norms, social spaces, modes, types of behaviour and attitudes (Max-Neef et al. 1989:27).
There are different categories of satisfiers that differ in their usefulness. Some that would seem to provide opportunities to actualise needs actually create poverty. Max-Neef et al. (1989:32) identified the violaters or destroyers, pseudo satisfiers, inhibiting satisfiers and singular satisfiers in contrast to synergic satisfiers that can actualise the need. These will be described in detail in chapter 11:2.1.

5.4 Development of social pathologies

Poverties are not static conditions of unactualised needs but constantly changing conditions that may extend and escalate. When poverty is severe because fundamental human needs are not met, individual and group social pathologies may emerge e.g. widespread unemployment and systemic violence (Swart 2002:13), inequality, social disintegration, erosion of moral values coupled with more traditionally recognised problems like poor health, hunger, infant mortality, illiteracy, poor housing and lack of access to communal infrastructure (Shiffman 1995).

Unemployment has always to a lesser or greater degree been part of the industrial society, but global rising unemployment in its present form is pathological as it seems to be of a permanent nature “because it has a structural component of the world economic system”(Max–Neef et. al. 1989:21). Extended unemployment has severe emotional impact on the individual who experiences a rollercoaster of emotions including shock, optimism, pessimism and fatalism. Fatalism presents the transition from frustration to stagnation and apathy where a person’s self esteem is severely affected. Extended unemployment has an extended systemic effect, affecting the meeting of other fundamental needs. Due to unemployment subsistence needs are usually the first to be affected. Due to subsistence problems the person may feel increasingly unprotected, crisis experienced in the family my destroy affection, lack of participation may give way to feelings of isolation and
marginalization and declining self-esteem may generate an identity crisis. Due to extensive extended unemployment, collective pathologies of frustration exist (Max–Neef et. al. 1989:21) requiring transdisciplinary strategies, not merely economic growth.

5.5 The value of a typology of fundamental human needs

Max-Neef and colleagues' postulate about needs which recognise their systemic nature provide a comprehensive and holistic people centred approach to understanding and addressing poverty. The range of needs/poverties and satisfiers already allude to the multiple disciplines that should be involved when an expanded definition of needs/poverty is used.

Poverty as a system of poverties of unmet fundamental human needs also introduces the systemic perspective of complementarity which alludes to the simultaneous presence of actualised needs and therefore the potential of people to participate in their own development. Keeney (1983:92) said “Cybernetic epistemology proposes that we embrace both sides of any distinction an observer draws... by viewing them as cybernetic complementarities.”

Shiffman (1995) asserts that the approach implies that poverty is to be addressed from an organic paradigm of growth, which recognises people’s potential to participate in their own local development which is more than economic. Borrowing Wilson and Ramphele’s term “uprooting poverty”, he states that: “Strategies against poverty involve not only pulling up the root processes that impoverish people but also planting and nurturing those seeds that produce good fruit.” This approach also points to the importance of participatory strategies to address the poverties such as livelihood approaches (see chapter 6) to poverty where households and there members are at the centre of decision making (De Haan, Drinkwater, Rakodi & Westtley 2002:1).
The finite nature of needs implies that although different economic, social and political systems develop policies and programmes to meet the same finite fundamental human needs of populations irrespective of place and time, the ways in which these needs are met should be situation specific to fit the uniqueness of each situation with its own mix and measure of poverties.

Because subsistence needs must be met, economic growth is important, but if the other psycho-social needs are not simultaneously realised the subsistence needs will also not be adequately and sustainably actualised.

Shiffman (1995:3) says that the data on poverty enables one to realise the magnitude of the problem on a macro level. To address poverty on a micro level the numerical definitions have to be humanised." We need to develop definitions of poverty that go beyond explaining or describing poverty to understanding poverty." The matrix of poverties creates an awareness of the multiple possible experiences of a person visibly poor in one way and enhances understanding of the complexity of poverty. One is enabled to try to perceive and experience the world as the person sees it. (Rogers in Grobler et. al. 2003:152).

This approach to poverty provides an approach that alerts one to the awareness that the day labourer is not only experiencing economic poverty; if poverty is an interrelated system their poverty is multidimensional.

6 THE AFRICAN WORLD VIEW

A person centred perspective accepts that culture and cultural values are variables affecting any relationship, including research relationships, and requires researchers to make culture (in the widest sense of worldview) “explicit rather than remaining implicit and
made intentional rather remaining unintentional." ..."Intentionality on the other hand is about awareness." (Singh & Tudor 1997).

There is a TsiVenda idiom stating “Tibu ndi khali, tsha mbiluni ya munwe a tshi tibilwe,” which literally means that the lid of the cooking pot can be lifted by anyone to see what is inside, but a person’s heart is not like a cooking pot where an outsider can lift the lid, a person’s heart can only be uncovered by that person him or herself, because only the person exposed to the fire can tell how hot it is (Ndillo ohisa batsami- Xitsonga). (Louw & Schenck 2002:101).

With the above in mind, as a non-African researcher and social worker with a western orientation I have decided to include something on an African worldview which, to a greater or lesser extent is shared by the day labourers in Tshwane. I hope hereby to illustrate something of my intention not only to collect and interpret factual data on day labourers but to attempt to increase my empathic understanding of their experiences by being aware of the existence of an African worldview- "not knowing and not assuming (Grobler et. al. 2003:172). In terms of the idiom I want to remind myself of the closed cooking pot on the fire, knowing that this study is not about seeing the contents but only being aware of the cooking pot. I consciously remind myself that the context from which the information was given is also philosophically different from the context in which it is being documented.

I realise that what I present in this section is limited, subjective, selective and biased. This bias is also towards wanting to acknowledge and respect. I also realise that it is difficult to write anything about an African world view as there is no thing that can be referred to as "the" 'African world view'. If it exists, it is perhaps like wisdom. There is an Akan proverb from Ghana: Nunya, adidoe, asi metunee, o. Wisdom is like a baobab tree, too large to be embraced by an individual (Stewart 2005:10). Or it is like the African continent?
The continent is too large to describe. It is a veritable ocean, a separate planet, a varied, immense cosmos. Only with the greatest simplification, for the sake of convenience, can one say "Africa". In reality, except as a geographic appellation, Africa does not exist. (Kapuscinski 2001: prologue).

Coupled to this is a large variety of cultural groupings in Africa each exhibiting their own unique characteristics (Ramose 1999:78). It is therefore an over simplification and inappropriate to refer to an African world view as if there is a single African way of seeing and being, although similarities of culture are observable in the lives of African people. (Higgs & Smith 2002a:57). There is an underlying unity in the diversity of African culture which may be more related to the common history of subjugation, colonisation and acculturation of Africa. These common themes in the ways of seeing and being in sub-Saharan Africa are all to a greater or lesser extent, connected to what has been referred to as Ubuntu, a derivative of the proverbial expression that each individual's humanity is ideally expressed in relationship to others: "Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu" – a person is a person through other people. This African worldview is holistic, group oriented and cyclical and incorporates what is referred to as collective consciousness/ communality/ communitarian. Other important components of the worldview include orientations to time, nature, human activity and relational connections (Kruger, Segalo, Fourie & Terre Blanche 2004-2005:23;).

6.1 An African worldview is holistic

The interconnectedness and wholeness mentioned above are evident at many levels of an African way of seeing and being (Higgs & Smith 2002a: 57). In general things are seen as forming a cosmic unity where all things are experienced and regarded as interconnected. Humans, nature (plants and animals) and the supernatural form an integrated unity (Ramose 1999:59).
This holistic approach means that a situation is experienced and responded to in its totality; it is not analysed and problems that have to be fixed are not identified as a traditionally Westerner would do. Both the rational and non-rational elements are allowed to make an impact and any action taken could be described more as a response of the total personality to the total situation rather than the result of some analytical mental exercise that identifies a problem to be fixed in isolation form the rest of the situation.

Related to wholeness and interconnectedness is the persistent African search for equilibrium and harmony, to being attuned and to being in relationship in all spheres of life (Ramose 1999:59, 64). This is the basis for consensual decision-making. The objective of law enforcement is also perceived as positive and not negative when it is used as a means to re-establish equilibrium. The authority of law is legitimate and will command obedience if it protects and respects individual and collective survival. The penalties of African law are also directed to restore equilibrium and relationships and are not punishments directed towards specific violations (Ramose1999:120).

This striving for harmony is also explanatory of truth and time. Truth and time are relational and not absolute. Truth is not something external to live in or by; it is something to be lived, because truth is simultaneously interactive and participatory; human beings are not made by truth but are seen as makers of truth.

In African philosophy human beings make time and are not made by time; a person lives time not according to or in time. Time is experienced as cyclical events related to cosmic cycles of days, seasons and lifecycle events in which people participate and these events are marked by ritual religious celebration. Time is also mainly two dimensional consisting of a long past and a definite present. Thought about the future is limited. Life is here and now (Mbigi & Maree 1995:93). The wholeness and equilibrium implies a circularity which is encapsulated in the importance of the circle as symbol in African culture.
6.2 An African world view has a group orientation

"Unlike western thinking which puts the individual at the centre of life, African thought puts the community at the centre of life" (Higgs & Smith 2002a: 55) and life is communal. Individuals and communities are interdependent.

"The concept of community is vast and ever expanding ... It shares the earth with the unborn, the living spirits of the dead, the earth, mountain and sky" (Higgs & Smith 2002a: 55).

The communality of life is the heart and soul of Ubuntu. It implies a group solidarity, group conformity or obligation and care in the face of survival challenges. It is based on unconditional group compassion, respect, dignity, trust, openness and cooperation. Hereby a person is also entitled to unconditional respect, dignity, acceptance and care from his significant relevant group or community (Mbigi & Maree 1995:42).

These communitarian values of traditional African life emerge from communal thought that relies heavily on myths, legends, traditions and proverbs for continuation and sustainability (Higgs & Smith 2002b:108; Kuzwayo 1998:19). Collective experience as in collective bonding rituals and ceremonies and collective learning through mythological and heroic, tragic narration are important experiences of co-creation which build trust, high morale and interdependence (Mbigi & Maree 1995:42).

6.3 Personhood is relationally defined

Hulley, Kretchmer and Pato (1996:96) explain that the African conceptualization of being human is antithetical to western humanism, which tends to individualism, materialism and competition.
Because the community is more important than the individual, individuals cannot be understood separately from their collective identity. A person finds meaning and status primarily within the context of the group or community and not as an individual (Maree 2005:92, Kaunda in Higgs & Smith 2002a:60). Each individual's humanity is ideally expressed in relationship with others and in turn, individuality is truly expressed. A person has to encounter the "we" before discovering the "I". In this regard, Tutu, emeritus archbishop of the Cape Town of the Church of the province of South Africa, (Crawford-Brown 2006:16) says that a person is human precisely because of being enveloped in the community of other human beings; in being caught up in the bundle of life (Hulley et. al. 1996:96).

A person's right to existence and place is determined by the family and lineage. Louw (cited in Ubuntu:2006) adds that personhood in terms of Ubuntu also has religious connotations. The person one is to become by having Ubuntu is an ancestor worthy of respect or veneration. Those who uphold the principle of Ubuntu throughout their lives will, in death, achieve a unity with those still living.

This implies that to be human means being interdependent and to participate (Hulley et. al. 1996:100). In Africa it is a matter of "I participate, therefore I am" defining personhood as a process, not a state, existing in relation to the community and to others, not only the self. Mbigi and Maree (1995) explain that Ubuntu implies active participation and mutual caring in a community context.

Hulley et. al. (1996:103) explain further that humans are born as potentiality and learn how to be human through their association with other human beings. Therefore human beings become persons only by living in an environment, conducive to the interaction of diverse personalities and cultures. Wilson and Ramphele (1989:269) explain
that a personhood depends on recognising the humanity of others and their recognising yours. Happiness consists, at least partially, in living for others and supporting each other (Higgs & Smith 2002a:59).

6.4 Ubuntu

Ubuntu is a sub-Saharan ethic or ideology focusing on people’s allegiances and relations with each other (Wikipedia). It is an Nguni word referring to humanity or fellow feeling, kindness, a word defining what it means to be truly human (Buzzle.com). Ubuntu is translated as humanism (Hulley et. al. 1996:96), humanity (Higgs & Smith 2002a:58) and human-ness (Ramose 1999:52). Wilson and Ramphele (1989:269) recognise that Ubuntu shares much common ground with many religions and humanistic traditions around the world.

Ubuntu as way of thinking and being has developed in Africa in response to adversity and challenges caused by poverty, war, famine, disease, suffering and change (Higgs & Smith 2002a: 56, 59; Mbigi & Maree 1995:41). This is demonstrated in the seTswana idiom, “Fifing go tswaranwa ka dikobo” literally translated “in darkness, unity is through blankets”, meaning that people should stand together in times of distress (Kuzwayo1998:30). African communities and organisations still survive on the basis of the solidarity principle of Ubuntu. External and internal survival challenges are also managed on the basis of Ubuntu. Vilakazi (1991:9, 11) explains this in more detail as follows: The roots of Ubuntu have a material base in the small tribal societies where members were linked by blood and kinship ties. The orientation was communistic, labour was collective and produce and products distributed more or less equally. The interests of the individual coincided with those of the group. In such societies the division of labour and the sharing of food resulting from cooperative forms of productive forces could not be jeopardised without endangering the survival of every individual. Operation, mutualism and respect for the person and possessions of one’s fellows arose from a situation where each individual’s
well-being was enhanced by a common abstinence from competitive and aggressive behaviour". The highest value was placed on sharing, generosity, hospitality, brother and sisterhood, empathy and humaneness.

The following Tugen proverb from Kenya captures this: *Takipar bich che meloljinge ma*. Stewart 2005:13) which translates as follows: *It is easy to defeat people who do not kindle the fire for themselves*. Traditionally, in Tugen society, the elders would sit around the fire and discuss issues of concern to the community in order to maintain stability and unity. If the fire is not kindled for this purpose, or symbolically if the people do not value and appreciate each other, the proverb warns that they will easily be defeated in the time of trial.

This same value applies at village level and is taught through the idiom “mpepi e ya ipelegisa,” which is translated as “someone who does not care for another's children, will have to care alone for her own, meaning that you need to give support (Kuzwayo 1998:46).

Ubuntu that developed as a survival ethic in the face of adversity became a generalised moral value for life and not only for adversity. Vilakazi (1991:7) explains that:

> It is the belief in the centrality, sacredness, and foremost priority of the human being in all our conduct, throughout our lives. The values of dignity, safety, welfare, health beauty, love and development of the human being, and respect for the human being, are to come first, and should be promoted to first rank before all other considerations before economical, financial and political factors are taken into consideration.

The Pedi saying *Feta kgomo o tshware motho*, "pass the cow and embrace the person" encapsulates this (Louw & Schenck 2002:102). Ramose (1999:142) explains that if a person is faced with a choice between wealth and the well-being of another person then one should choose the well being or preservation of life of the other person and not be materialistic.
Vilakazi (1991:8) continues that:

at the very bottom of the soul or spirit of human beings there is an awareness of what is just and unjust, humane and inhumane; lodged in the very nature of human beings is an awareness of the distinction between kindness and cruelty, between beauty and ugliness, between harmony and disharmony; and lodged in the very nature of human beings is an appreciation of peace over war, of harmony and love over violence and hatred, and of life over death; deep down, in human nature is an appreciation of brotherhood and sisterhood among human beings, of good and evil and fairness and unfairness in human relations.

In such a life style, "group compassion, care and conformity, freedom from want takes precedence over freedom of choice thereby equalling the chances of survival for all." (Mbigi & Maree 1995:45). Ubuntu is the environment of vulnerability.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu (Ubuntu (Ideology: 2006) says that Ubuntu was very difficult to render into a Western language and explains:

The self-sufficient human being is a contradiction in terms, is subhuman. God has created us to be different in order that we can realize our need of one another. A person is not basically an independent solitary entity. It is the essence of being human. It speaks of the fact that my humanity is caught up and is inextricably bound up with yours. I am a human because I belong. It speaks about wholeness, it speaks about compassion. A person with Ubuntu is welcoming, hospitable, warm and generous, willing to share. Such people are open and available to others, willing to be vulnerable, affirming of others, do not feel threatened that others are able and good, for they have proper self-assurance that comes from knowing that they belong to a greater whole. They know that they are diminished when others are humiliated, diminished when others are oppressed, diminished when others are treated as if they were less than who they are. The quality of Ubuntu gives people resilience, enabling them to survive and emerge still human despite all efforts to dehumanise them.
Elsewhere (Hulley et. al. 1996:100) Tutu also explains that someone who has Ubuntu cares about the deepest needs of others and adheres faithfully to all social obligations. Mbigi and Maree (1995:41) explain that by the individual's conformity to social obligations reciprocal security is provided and can be expected. Additionally, the person who lives in Ubuntu is more willing to make excuses for others thereby providing an alternative to vengeance (Hulley et. al. 1996:104).

An African worldview which to a lesser or greater extent is shared by the day labourers in Tshwane has been included as an intention to take note of and respect differences in experiences and values that may not make sense to me. I am particularly aware of having a limited understanding of Ubuntu and yet realise that because of Ubuntu day labourers may also find it difficult to make sense of their experiences of deprivation in environments of plenty where they stand at hiring sites.

7 CHAPTER REVIEW

This chapter presents the description of my conceptual framework and alerts the reader to a selective and biased approach of the study. The study has been situated within social work with its fundamental value of social justice from which the injustice of poverty and unemployment of day labourers is researched to try to influence social policies contributing to social justice.

The approach is people-centred and regards the experience of the life world or micro social reality experienced by individuals as important. It is also a social development approach, which embraces both social and economic changes to promote people's welfare and is multi-sectoral and holistic. A preferred approach is Human scale development which views economic growth alone as insufficient to alleviate poverty, and explains poverty and development holistically in terms of fundamental human needs of subsistence, protection, affection, participation, creation, idleness, identity, freedom and transcendence. Poverty is
any fundamental human need that is not adequately actualised. Needs and satisfiers are fundamentally different. Effective need satisfiers are synergic and holistic.

A section on an African worldview which to a lesser or greater extent is shared by the day labourers in Tshwane has been included. An African worldview is holistic, has a group orientation, defines personhood (identity) and is captured in Ubuntu. Ubuntu is in essence ‘I am a human because I belong.’ It speaks about one person’s humanity being inextricably bound in the humanity of others.
CHAPTER 3

THE RESEARCH STORY

1  INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the story of how the research process unfolded will be presented in narrative form as a dialogue between the research action-planning and execution-(written in italics) and research theory.

The situation as explained in chapter one created a need "to know more" about day labourers waiting at informal hiring sites and indicated the need for research. (In the rest of the chapter “day labourers” will refer specifically to day labourers waiting at informal hiring sites). Day labourers are a particular aspect of human society which places research about day labourers in the field of social science research. Mouton and Marais (cited in De Vos, Strydom, Fouche & Delport 2004:45) define social science research "as a collaborative human activity in which a social reality is studied objectively with the aim of gaining a valid understanding of it." Social science research is also a systematic, controlled, empirical and critical investigation which is guided by theory. It “includes activities consciously aimed at collecting, collating, analysing and disseminating information” (De Vos et. al. 2004:45). Research as a systematic process refers to considering and executing the possibilities one at a time in a logical order (Bless & Higson-Smith 1995:5). In the social sciences more often the criterion of a systematic process implies using a recognized research approach and design which begins with a clear aim and research question from which the purpose of the research and design emanate.
In this study I did not intentionally search for a problem to research which is usually the first step in a research process (De Vos et. al. 2004:95). As explained in chapter one the research found me and when I became involved, it already had an identity and momentum of its own. As explained in chapter one, it was after Prof. Schenck had received the Thuthuka grant for research on day labourers in Tshwane that I decided not only to be a co-researcher in the project but to do the study as a doctoral study. It was a case of mounting and riding the horse already running and going in the direction it was already going. I was not in a position to plan the study from scratch; I had to find ways and means of joining a research story which was already unfolding.

2 THE LARGER RESEARCH PROJECT

Based on a further literature study and the available funds from the Thuthuka grant Prof Schenck and I began brainstorming and the beginnings of a research design began to unfold.

De Vos et. al. (2004:137) state that the “definitions of research design are rather ambiguous”. One meaning of research design which will be used in this study is that it is described as a plan and the procedure to be followed in conducting the research (Bless & Higson-Smith 1995:63). Auriacombe (2001:19) refers to method and states the focus is on the research process and the kind of tools and procedures to be used. The point of departure is to describe the specific tasks of data collection, sampling and the individual steps and procedures to be followed. Similarly, de Vos et. al. (2004:90) refer to a strategy which depends “on the purpose of the study, the nature of the research question and the skills and resources available to the researcher”. A research design answers to the question of “what kind or type of study” is being planned and what kind of result is aimed at. It includes the planning from the first to the last step. It focuses on how to achieve the end product.
The point of departure is the research problem or question. It focuses on the logic of research asking what kind of evidence is required to address the research question adequately (Auriacombe 2001:19).

We revisited the aim of the research as stated in the proposal for the Thuthuka grant which was broadly “enhancing our understanding of the situation of day labourers in Tshwane and doing something about the situation”. For this we realised that the research would firstly have to be about getting an idea of the big picture. From our experiences of trying to get something off the ground in Elardus Park we realised that we also needed to have more detailed knowledge about what happens at hiring sites and how residents and businesses perceived and experienced the day labourers.

De Haan et.al. (2002:1) confirmed our thinking with the explanation that:

[s]uch (qualitative in depth research) methods need to be complemented by larger scale data collection and quantitative analysis, in order to reveal the characteristics of the context, the overall dimensions of and trends in poverty and the extent to which household characteristics revealed in depth in relatively small scale studies are typical.

With the above in mind, taking into account the budget constraints and available researchers, we decided on a research project in three parts. They are:

- The identification of the informal hiring sites in Tshwane and the in-depth exploration of a few.

- The in-depth exploration of the context of a few hiring sites. This would include the identification of different stakeholders affected by and affecting the hiring sites e.g. residents, businesses and their perceptions and experiences relating to hiring sites and day labourers.
An exploration and description of the social and economic conditions of the day labourers at the informal hiring sites in Tshwane.

Even though each part of the larger research project would be separate, formulate its own aim and have its own design this would take place in close collaboration with the researchers of each part. It was obvious that the different projects were interlinked and interdependent and that the identification of the hiring sites had to be completed before the other research could commence.

The different projects would also fulfill the function of triangulation reciprocally increasing the validity of the findings of the different projects. Rubin and Babbie (1997:171) explain triangulation as a principle according to which “different research methods are used to collect the same information” and provide the opportunity to establish whether they tend to produce the same findings. Combining the data from the different projects would provide a richer description of the situation (De Vos et. al. 2004:342).

Early in 2004 a research team was formed. These included Prof. Rinie Schenck from the Department of Social Work at UNISA, the research coordinator, Lawrence Xipu, a masters student, who was to research the hiring sites, Dehlia Nel a masters student, who was to research the context of the hiring sites, and myself, who was to survey the day labourers, We were all staff and students of UNISA. We were joined by Derrick Blaauw, a labour economist from the University of Johannesburg, who would be the consultant on economic aspects for the questionnaire.

The inclusion of Xipu who was the only African on the team, while the rest being white Euro-Africans, happened because he was available and necessarily because it was intended to include a person representing the culture of the research participants.
It is hoped, however that his inclusion helped to decrease the possible cultural bias and insensitivity, methodological error and ethical transgression about which Rubin and Babbie (1997:76) warn.

Several consultative planning meetings were held. We were all collecting and reading the publications of Valenzuela and a few others on day labourers in the USA. Prof Schenck was in E-mail contact with Valenzuela who had expressed interest in our study. He also provided access to more information. All this, as well as the research on day labourers in Elardus Park (Schenck & Louw 2005) and the inputs from Blaauw influenced the planning. We planned the broad outlines of the different research projects and at this stage, specifically the identification of hiring sites and counting the day labourers present.

In planning we kept in mind that Valenzuela and Melendez (2003:13) had realized from their experience of research regarding day labourers that such research require creative research approaches to accommodate the following unique factors,(which from previous research by Schenck and Louw (2005) were accepted as applicable to the situation in Tshwane:

- Despite their ubiquity day labourers are not an easily defined population.

- Day labour is not an easily defined occupational category. It does not exist in the US standard occupational classifications or the standard industrial classifications used by USA government departments for census and other purposes.

- Day labourers are employed by many different employers for various jobs that range from hours to weeks. The status of a day labourers changes constantly from being an employee in the informal market to being unemployed in the formal market (my addition). His inclusion in a count will depend on his status at the time of the count. Counts at hiring sites are
therefore accepted as being estimates.

- Although visible it is difficult to keep track of hiring sites as new ones constantly appear and old ones disappear. The sites determined before a survey are likely to change by the time the survey takes place.

- At any given time determining who is and who is not a day labourer is fluid. For some day labour is temporary. Some day labourers may hold another part-time or full time job.

_These conditions seemed to apply to the situation in Tshwane as well. We realised we would have to be creative and flexible. We would have to make special arrangements to locate hiring sites and fit in with the times and conditions when day labourers are available, e.g. early morning before they are hired._

### 3 DATA ON HIRING SITES

_The initial identification of informal hiring sites was done through the internal E-mail of UNISA from February 2004. As the data came in each site was given a number and we all helped Xipu to plot it on a large map of Tshwane._

_More sites were also identified during a reconnaissance of Tshwane by the whole team. In May 2004 Xipu then conducted systematic research of the hiring sites._

_With 20 UNISA undergraduate students, mostly social work students, as field workers all the possible hiring sites about which we had been informed were followed up and confirmed and the day labourers were counted. Some new sites were identified and some were not found. The sites could have disappeared or the information may have been incorrect. By the end of May 2004, seventy hiring sites had been identified and 2420 day labourers counted. Sites were classified according to location, size and nature. On the map below (fig. 2) the number of sites in the six_
areas in Tshwane are indicated. [North 10, South 13, East 25, West 4, North east 8, Central 9]

Each black dot represents between 1-5 sites

Figure 2: Map of hiring sites in Tshwane

4 DESIGN OF THE RESEARCH ON THE DAY LABOURERS AT THE INFORMAL HIRING SITES

In the meantime I was developing the research design for the exploration and description of the social and economic conditions of the day labourers at the informal hiring sites in Tshwane and as a team we were working on the questionnaire for the survey.
4.1 Aim of the research

The aim of the research was stated in chapter one and was formulated as follows:

- To increase informational knowledge, and understanding of the social and economic situation of day labourers at the informal hiring sites in Tshwane.

- To contribute to the public good by making the knowledge available for use in developing policies and services that could contribute towards the transformation of the situation of day labourers (Mouton and Muller 1997:13-15). In so doing I trust that the voice of the day labourer and his plight will be heard and respected.

O'Leary (2005:147) writes that understanding begins knowing about a situation in terms of its prevalence, causes, and effects.

[w]ithout knowing prevalence ...it's impossible to argue the need for a solution .... Without understanding effects ...you cannot work on remediation.... Without understanding who's at risk you won't know who to help.

By understanding I also have in mind Kaplan's (2002:15) explanation that "understanding, by seeing something in the context in which it belongs, is the experience of seeing it more fully as itself." To see more fully is to include different aspects of context and to attempt to tease out the chiefly negative initial perception of day labourers standing at hiring sites, by including detail that adds to a richer description which includes alternative meanings. The literature study in this thesis thus includes various related topics like poverty, urban poverty unemployment, migration and Tshwane as spatial context.
4.2 Research question

Based on the aim stated above the research question was formulated as follows:

What are the social and economic conditions and experiences of day labourers at informal hiring sites in Tshwane?

4.2.1 Contextual influences on the research design

Besides the research question the research design for this study was influenced by additional circumstances. This study is one part of a larger research project made possible by the NRF’s (National Research Foundation) Thuthuka grant. The design of the research had to fall within the outlines of the proposal for the larger research project. The roll over of funds from a Thuthuka grant to the following year is not automatic. This placed a time constraint on the research. The survey would have to be completed during 2004. This fact made attendance of the training of field workers for a planned national survey on day labourers in the USA in June 2004 by Valenzuela particularly valuable because of the experience it provided. Valenzuela also gave permission to use his and his co-worker’s research design and adapt their questionnaire as necessary. This made it possible to complete the research during 2004 but also contributed to the questionnaire being somewhat of a replication of the design for the USA national survey on day labourers.

4.2.2 Purpose of the research

From the foregoing it became clear that the purpose of and type of research on the social and economic conditions of the day labourers would be exploratory and descriptive. This corresponds with the observation by Rubin and Babbie (1997:108) that exploration, description and explanation are most common and useful in social work research. They continue that a given study can have more than
one research purpose as proved to be the case. As most of the team were social
workers and inclined towards participation, the possibilities of participation of the
respondents and other stakeholders in the research was considered, but not
deemed feasible, for a survey where the data was to be quantified.

Differences exist among authors as to whether exploration, description,
exploration and evaluation are the purposes/goals and objectives of research
(Rubin & Babbie 1997 & 2001; De Vos et. al. 2004:109) or whether these terms
refer to types of research (Bless and Higson-Smith 1995). In this study I will refer to
purposes but also incorporate ideas from Bless and Higson-Smith in the
descriptions that follow.

- Exploration

In the research study in Elardus Park (Schenck & Louw 2005:93) I emerged
that all the residents and business people interviewed had opinions about the day
labourers, e.g. that they were homeless and jobless, responsible for the rising crime
rate, did not really want to work. It was clear that the assumptions about day
labourers were based stories of repeated isolated hearsay experiences. Very few
people had ever spoken to day labourers. This is confirmed by the recently
completed study by Nel (2007) on the context of the hiring sites. There was thus a
need to inquire about day labourers in order to learn about them making exploration
an appropriate purpose for the research. Exploratory research is done in a particular
field or topic in social sciences on which no research has been done or of which
mention has been made, but which has not been addressed in a scientific manner
(Bless & Higson-Smith 1995:42-43). Exploration aims to gain an initial familiarity
with a situation or action and provides a rough understanding thereof. Exploration is
often the first stage in a sequence of studies and is designed to answer a "what"
research question (Newman in De Vos et. al. 2004:109). This was the case in this
study because day labourers at informal hiring points in Tshwane are a new interest
which is relatively unknown (Bless & Higson-Smith 1995:43). The results could be
valuable because they could be breaking new ground and should yield new insights for the development of (grounded) theory (Rubin & Babbie 1997: 22,108,109).

A typical limitation of exploratory research, which applies in this study, is that the data is seldom definitive due to the sampling, which may not be representative and merely point towards general answers (Rubin & Babbie, 1997:9). This was the anticipated situation as the whole population of day labourers was not included. It was also unlikely because the day labourers in general and at any particular hiring site are a constantly changing population. Each hiring site also appeared to be unique.

- Description

Based on the foundation of knowledge gained about the day labourers in the research at Elardus Park (Schenck & Louw 2005) it seemed there was also a need to be able to describe the common characteristics of day labourers and their experiences. This made descriptive research appropriate. To describe a situation or event it is carefully and deliberately observed for example, by making use of a large scale survey of a representative sample using quantitative methods (Rubin & Babbie 1997:109). Although exploration and description have similarities in that description is to gain insight into a situation, community or person (Bless & Higson-Smith 1995:42) the description is more to answer to “how” and “why” questions (Mouton & Marais in De Vos et. al. 2004: 109). Rubin and Babbie (1997:110) continue to explain that surveys are a quantitative form of description typically used to refer “to the characteristics of a population based on quantitative data obtained from a sample of people thought to be representative of that population”. Such data “are likely to refer to surface attributes that can easily be quantified, like age, income, size of family and so on”. However description can also be qualitative and attempt to convey a sense of what it is like to walk in the shoes of the people being described—providing rich details about environments, interactions, meanings and everyday lives’. Large representative samples are selected (Rubin & Babbie
1997:110). According to Bless & Higson-Smith 1995:43) exploratory and descriptive research makes use of observation, questionnaires and interviews for data collection. The observation may be simple or participatory. Questionnaires and interviews enable the researcher to access information that is not easily observable, accessing feelings, beliefs, attitudes and thoughts.

Descriptive study is exploration undertaken when too little is known to formulate a definite research question and a description or background information must be gathered as in this study (Bless & Higson-Smith 1995:41). This larger study includes describing the situation of the hiring sites and their context. This requires careful and deliberate observation as directed by the semi-structured questionnaires used to obtain information on the hiring sites and the interview schedules used in gathering information and understanding the context of the hiring sites. This research will be covered by the other two researchers as mentioned in (2.1-3).

### 4.2.3 Quantitative and qualitative research design

Quantitative design includes experiments, content analysis and surveys which include fieldwork. Survey designs often make use of questionnaires as a data collection method and respondents are ideally selected by means of randomised sampling methods (De Vos et. al. 2004:138, 142). Qualitative design includes participant observation, direct observation and unstructured or intensive interviewing (Rubin & Babbie 1997:32).

*The research team agreed that the main means of data collection would be a survey using an interview questionnaire. Further data could be collected through individual and group interviews. The data to be collected would be both quantitative and qualitative.*

O'Leary (2005:154) states that when existing data and records are not available, primary data has to be generated, and the answer to "how" ... is to
"conduct a survey."

4.2.4 Defining the Research Population

The data would be collected from day labourers by means of a questionnaire. As with most research the whole universe of day labourers would not be included. The population, a well defined set of units (Schultz 1996:3) or the total set from which the individuals were chosen (Seeberg in De Vos et. al. 2004:198), were defined as the male day labourers waiting to be employed at the informal hiring sites in Tshwane. This was similar to the way the population had been defined in the studies by Valenzuela (1999-2005). The population was defined geographically viz. the municipal area of Tshwane and the specific people were day labourers, un- or underemployed people. A further distinguishing factor was that the population did not include all un- or underemployed people but specifically those waiting at informal hiring sites or pick up points. Many unemployed people use other means of searching for jobs and many people gather at specific places regularly but not necessarily with the hope of securing employment. The sample would also probably all be male as it had become apparent in the study in Elardus Park (Schenck & Louw 2005:87) that women seeking piece jobs as domestic workers preferred to make use of informal networks and did not gather at informal hiring sites.

All the men seen at informal hiring sites were not necessarily day labourers seeking employment. Especially early in the morning some of the men standing around at hiring sites were people who had jobs for the day and were be waiting to be picked up by an employer. Some people who at first appeared to be day labourers on closer observation, might actually be begging; others scouting the area for opportunities to engage in criminal activities e.g. drug trafficking.

4.3 Data collection methods

Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:99) explain that data are facts collected as a
result of scientific observation which are expressed in the language of measurement in its general sense and not necessarily as figures. The primary data collected in this research would be both quantitative and qualitative.

4.3.1 Interview Survey

"Survey is the collection of information on a wide range of cases, each case being investigated on the particular aspect(s) under consideration" (Bless & Higson-Smith 1995:43). Rubin and Babbie (1997:346) state that surveys may be used for exploratory, descriptive and explanatory purposes. Surveys are mainly used in studies that have individual people as units of analysis, in this case, day labourers. Surveys are a suitable method for collecting original data to describe a population too large to observe directly. Careful random sampling provides a group of respondents whose characteristics may be taken to reflect those of the larger population. Carefully constructed standardised questionnaires provide data in the same form from all the respondents.

According to Rubin and Babbie (1997:364) the survey method has following inherent weaknesses:

They may appear superficial in their coverage of complex topics due to the standardisation of questionnaire items.

- Survey research cannot deal with context and provide the feel for the total life situation of respondents.

- Surveys are inflexible in that they cannot be modified when already in use to fit new variables of which the interviewer may become aware.

- Surveys cannot measure social action; they can only collect self reports of recalled past action or of hypothetical future action.
• Survey research is generally weak on validity and strong on reliability.

Rubin and Babbie (1997:365) say that by combining survey research with qualitative methods it is possible to benefit from the strengths of survey research while offsetting its weaknesses regarding superficiality, missing social context, inflexibility, artificiality and questionable validity. The qualitative methods of individual and group interviews would therefore be included. The qualitative information from individual and group interviews would bring local insights and add emphasis to the statistics from the survey (Henderson & Thomas 2000:247).

According to Rubin and Babbie (1997:365) and Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:111) advantages of interview surveys are:

• They can be administered to respondents who cannot read and write.

• There is a higher response rate than with mail surveys.

• The presence of the fieldworker generally decreases the number of "don't know" and "no" answers.

• Interviewers provide a guard against confusing questionnaire terms by clarifying.

• Fieldworkers can provide additional information because they can observe as well as ask questions.

The quality of the interview survey is determined by the quality of the sampling, questionnaire and interviews as discussed below.

We did not consider using self administered surveys because many day labourers did not have a fixed address and we thought that many might not be sufficiently literate to read and understand the wording of the questionnaire, nor
understand the language used. During the research in Elardus Park (Schenck & Louw 2005) it became apparent that all the men were African and beyond simple phrases needed for job negotiation were limited in their ability to speak English or Afrikaans. The day labourers speak numerous African languages. Self administered questionnaires would have to be translated into at least 11 languages. This was way beyond the available budget. To the research team it seemed obvious to use the interview survey where fieldworkers asked questions orally and in face to face encounters, immediately recording the respondents’ answers. A team of fieldworkers who could speak different African languages would be needed. Therefore, in this study, 20 fourth level Unisa Social Work students fluent in one or more African languages were used as field workers to conduct the survey at the hiring sites.

In the meantime, the first part of the larger research project, the identification of the hiring sites and counting thereof by Xipu had made available data on the target population. There were 60 hiring sites and a minimum of 2420 day labourers. This information indicated firstly, that the universum of hiring sites and day labourers was too large to be included as population for the research and secondly provided the information to be used to determine the sample population. The sampling was done in consultation with Prof Fletcher from the department of Statistics at Unisa. The hiring sites could be grouped into five geographic areas, of four different sizes and situated where four different types of economic activity took place.

In determining the choice of the method of sampling the following factors were also considered.

- Costs: Budget restrictions determined that only 240 (10%) interviews could take place. A sample of 10% of the population was therefore accepted as representative of the day labourers at informal hiring sites in Tshwane implying sacrifice of precision. However a 10% sample is accepted as being sufficient to control sampling error (De Vos et. al. 2004:200).
Due to budget restrictions and the fact that most field workers had not yet obtained driver’s licenses they would make use of public transport to reach hiring sites.

Due to budget constraints and the availability of fieldworkers, only 20 field workers could be involved for three days. This meant that each fieldworker would have to complete 4 questionnaires per day taking about 30-45 minutes per interview.

The field workers were mostly women and their safety when visiting the hiring sites had to be considered. They would not visit the sites alone and had to go in pairs at least.

It was impossible to compile a complete list of day labourers due to their varying availability and constantly changing numbers.

At many hiring sites the day labourers were only available until about 10.00.

Geographically hiring sites were far apart.

The groups at hiring sites seemed to be reasonably homogenous.

The multiple variables relating to geographic area, size and nature of hiring sites had to be considered in selecting a representative sample of day labourers.

To obtain a representative sample, cluster sampling was considered.

4.3.2 Sampling

Sampling is the process of selecting observations (Rubin & Babbie 1997:233) or of drawing a portion of a research population that is considered representative for
actual inclusion in a study. To be representative a sample should have approximately the same characteristics as the population. This means that as many as possible of the variables in the population must be included in the sample and every member of the population should stand an equal chance to be included in the population. For this, probability sampling using random sampling techniques is indicated (Rubin & Babbie1997:233; De Vos et. al. 2004:201). Random sampling is a “method of drawing a sample of a population so that all possible samples of fixed size have the same probability of being selected”(De Vos et. al. 2004:200). A list of the names of the whole research population is required.

Cluster sampling is a variation of random sampling. Cluster sampling is a complex sampling design typically involving the initial sampling of groups or clusters of elements, followed by a random selection of elements within each of the clusters. It is also referred to as multi stage sampling (Rubin & Babbie 1997:259; Bless and Higson-Smith 1995:93). Clusters are preferably natural groupings of similar things e.g. plants, people, animals, gems. Clusters are externally homogenous but internally heterogeneous. On their own clusters must be representative of the whole population. Variation between clusters must be minimal. Cluster sampling can be considered under the following conditions:

- When groups of sampling units occur together (Schultz 1986:57).

- When economic considerations are significant for the study (Sarantakos in De Vos et. al. 2004:206).

- When the sampling population is spread over a large area and reaching every selected unit would increase costs (Schultz 1986:57).

- When groups are informal and only known in their direct environment (Bless & Higson-Smith 1995:93).
The sampling for the research took place as follows (see table 2):

- Each of the hiring sites was given a number.
- Sites were classified according to size (small medium small medium large and mega according to number of workers at the site) and counted.

Table 2: Classification of hiring sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size of site</th>
<th>Number of sites</th>
<th>Site numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small:</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 18, 19, 21, 22, 24, 25, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 36, 38, 40, 42, 49, 53, 55, 57, 58, 59, 61, 65, 66, 69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5-25 day labourers)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small medium:</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7, 12, 13, 17, 20, 23, 26, 41, 47, 52, 68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(26-35 day labourers)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large medium:</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4, 16, 48, 50, 51, 54, 60, 62, 63, 64, 67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(36-50 day labourers)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large:</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10, 14, 15, 35, 37, 39, 43, 45, 70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(51-100 day labourers)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mega:</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>44, 46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(100+ day labourers)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3: Cluster sampling

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stratum</th>
<th>#sites per stratum</th>
<th>#sites in sample</th>
<th>#respondents per stratum</th>
<th>#respondents in sample</th>
<th># field workers</th>
<th>Site no</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North Business</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>48, 56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Residential</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Mixed</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Transport</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Business</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4, 50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Residential</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Mixed</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Transport</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10, 69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Business</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>64, 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Residential</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14, 20, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Mixed</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>35, 15, 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Business</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Residential</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Mixed</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North-East Business</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>39, 37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North-East Residential</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North-East Mixed</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Business</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>44, 45, 70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Residential</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Mixed</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To compile the above table (table 3) the following steps that explains the table, were taken.

- Sites were then stratified according to their geographic location in Tshwane (north, south, east, north-east and central) and nature (residential, business, transport hub and mixed). The number of the site, size category and number of men were indicated. The number of sites in each category was then counted. Empty strata were eliminated. 20 strata remained.

- The proportion of respondents out of 240 for each stratum was calculated. To accommodate the previously mentioned restrictions the number was rounded to multiples of 4.*
• The final sample of sites and number of respondents was drawn by including:
  o A quota from all ‘single’ sites in a stratum, where there was only one in a stratum.
  o The quotas from the largest to smallest sites until the quota* was filled.

• At the hiring site field workers filled the allotted quota by interviewing available day labourers. In some cases hiring sites no longer existed and field workers were advised to go to the nearest hiring sites that had not been included in the sample or new or unknown hiring sites and interview available day labourers to fill the quota.

4.3.3 The questionnaire

A questionnaire is a complex instrument of data collection. It is a document containing a formulated series of questions which are completed by the respondents to provide information, facts and opinions, on a phenomenon which is the subject of a research project.

In this study a structured, or that which is also referred to as a standardised interview was used. This is an established questionnaire with the same set of questions with fixed wording administered in the same order to all respondents. There are also instructions on how each question should be asked and answered (Bless & Higson-Smith 1995:107; Henderson & Thomas 2002:69). The objective was that the questionnaire be presented to each correspondent as similarly as possible to minimize the influence of the fieldworkers and to ensure a better comparison of results. The aim was to convert into data information given directly by a person. Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:109) mention that as a rule the information gathered is about:

• What a person knows: factual information;
What a person likes or dislikes: values, preferences, interests, tastes;

What a person thinks: attitudes and beliefs;

What a person has experienced or what happens at present.

Some of the basic conditions for gathering such information are that people should be willing to co-operate in sharing their knowledge; that respondents should express as reality what they see, know and experience, not how they think it should be or what they wish it to be; and "respondents should be aware of what they feel and think and be able to express it in order to communicate the information" (Bless & Higson-Smith 1995:109).

The aim of structured interviews is largely to determine the frequency of certain answers and to find relationships between answers to different questions. The responses of large numbers of respondents to questions are compared based on categories of answers that are already known (Bless & Higson-Smith 1995:111). The advantage of the questionnaire component of the interview survey is the structure that it provides for the interview making it possible to involve a relatively large sample of respondents using different fieldworkers and still having comparable and relatively complete data.

Bless and Higson-Smith (1995) provide the following general guidelines for formulating questions:

- **The procedure** for drafting a questionnaire is not to start by drafting questions but to begin by listing the issues to be explored, analysing what kind of data is required to explore those issues and only then formulating specific questions. The design of the questionnaire should be respondent-centred. One way is to adapt language and vocabulary to that of the respondent. The writers warn that when questions are translated into (a) local
language(s) words need to be chosen very carefully. It is useful to make use of double translation (English-vernacular-English) by different translators to reduce the danger of inaccurate translation (Bless & Higson-Smith 1995:115-117).

- **The wording of questions** should be brief and simple, unambiguous, use understandable vocabulary and not be double barrelled nor leading (Bless & Higson-Smith 1995:117). The ideal is that the question will mean the same thing to every respondent and every given response must mean the same when given by different respondents but an impossible goal (Rubin & Babbie 1997:355).

- **The structure of the questionnaire** should be logical, e.g. exhausting one topic before moving on to the next. To check the consistency of answers the content of some questions should be repeated but formulated differently. The monotonous sequence and format of questions and response categories should be broken to avoid response set which is participants answering all questions in a specific direction regardless of the content of the questions (Bless & Higson-Smith 1995:116).

To enhance the quality of questions when designing a questionnaire, Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:118-119) provide the following checklist for checking every question:

- Is the question necessary? How does it contribute to the purpose of the research, e.g. exploring the phenomenon of day labourers?

- Does the respondent have the information necessary to provide this kind of data?

- Is the participant willing to provide the data?
• Is the question respondent–centred?

• Will the question be interpreted similarly by all respondents?

• Is the question neutral or does it favour a particular answer?

• Is the wording of the question adequate?

• Is the question logically placed but not monotonous?

The types of questions relevant for this study were mainly factual requesting objective information about the respondents, e.g. personal data, details of their social and economic backgrounds, and present social and economic conditions. The types of questions that can be used in questionnaires are unstructured and open ended and various structured questions including multiple-choice or check-list, scaled answers and ranking answers, contingency questions and fill-in questions (Bless & Higson-Smith 1995:119-122).

Consulted sources agree that a questionnaire should be piloted (Bless & Higson-Smith 1995:43, 50; Henderson & Thomas 2002:70; De Vos et. al. 2004:215-221) to test it for length, relevance, wording, sequence of questions and overall impact on respondents and making improvements.

*Designing the questionnaire was a team effort. Literature on Valenzuela’s work and the information gleaned from the identification and confirmation of hiring sites was used in the design of a survey questionnaire. In designing the questionnaire we unpacked the research question to identify the categories of questions needed to answer the research question. The unpacking of the research question began with the following questions which Valenzuela and Melendez (2003) had used in a study on day labour in New York.*

• Who are the day labourers?
• What do day labourers earn?
• What do the day labourers do?
• Why do they work as day labourers?
• Who hires day labourers?
• Are day labourers abused?

In addition to the above questions and based on the preliminary research in Elardus Park (Schenck & Louw 2005), we accepted that the day labourers experienced poverty more comprehensive than merely a lack of income. We therefore considered questions to explore additional unmet fundamental human needs (see chapter two 5.3). We continued the unpacking of the research question with the following questions:

• Why are they standing there?
• Where and how do they live?
• Where do they usually sleep?
• What are their experiences of work and their economic situations?
• What are their non-work activities, experiences, conditions?
• What is the nature of their social interactions and with whom do they have relationships?

While the team was still working on the questionnaire Schenck and Louw were invited by Valenzuela to attend the training of field workers in June 2004 for a planned national survey on day labourers in the USA National Day labour Survey coordinated from The Centre for the study of Urban Poverty at UCLA. We attended the training and accompanied the field workers for a few days of the national survey. This experience and Valenzuela’s approach was valuable preparation and experience for my research in Tshwane. Permission was granted to use or adapt
Valenzuela et. al.'s research design and questionnaire. Some questions were omitted, some adapted according to the local context and rephrased using vocal vocabulary. More questions on social aspects were added.

The questionnaire (Appendix 1) eventually consisted of the following nine sections:

- **Survey details:** To be completed by field workers after interviews
- **Section A:** Ten questions on the hiring site
- **Section B:** Eighteen questions on personal background and living conditions of the day labourers
- **Section C:** Twenty questions on economic aspects such as employment and employment seeking history of day labourers, income and remittances
- **Section D:** Ten questions on abuse experienced by day labourers
- **Section E:** Four questions on work related injuries
- **Section F:** Six questions on health and access to health care
- **Section G:** Fifteen questions on relationships social networks, associational and organisational involvement
- **Section H:** Some qualitative topics and space for other relevant information provided by respondents

Most of the questionnaire consisted of structured questions. Some less structured questions were phrased to provide information that could be codified.

The questionnaire was in English but the field workers were all African and at least bilingual to increase the possibility of the interviews being conducted in a language familiar to the day labourers. To pilot test the questionnaire and as training for the survey, the 20 field workers each interviewed two day labourers using the
questionnaire.

Based on the feedback from the fieldworkers and the quality of the answers in the completed questionnaires, the questionnaire was again revised before being finalized and printed.

4.3.4 The survey interview

The interview aspect of a survey includes following the general rules for interviewing, coordination and control.

Rubin and Babbie (1992:356-358) make the following suggestions for interviewing when administering an interview survey:

- The fieldworker should dress in a fashion similar to that of the interviewees.
- Fieldworkers should be familiar with the questionnaire.
- In asking the questions the wording of the questions should be followed exactly.
- Responses should be recorded exactly.
- Probing for responses can be used when respondents answer inappropriately but fieldworkers should be as neutral as possible.

Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:116) mention that interviews can be more respondent-friendly by taking into consideration the time and venue, privacy, gaining co-operation by gaining official permission and support where applicable and fieldworkers being aware of their possible influence on respondents, e.g. appearance, attitude and gender.

Because administering an interview survey requires the assistance of several fieldworkers their co-ordination and control is important. This takes place through
training of fieldworkers, preferably in a group, and supervising them during the survey. Training should include fieldworkers being well informed about the objective of the study, interviewing skills, going through the questionnaire question by question to familiarise themselves with the content and looking for evidence of misunderstanding. Fieldworkers should also be provided with specifications of what to do in different situations. In addition to the information the training should include demonstration interviews, role plays of interviews by all trainees and, finally, conducting real interviews before the survey (Rubin & Babbie 1997:358).

Prior to the survey the fieldworkers were trained over two days. This was done according to the outline by Rubin and Babbie (1992:356-358). This was what we had experienced in the training with Valenzuela. Additionally, during the training sessions there was the opportunity to role-play the interviews in the different spoken African languages, in the process translating and discussing questions. To test the questionnaires the fieldworkers conducted two interviews each on the second morning on their way to the training session. After the trial run the fieldworkers gave feedback, the completed questionnaires were evaluated and ambiguous questions identified and adjusted. The day before the survey commenced refresher training was done and administrative arrangements completed (Blaauw 2005:10). The fieldworkers were supplied with the questionnaires, information on the hiring sites they were to visit, daily site control sheets, consent forms and notices with a request to respondents to participate and a brief explanation about the purpose of the research.

Rubin and Babbie (1997:360) emphasise that the work of fieldworkers should be supervised throughout the course of the research. Fieldworkers should not complete all interviews before returning the questionnaires. They should first do a small number which should be returned and checked before they continue. This protects the researcher against misunderstanding that may not have been evident during the training and the early stages of the study.
In order to monitor the research process, while the fieldworkers were conducting the interviews, the research team were available by cell phone, phoning many of the fieldworkers where problems were anticipated and when possible travelled to these hiring sites. The research team also travelled between the points where the field work took place in order to monitor the situation. Some questionnaires were collected from the fieldworkers by the team while visiting the different hiring sites.

As a measure to keep track of the research process and determine whether the research process had taken place as anticipated e.g. in terms of the time it took to conduct the interviews and period of availability of day labourers, the field workers were requested to complete a “Daily site control sheet” (Appendix 2). On returning the questionnaires the fieldworkers were requested to give written feedback on the experience of participating in the research (Appendix 5).

4.3.5 Interviewing for generating qualitative data

The type of interview relevant for this study ranged from Patton’s informal conversational interview to guided interview (as cited by De Vos et. al. 2004:297). A conversational interview resembles a chat where most questions flow from the context. Guided interviews are guided by a checklist of relevant topics. De Vos et. al. (2004:298) refer to an unstructured one to one interview and describe it as “a conversation with a purpose” where the fieldworker is interested “in understanding the experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience”.

Group interviews or focus groups can also be used as supplementary source of data where a survey is used as the primary method of data collection (De Vos et. al. 2004:306). Morgan’s description (cited in De Vos et. al. 204:306) of a “focus group as a research technique that collects data through group interaction on a topic determined by a researcher” is most applicable. (See 6.2 and 6.3 on how individual interviews and small group interviews were utilised in research).
4.3.6 Observation

To obtain usable data, observation should be done systematically following scientific rules (Bless & Higson-Smith 1995:105). Types of observation include simple or non-participant observation, participant observation or field research and modified participant observation (Bless & Higson-Smith 1995:105-106). Simple or non-participant observation is the recording of events as observed by an outsider. In participant observation the observer hide the real purpose of their presence by becoming participants and sharing their confidences and experiences without disturbing their behaviour. Modified participant observation is restricted to participation in major events (Bless & Higson-Smith 1995:106). See (6.4) on how observation was utilised in research.

5 ETHICS

Strydom (in De Vos et. al. 2004:63) presents the following summary of the current view of ethics for research in the social sciences and human service professions:

Ethics is a set of moral principles that are suggested by an individual or group, are subsequently widely accepted, and offer rules and behavioural expectations about the most correct conduct towards experimental subject and residents, employers, sponsors, other researchers, assistants and students.

The major ethical principles or issues for academic research are classified differently by the authors consulted (Stoecker 2005:241-243; Bless & Higson-Smith 1995:102; Rubin & Babbie 1997:59-63; De Vos et. al. 2004:64). Strydom (in De Vos et. al. 2004:64) refers to ethical issues and has the most comprehensive list including: harm to experimental subjects and/or respondents, informed consent, deception of subjects and/or respondents, violation of privacy, action and competence of researchers, co-operation with contributors, release or publication of
findings and the debriefing of subjects or respondents. The issues most frequently mentioned in the consulted sources will be briefly described and it will be explained how they were respected in the research.

5.1 Doing no harm

Strydom (in De Vos et. al. 2004:64) mentions doing no harm to respondents as the first issue. Possible effects of the research should be considered. Respondents should be protected by being informed of possible effects, including discomfort and where harm has taken place reparation should be made as far as is possible. From the literature study on day labourers in the USA and the research conducted in Elardus Park we were aware that day labourers were subject to harassment and those without the necessary legal documents were especially wary of police. All fieldworkers were advised to clearly display their UNISA student cards, distribute the written information on the research, explain that the research was being conducted by UNISA and that they were not linked to any form of law enforcement. We realised that participating in the research could jeopardise the day labourer’s chances of being employed and considered paying them a basic amount as had been done in the USA NDLS. Due to budget restraints this was not possible. Even if it had been possible, the field workers’ safety was also an ethical issue as it would have endangered the fieldworkers to carry money. The field workers’ safety was also taken into consideration by sending not less that two to a hiring site. In most cases there was a male field worker in the group. During the survey the research team was constantly available via cellular phones and travelling in cars visiting the sites.

During the trial run the fieldworkers mentioned that the research was being conducted by the department of social work from UNISA. The mention of social work seemed to raise expectations of direct assistance and made it difficult to continue with the interviews. It was therefore decided that in explaining the research the mention of social work would be avoided.
5.1 Voluntary participation

This implies that respondents should be treated as having the right to choose to participate or refuse to participate in the research. This is related to the right not to divulge certain information or to discontinue participating (Bless & Higson-Smith 1995:102). When incentives are offered it bends this rule (Stoecker 2005:241).

_In the trial run of the questionnaire we received feedback that the respondents did not want to reveal their ages but were willing to indicate their age group. The relevant question was changed accordingly in the questionnaire._

_In the research the day labourers often approached the fieldworkers when they arrived on the scene and after being informed of the purpose of their presence some day labourers were interested and volunteered to complete the questionnaire._

_The respondents’ voluntary participation is illustrated by the fact that interviews were immediately terminated if there was a possibility of being hired or if the respondents were unwilling to answer. 23 questionnaires were not completed. Reasons given by the fieldworkers were that seven of the men were employed, nine discontinued due to the possibility of employment but did not return when the possibility did not materialise, one ran away when he saw a police vehicle in the distance and eight refused to answer some questions._

If the respondents had been paid for their participation, as I would have liked, the voluntary participation would have been affected (Stoecker 2005:241).

5.3 Informed consent

Informed consent means informing the respondents accurately and completely about the research so that they understand before being ask to consent to participate. It may involve getting their written consent (De Vos et. al. 2004:65; Stoecker 2005:242).
This principle was honoured by providing information on the research
(Appendix 3) answering questions and asking respondents to sign a written consent
(Appendix 6).

5.4 Confidentiality and anonymity

Confidentiality and anonymity is about respecting a person’s right to decide
how what is revealed must be dealt with, e.g. to maintain the privacy of individuals’
records (confidentiality) and report research results in such away that they to not
identify individuals; it could imply not to use names, but use numbers (Bless &
may be a problem when interviews are used to collect data (Bless & Higson-Smith

Confidentiality was respected in the design of the questionnaire. No
information was asked that could identify individuals. Anonymity was, however,
compromised by the fact that interviews were conducted. It is possible that
afterwards fieldworkers would be able to recognise respondents.

5.5 Deception of respondents

This means that there should be no deliberate misrepresentation of facts that
would violate respect to which people have a right e.g. data must only be used only
for the stated purpose (De Vos et. al. 2004:66).

The decision to avoid any reference to social work could be regard as a
compromise between deception and furthering the objective of the research.

Authors like Kotze, Myburgh, Roux and associates (2002) and Nama and
Swartz (2004) introduce a further dimension to the ethics of social research. They
point to the fact that social research such as this study on the day labourers at
informal hiring sites in Tshwane has the potential of developing knowledge which
may be used to improve peoples' lives, yet social research is not necessarily always good or ethical. Kotze (Kotze et. al. 2002:21) states that research is not a neutral or innocent act but is a political-ethical process that has the potential to harm or good. Issues of power are magnified in research undertaken in contexts of poverty, gender, race, ethnicity, (Nama & Swart 2004:11) and other forms of marginalisation, e.g. illegal immigrants, unemployment and lack of shelter. In research where power imbalance between researchers and respondents is an issue special sensitivity is needed. Accountability for our actions in doing research is essentially what ethics in research should be about. To be accountable we should harbour a hermeneutics of suspicion (Hudson & Kotze in Kotze et. al. 2002:269-290) and constantly ask the question "what effect does what I am doing have?" We should not only ask whether some action is harmful and endeavour to avoid it, but we should simultaneously strive to contribute to the general good. Ethics should take us beyond avoiding harmful actions to a commitment to promoting the general good.

During the piloting of the questionnaire the power issue became apparent when the field workers mentioned that the research was being conducted by the Department of Social Work at UNISA. The mention of the word 'social work' evoked requests for assistance, many outside the range of assistance that social work can offer and to which the field workers in any case did not have access to. The research team decided that the field workers should not mention social work at all but only mention that they are from UNISA. This illustrated the power of social work to assist or refuse to assist disadvantaged persons.

6 DATA COLLECTION

Doing the interview survey posed not only the already mentioned challenges but also highlighted the following conditions of day labour which influenced their availability.

As in the USA most day labourers are on the streets from about 6.00 to 10.00
hoping to be hired. Researchers had to be at the hiring sites very early and mostly relied on one-off interviews. Some men, even though included in the sample, might be hired before they could be interviewed. After 10.00 they might leave the hiring sites for different reasons. While the men are waiting to be hired they would not want to become engaged in conversations for too long as this could jeopardise the opportunity to be hired. They also might not remain at the same site for long. All these factors required adapting the research to the situation using creative research approaches.

Day labourers are employed by various employers for a variety of jobs. The time frame ranges from several hours to several weeks. This means that the position of the day labourer is constantly changing from job search at the hiring site to being employed, usually in the informal market. After the optimal time of searching for a job, time may be occupied by begging, sleeping, attending to other survival chores or involvement in recreational activities, e.g. games, (including gambling) and drinking. This means that a person’s fortune, the demand for day labour, the season and time of day influence the day labourers’ availability to be interviewed.

As Valenzuela et. al. (2003:5) state, day labourers in USA are suspicious of official looking people. They have experience of employer abuse, police harassment, business and public complaints and they may be without legal documents. To inform the day labourers about the legitimacy of the study, reconnaissance field work is done during which flyers in Spanish are distributed explaining the presence of the survey team, the objective of the survey, the selection procedure, that their participation is voluntary and that they are not be identifiable from the survey.

6.1 Administering the survey

The survey was conducted from 27 to 30 September 2005. On arrival at the
hiring sites flyers (Appendix 3) explaining the aim of the research were distributed to the day labourers.

The interviews were conducted from 06.00, the time of day labourers start arriving at hiring sites. Most respondents were cooperative.

With hindsight it may have been less disruptive and more productive if interviewing had started after the biggest rush was over.

During the survey the 20 field workers conducted 242 interviews and completed the questionnaires which took an average of 40 minutes. One fieldworker, contrary to instruction during training, allowed an unidentified number of respondents to complete the questionnaires themselves.

6.2 Group interviews

Three small group interviews with three day labourers each were conducted at the informal hiring sites at Newlands, Gezina and Pretoria North with Xipu’s assistance. He approached the men, explained why we were there and asked for three volunteers. We then sat on the grass and asked questions and spoke about the topics included in the questionnaire. With the men’s permission we made audio recordings that that were unsatisfactory due to the high level of traffic noise. At Gezina and Pretoria North the men were asked to sit in the car which was more satisfactory. After the interviews the men were each paid R20 and given a wrapped uncut loaf of bread. Only three interviews were conducted due to Xipu no longer being available. Only three men were included in each group due to lack of a place to interview them other than in the car. (Relevant information from the conversations has been incorporated in the research findings in chapter 6)

The men were offered a wrapped uncut loaf of bread as the research team had learnt during the Elardus Park research that the day labourers would share a loaf. We had also learnt that many day labourers were suspicious of “open food’ and
even if they were very hungry may not eat it.

6.3 Individual interviews

Three interviews were conducted where it was possible to use English or Afrikaans.

6.4 Observation

Informal observations that do not necessarily meet the criteria of scientific observation occurred wherever day labourers were encountered. While on research and development leave in 2005 I was able to make many informal observations when I participated with an existing church group in weekly food distribution to day labourers in Elardus Park. Many of these observations supported the research findings.

7 DATA ANALYSIS

Data obtained from the completed questionnaires was codified by Derrick Blaauw and processed by the Department of Computer Services at the University of the Free State. Descriptive statistics of the frequency of the basic features of day labourers were analysed and interpreted to obtain a profile of day labourers in Tshwane which is presented by means of tables and graphs in chapter six.

8 CONSTRAINTS EXPERIENCED DURING THE EXECUTION OF THE RESEARCH

The grant placed limitations on the research. The research had to be done as had been applied for in the application.

Students had difficulty locating some sites. They should have been given street maps of the area and should have located the sites the week or day before
the survey to make sure they knew where to go to.

When some students went to the site the street names were found to be incorrect and the place was non-existent. The places were not checked again after the students had gone to locate the sites. Possibly some were not actually visited,

Due to the mobility of day labourers, unpredictability of the day labour situation, limited budget and transport arrangements the research design was sometimes adapted to fit the circumstances.

The field workers made use of taxis to travel from their places of residence to the hiring sites. In most cases they were not able to be at the hiring sites by 6.00 when, at some sites day labourers start arriving. This may have affected the results.

9 FACTORS THAT MAY AFFECT THE ACCURACY OF THE FINDINGS

Whether the fact that the questionnaires were in English had an influence cannot be determined. It was practically and financially not possible to make provision for the translation into all the languages that day labourers use. Most of the fieldworkers had a basic knowledge of a number of African languages and felt confident that they would manage to work from an English questionnaire and translate as they went along. During the training of the fieldworkers the meanings of questions were discussed and possible translations were practiced to develop maximum common meaning. This was, however, not sufficient to ensure that all questionnaires were meaningfully completed.

10 CHAPTER REVIEW

In this chapter the story of how the research process unfolded was presented in narrative form as a dialogue between the research action-planning and execution-(in italics) and research theory. This study is part of a larger research project on day labour in Tshwane planned by a research team of staff and students of the
department of Social Work at UNISA: Prof. Schenck (co-coordinator), Xipu (masters student), who was to research the hiring sites, Nel (masters student), who was to research the context of the hiring sites, and myself (doctoral student), who was to survey the day labourers, and a consultant Blaauw (labour economist from University of Johannesburg) in 2004.

To answer the research question: ‘What are the social and economic conditions and experiences of day labourers at informal hiring sites in Tshwane?’ The process commenced with a systematic search that located and determined that there were a minimum of 70 informal hiring sites with a minimum of 2420 day labourers in Tshwane.

In order to explore and describe the social and economic conditions of the day labourers at the informal hiring sites in Tshwane data collection, mainly through a survey using an interview questionnaire, was planned. Permission was received to use or adapt the research design and questionnaire used in the National Day Labour Survey in the USA by Valenzuela, Theodore, Melendez and Gonzalez (2006). The questionnaire was adapted to local conditions and more questions on social aspects were added. Cluster sampling was done to accommodate the differences at hiring sites. 20 fieldworkers administered 242 questionnaires over 3 days. The interviews were conducted from 06.00.

Ethical issues were considered and constraints and difficulties experienced are also discussed.

The research story continues in chapter six where the research results are presented. The chapters four (4) and five (5) include a literature study on day labourers.
SECTION B

PREPARATORY LITERATURE REVIEW

Going south to live... on a street corner

Alphonso, Hope and Nsanze left Ngozi, a village in the north of Burundi last November. (It is now April). It was a Monday morning and his mother held him close-something unusual as he said goodbye to her in the street in front of their home. “There is no money here,” he tried to explain again. “Here is no life. There may be peace now, but will there still be peace tomorrow?” But his mother didn’t understand: why do they all suddenly want to go south?

There wasn’t much in his canvas bag: a few trousers and shirts, a toothbrush wrapped in a face towel, and a jersey with the face of the soccer star Ronaldo. In the side pocket was his passport, in another much handled documents, and in another the money he took so long to save, 700,000 Burundian francs (about R450).

Outside Ngozi he picked up a lift on a Coke lorry. It took them six shaky hours through many potholes to Bujumbura, the capital on the shores of lake Tanganyika. That night he slept under a tree on the lake shore. The next day a boat, a used up VW1 steamer would be departing for the south first stopping at Kigoma in Tanzania, then on to Mpulungu in Zambia, a distance of 730 km with 1000 people aboard, even though it was only meant for 500.

He slept on the deck and hoisted drinking water from the lake with a bottle on a string. They cruised southwards for four or five days. Somewhere along the way he lost track of the days. All that mattered was to continue going south.

At the border post in Zambia a soldier poked him in the stomach with the butt of the AK47. “Why have you come here?” He insisted that he was just coming to buy kapenta fishes, and the same day he boarded a boat going further south to Mpika, where he spent the whole afternoon sleeping in the shadow of the Catholic church. Late that evening he boarded the train, third class to Kapiri Mposhi. There he paid 70,000 kwatcha for a bus to Livingstone on the Botswana border. There he found a man who let him stay in an outside room for a number of days with two others who were also heading south.

He paid the man 100,000 kwatcha and one night the man woke them and showed him to move in behind some bags of on a lorry. They traveled, there were voices and they continued their journey. Then they arrived in Kasane, Botswana where he managed to get a lift on a cattle lorry for a further 800km to Sherwood. There he filled two bottles with water and waited in the bush until it was dark. Then he started walking, walking, walking over the border into South Africa. There was another lorry and many more days and nights. And a bakkie. And a bus. And just when it started feeling as if there really was no south, one afternoon through the window of an overloaded taxi he saw many buildings.

Pretoria: ....Now Alphonso, Hope and Nsanze stand at the traffic lights in Schoeman street trying to sell me a cheap black and red cell phone cover... or their labour for piece jobs [my insertion].

(Dana Snyman, Beeld, 29 April 2005:14)
THE DAY LABOURER: A SOCIAL PERSPECTIVE

The action that takes place at an informal hiring site is visibly economic, but all of the practices, seen and unseen are social in nature. (Turnovsky 2004:14)

1 INTRODUCTION

In different reports Valenzuela repeatedly states that day labourers are a largely unknown population (Valenzuela, Theodore, Melendez & Gonzalez 2006:27; Valenzuela, Gonzalez, Theodore & Melendez 2005:3, Valenzuela, Kawachi & Marr 2003:3). Many people are aware of men standing at the roadside or street corners from early morning perhaps raising a finger, miming a skill, or displaying tools in an effort to market themselves to potential employers. On the other hand, many people are not aware of day labourers in spite of their ubiquity. A number of the fieldworkers who participated in the research commented that before participating in the survey they were not aware of the day labourers and their suffering. “Even though these men are visible, their plight, specifically as members of the working poor, is practically invisible” (Turnovsky 2004:6).

Day labourers are found in many countries, cities and towns. Turnovsky (2004:2) points out that the scenes may be similar, but the actors are different men and women of different ages races, ethnicities, and class backgrounds. What do we know about them? Who are they? How do they survive? What are their capabilities, resources, skills and knowledge as well as vulnerabilities? It is this type of information that is required to inform our understanding of day labourers at informal hiring sites.
Chapter 4: The day labourer: a social perspective

In this chapter a social and people-centred description is given to make the day labourers and their plight visible. Kaplan (2002: xiv) warns that social description is not clear and bounded, but rather messy and indeterminate. In this chapter it is intended to take a look at day labourers in their mutual inter-relatedness with people, including the wider society, relations with one another at hiring sites and their families. Chapter five (5) presents an economic perspective on day labourers which is perhaps more bounded.

The following studies: Turnovsky (2004) on a hiring site in New York, Gonzo and Plattner (2003) on "street employed" in Windhoek, Namibia and the preliminary study on day labourers in Elardus Park (Schenck & Louw 2005), as well as many reports in newspapers constitute this chapter.

2 EXPLANATION OF THE TERMS “DAY LABOURERS” AND “HIRING SITES”

In this section different names and associated meanings by which day labourers and informal hiring sites are described will be explored.

2.1 Day labourer

The prologue and vignettes at the beginning of chapter one and between chapters, introduce day labourers. They are mostly men who gather, at formal or informal hiring sites, hoping to sell their labour for a day or longer or for a specific job in order to earn some money. Although they are a widespread phenomenon they are often referred to in passing but not widely researched (Valenzuela 2002:5). Day labourers have been the subject of novels e.g. “The Tortilla Curtain" (Boyle 1995) about a Mexican day labourer in Los Angeles and a film "Los Trabajadores", a film portraying the life of two Latino men at a hiring site in the USA.

Various terms are used to refer to day labourers. In the USA day labourers are also referred to as “Jornaleros” (Valenzuela & Melendez 2003:i) a direct Spanish...
translation of a day worker or day labourer, or "Esquinos" (Malpica in Valenzuela 2003:310) referring to the day labourer in terms of the street corners where they gather and "Buen trabajador" (migrant) (Turnovsky 2004:2). Gonzo and Plattner (2003:8) use the term "Street unemployed" to refer to the day labourers in the research conducted during 2000-2001 in Windhoek, Namibia. Maisel (Reynolds 2003:2), from the Men on the Side of the Road (MSR) project, refers to the "Roadside job seekers" and "Men by the side of the road". Gill (2002) who conducted a study on day labour in Tokyo, referred to "Workers employed by the day."

There are also different meanings attached to the word "day labourer". For the purpose of this study the term day labourer will be used and described as a person who gathers with other job seekers at informal hiring sites, hoping to sell his labour for the day or longer or for a piece job, in order to earn some money.

2.2 Hiring sites

The names "esquinos", "street unemployed," "men by the side of the road" and "roadside job seekers" for day labourers already tell us something about the informal hiring sites where one is likely to find day labourers. Hiring sites, also known by other terms (see chapter 5 section 2), are the places by the roadside in cities and towns, where unemployed men congregate during the day, especially during the early morning, hoping to sell their labour for the day to be able to earn some money. Hiring sites are an extremely effective device for bringing together prospective employers and job seekers (Valenzuela & Melendez 2003:2).

Valenzuela, Kawachi & Marr (2002:208) write that the spatial configuration of hiring sites is not a random process but the result of factors that include historicity, visibility, employer-labor relations and municipal regulations which are all socially related factors.
Chapter 4: The day labourer: a social perspective

The following case studies on a hiring site in Brooklyn, New York researched by Turnovsky (2004:2) is presented to introduce and describe the context where day labourers seek and negotiate employment.

2.2.1 Brooklyn, New York

The following is a summary of Turnovsky’s (2004:2) description of an informal hiring site at an intersection in Brooklyn, New York.

When her visits first began, the men occupied the four corners of one street intersection. A year later on a following visit, the workspace had extended across the avenue covering the four corners of three street intersections. She comments that whatever these corners may have served for passers-by or residents in the past, this space had changed from being a geographical space to being a more human one.

Turnovsky observed that the men stand or sit patiently while they wait for someone to pull up along the curb looking to hire a “buen trabajador” for the day. Some men pass the time by making conversation with each other, perhaps about the latest football match in “la liga mexicana”. Others play card games or read the newspaper. A lot of them, mostly Polish and Russian men smoke. Many of them make good use of the spaces along the way by sitting on stoops near the laundromat or on the cement base enclosing the nearby cemetery, leaning on the fences surrounding the nearby train yard, or just sitting on the pavement outside of the corner bagel and deli shop. But when the men hear the "beeps" or "honks" of a truck or just an ordinary car pulling up beside the curb, they are at full attention. Conversations stop. Heads look up from the newspapers. Those sitting stand up. Bodies lean forward and faces look curious as they wait to hear the call from the driver.

This case study on the hiring sites provides a qualitative and general picture of day labourers and hiring sites. Hiring sites are geographical spaces that have become
human spaces. Each hiring site is a small unique community within a larger community.

In the next chapter hiring sites as market places where day labour is traded and the men as day labourers will be discussed. The above description of what happens at a busy site serves as background for a general social profile of day labourers, based mostly on descriptions of day labourers in the USA.

3 SOCIAL PROFILE OF DAY LABOURERS

The above case study, the prologue and cameos of day labourers included between chapters have already introduced day labourers. In this section a richer and more detailed picture is presented.

3.1 The ubiquity of day labourers

The following quotes seem to depict the experience of many people regarding day labourers.

[M]en, he saw ... He'd been in Los Angeles two years now, and he'd never really thought about before, but they were everywhere, these men, ubiquitous, silently going about their business

(Boyle 1995:11-12).

_Everyone has seen them._ Those men on the side of the road. Perched on bricks, or sprawled exhaustedly on the grass as they wait. Desperately hoping a car or van will stop and someone will shout, “who wants a job?” This is followed by an undignified scramble to get the work. One or two may be chosen. The rest fall back into a hungry forlorn stupor.

(Banish 2005:16)
In chapter three section two (The larger research project) some of the difficulties in determining the number of day labourers were explained. Due to the nature of their employment their employment status is also constantly changing. For a day labourer to be included in a count, he must be at the hiring site and not employed at that particular time. Some sites identified in advance of a survey being conducted are very likely to change by the time the survey takes place. Counts at hiring sites are therefore not very accurate and at the most only indicate the minimum possible number of day labourers (Valenzuela 1999:3, Valenzuela & Melendez 2003:13).

The statistics in the following table regarding day labourers reflect the situation in different places. These figures are incomplete and not comparable. They are estimates that have been made at different times and by different means, but they do give an idea of the pervasiveness of hiring sites and day labourers in different countries and indicate that the phenomenon of day labourers is widespread. (Schenck 2007, Valenzuela et. al. 2006:33; Valenzuela & Melendez 2003:1; Maisel 2003:2; Reynolds 2003; Wyatt 2005; Gill 2001).

**TABLE 4: UBIQUITY OF DAY LABOURERS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PLACE</th>
<th>DAY LABOURERS</th>
<th>SITES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>0.8 -1.2 Million</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA (2006)</td>
<td>117,647</td>
<td>264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>5 831 – 8281</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern California</td>
<td>15 000 – 50 000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Africa (2003)</td>
<td>25 000 – 50 000</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2007)</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cape Town</td>
<td>2 000 – 3 000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johannesburg</td>
<td></td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In South Africa day labourers at informal hiring sites have become ubiquitous in all the cities and many towns and villages but they remain relatively invisible to many people. Schenck (2006) has identified 1000 hiring sites with a minimum of 50,000 day labourers.

In the Afrikaans Sunday paper “Rapport” Eybers (2005:20), challenged President Mbeki’s statement that he doubted the correctness of statistics indicating there are 4.4 million unemployed people in South Africa. He said that if that was the case they would be seen on the streets. Interestingly, like many others, the President seems unaware of the thousands of day labourers who daily stand at the side of the road, at street corners and in front of businesses related to landscaping and construction soliciting piece jobs in all the cities and most towns throughout South Africa. They are men who are not part of the formal economy and experience severe poverty. The day labourers at hiring sites in the USA, Japan, Namibia and Eldorado Park are in some ways different and in others similar to each other as will be discussed in the rest of this chapter.

In 2004, on a visit to The Centre for the Study of Urban poverty at UCLA, USA it was surprising to become aware of so many similarities between day labour in the USA and in Tshwane e.g. age, education, type of jobs. Although there are similarities there are also significant differences. Some of the differences are that in the USA day labour is largely a situation of underemployment or employment abuse linked to illegal immigration in a context of low unemployment. In South Africa day labour at informal hiring sites is a job-seeking activity in a context of high unemployment. In the USA human rights violations relate to immigration and employment; in South Africa the absence of human rights relates to the absence of the right to employment. Employment and immigration abuses although also present, get less attention. This was confirmed by Valenzuela and Theodore during their visit to South Africa from the USA during 2005.
3.2 Place of origin

"Where had they all come from? What did they want?" (Boyle1995:11-12).

All the available sources indicate that most of the day labourers standing at informal hiring sites originate from elsewhere and were not originally local residents. In the USA most day labourers are Latinos who come from Mexico and other Central American countries (Valenzuela et. al. 2006: iii). In Washington only 7% were of non-Latino background (Valenzuela et. al. 2005:5). In New York (Theodore, Valenzuela & Melendez 2006:412; Valenzuela & Melendez 2003:5; Turnovsky 2004:2) up to 33% of the men were from the Caribbean, Europe, Canada, Ireland, India, Haiti and China. In Los Angeles almost 100% were Latinos (Valenzuela et. al. 2002:201) and in Tokyo 100% were Japanese men from rural areas (Valenzuela et. al. 2002:201).

Referring to a single site in New York, Turnovsky (2004:3) observed that there were three clearly distinguishable groups. Firstly, there were the Latinos, mostly Mexican men and some from Ecuador, Colombia and Panama and secondly, there were men from Eastern Europe, mostly Polish and Russian men. These two groups are referred to as the “Regulars” who came to look for work daily. Then there was a third group, the temporary workers, referred to as “Temps” who were mostly USA citizens, mostly African American and a few Puerto Ricans. They were there less regularly, mostly only during the summer months.

In the US most day labourers are immigrants without legal residency status and thus undocumented and not accurately reflected in official statistics. This implies that these day labourers are probably out of touch with formal networks, particularly regarding employment (Turnovsky 2004:4). Elsewhere most seem to be rural-urban migrants, many of whom seem to have moved permanently. They have migrated
(across border or urban-rural) as a strategy to deal with their previous economic contexts that offer even less employment opportunities. They have moved from areas of high unemployment to cities, with lower unemployment (in the process defying the USA immigration policy and closed borders) and utilising the open market (Satterhwaite & Tacoli 2002: 55, Beall 2002:76).

There is a widespread assumption about day labourers in South Africa that they are illegal, across border migrants (Wyatt 2005, Woihe 2005:8). However, most of the day labourers in Elardus Park were neither local people nor immigrants. Most came from the bordering rural provinces, less than a third were local from Tshwane and only twelve percent were across-border migrants, most of them without identity documents (Schenck & Louw 2005:88). In Windhoek, Namibia 97% of the day labourers were from the distant, northern, rural districts of Namibia (Gonzo & Plattner 2003:93 & 49).

The length of time since day labourers had left their places of origin are all similar except in Tokyo. In the USA about a quarter of the day labourers are very recent arrivals and had left their places of origin less than a year before the respective surveys had been conducted and more than half had left their places of origin less than six years ago (Valenzuela et al 2006:17). On the other side of the spectrum, some day labourers had been frequenting hiring sites for longer than twenty years. This seems to indicate that day labour is a point of entry into the formal labour market. Valenzuela et. al. (2006:20) explains that these day labourers probably represent those who are underemployed. They may currently have another job in addition to participating in the day labour market because these are mostly low paying jobs. It also is possible that day labourers who are able to make the transition out of this labour market do so by holding multiple jobs before leaving it entirely. For others, it could be that they move in and out of regular employment in the formal economy and also in and out of day labour as more than half of the day labourers in the USA have held a permanent job. For these workers, day labour may be a source of income while searching for a permanent job. In Tokyo most of the day labourers have been at the sites for more than 20 years. Day labour has
become away of life (Valenzuela et. al. 2002:203). In Eldorus Park the longest time labourers were standing at sites was 15 years (Schenck & Louw 2005:87).

At most hiring sites in the USA and South Africa, the pool of day labourers is continually changing as it is also replenished with new entrants. In contrast, in Tokyo, most of the men have been day labourers for more than twenty years and the supply of day labourers is not being replenished due to the changed economic context.

As the profile of day labourers unfolds it will become apparent how the factor of being away from home contributes to social marginalization as it increases the challenge to meet fundamental human needs. Migration and its effect is discussed in chapter nine (9). The places of origin of the day labourers at informal hiring sites in Tshwane was covered in Section C of the Questionnaire (appendix 1) and the research results are presented in chapter six (section 2.2.1.1 & 2.2.1.2).

### 3.3 Gender

In most places where day labourers have been surveyed, it has been found that day labourers are almost exclusively men, with the exception of New York where two hiring sites with women were found (Gonzo & Plattner 2003; Valenzuela & Melendez 2003:i, 3, 5; Turnovsky 2004:3; Valenzuela et. al. 2005:5; Valenzuela & Theodore 2005; Schenck & Louw 2005:87). In New York 5% of the day labourers were women working as housekeepers, janitors and factory workers (Valenzuela & Melendez 2003:i, 5).

Men seem to be more suited to using day labour as a strategy for coping with unemployment due to being physically stronger and less vulnerable. Men seem better able to cope with the unprotected existence to which day labourers may be exposed (Blaauw 2005:12). Men are also usually more able to perform the heavy manual jobs available. On the other hand, women seem to obtain employment in other ways, being more successful at utilising networks. They are also likely to be viewed with less
suspicion when they approach people directly asking for employment (Schenck & Louw 2005).

The gender of the day labourers at informal hiring sites in Tshwane was covered in the introductory section on survey details in the Questionnaire (appendix one) and the findings are in chapter six (6 section 2.24).

3.4 Age

Even though day labourers range in age from fifteen to eighty-five, they are generally youthful, except in Tokyo. In the USA the mean age is 32 to 35, in Elardus Park and Windhoek more than half are under 30 and in Japan the men are between 40 and 60, the mean age being 52. The numbers of day labourers decrease as age increases (Valenzuela et. al. 2005:1; Valenzuela & Melendez 2003:5; Valenzuela Kawachi & Marr 2003:201; Gil 2001; Valenzuela et. al. 2005:5). Turnovsky (2004:3) noted that the “Regulars” ranged in age from 16-32 and the “Temps” were between 18 and 22 years of age.

Valenzuela et. al. (2005:5) comment that the relatively youthful age can be expected considering the labour intensive nature of the work, its instability and the fierce, physical competitiveness in securing jobs daily. As Abram (2003) comments: “It has become a matter in many ways of who is the toughest and who is the fastest.” The youthful age of day labourers also corresponds with peoples’ economically active years (Valenzuela in Cleeland 1999; Gonzo & Plattner 2003:47) and seems to indicate that day labour is a strategy of primarily youth unemployment (which is discussed further in chapter eight (8 section 5.4.2).

The challenge of migrating requires daring, adventurousness and entrepreneurial spirit. This is more like to be found among the young adults who migrate than older people and those who remain at home (Meikle 2002:38).
The decrease in numbers as age increases may also be an indication that with the passing of time, day labourers tend to succeed in entering the formal labour market or that they lose all hope of obtaining employment and completely withdraw from the labour market.

Valenzuela, Kawachi & Marr (2003:201) explain that due to the diminished demand for day labourers in Tokyo, the supply of workers is not replenished with young men and is on the verge of extinction. Those men pursuing day labour are those who have remained in this work since they were young and they are now an aging population approaching the end of their work life.

The ages of the day labourers at informal hiring sites in Tshwane was covered in Section B of Questionnaire (appendix 1) and the research results are presented in chapter six (6 section 2.25).

3.5 Education

Education is approached inclusively and includes formal schooling, vocational training and skills acquisition. Education is a satisfier of the fundamental human need of understanding which also affects the access to satisfiers of other needs as well as the actualization of other needs. Education affects the access to employment which affects the actualization of subsistence needs.

3.5.1 School education

In the USA day labourers in the Washington area were the best educated, though only slightly better than in Los Angeles and New York. In Washington DC (Valenzuela et. al. 2005:1) the majority of day labourers had access to formal school education: 50% to middle school education (0 to six years); 10% had between seven and eight years of formal education and 30% had nine to twelve years of education. In Japan the level of
education amongst the day labourers was the highest and most consistent. In Japan 97% had completed junior high school and a third had also completed high school (Valenzuela & Melendez 2003:1,5; Valenzuela, Kawachi & Marr 2003:204).

In Elardus Park and Windhoek the level of education was slightly lower than in the USA. However, in many ways it was similar to that in the USA with the exception of the fact that there was a larger number who had completed 10 years of schooling. There were a number of day labourers with at least 10 years and more of education indicates that lack of education is not the only or most important reason, for having to resort to day labour as a means of employment (Gonzo & Plattner 2003:48).

Many day labourers in Elardus Park and Windhoek mentioned that they had not continued with their education due to poverty and in Windhoek as many as 78% indicated that they would still like to continue their education (Gonzo & Plattner 2003:48; Schenck & Louw 2005:90). Some mentioned that they left school to try to find employment to supplement the family income. A day labourer commented as follows: “I am the eldest of four children. I had to leave school in grade seven to find work to help my grandmother to support the family because my parents were unemployed” (Schenck & Louw 2005:90).

A significant number actually mentioned being too hungry to go to or concentrate at school (Schenck & Louw 2005:90). The situation in Windhoek was very similar to Elardus Park. The educational level of the day labourers was concentration at the low end of the scale and a significant concentration at the relatively high end of school education. Economic poverty as a reason for day labourers discontinuing their education, illustrates how poverty can perpetuate poverty (Gonzo & Plattner 2003:48).

3.5.2 Vocational and skills training

Vocational and skills training are closely related to levels of formal education.
Gonzo and Plattner (2003:47) commented that 38% of the day labourers in Windhoek had actually reached a level of formal school education that qualified them for occupational training. In the existing studies the extent of vocational and skills training of day labourers has received limited attention. In Japan and the USA close to 40% of the day labourers indicated that they were skilled or had some form of training in construction or related areas whereas in Windhoek it was half that number. (Valenzuela & Melendez 2003:9; Valenzuela; Kawachi & Marr 2003:201; Gonzo & Plattner 2003:48).

Generally the day labourers seem to include a large proportion who are unskilled and marginally skilled and are mostly available as unskilled labour dependent on their physical strength and ability (Lunan 2003).

The lack of adequate satisfiers for meeting the fundamental human need of understanding, does not only create a poverty of understanding but, because of its interrelatedness with other satisfiers, other poverties like the poverty of subsistence are likely to be present in the lives of many day labourers.

(The education and vocational and skills training of the day labourers at informal hiring sites in Tshwane was covered in Section C of Questionnaire (appendix 1) and the findings are presented in chapter six (6 section 2.2.10).

3.6 Daily living conditions

As indicated above most day labourers are not of local origin and are not very well educated and equipped for the formal labour market. Questions arise as to their day to day existence and survival. How do they meet the subsistence needs of shelter, food and water in their new places of abode?
3.6.1 Abode/shelter/housing

Shelter fulfills an aspect of the fundamental human need for subsistence. It means having a place to live that serves as a shield or protection from danger and bad weather. In the context of this study it is a place from which a day labourer can go to hiring sites to look for employment enabling him to live and sleep.

He tried to picture the man’s life- cramped room, the bag of second-rate oranges on the street corner, the spade and the hoe and cold mashed beans dug out of the forty-nine cent can...[C]amping. Living. Dwelling. Making trees and bushes and the natural habitat of Topanga State Park into his own private domicile, crapping in the chapparal, dumping his trash behind rocks, polluting the stream and ruining it for everyone else. That was state property down there, rescued from the developers and their bulldozers and set aside for the use of the public, for nature, not for some outdoor ghetto. And what about fire danger? He remembered his first trip to the North, hotbedding in a two-room apartment in Echo Park with thirty two other men, sleeping in shifts and lining up on the street corner for work, the reek of the place, the roaches and the nits...

(Boyle 1995:10-11, 26).

Most day labourers have a place they refer to as home with which they have connections and that, in the past, provided them with basic shelter and the experience of belonging. In most instances therefore, except in Tokyo, they do not meet he criteria for homelessness, although they may experience temporary homelessness. Cross (2005) reporting on a study by the HSRC (Human Science Research Council, South Africa) on homelessness referred to it as “sleeping rough, in shacks or shelters” and people “perceive themselves as homeless associated with behaviour of disassociation and disconnectedness”. Valenzuela et. al. (2002:200) mention that the day labourers in Tokyo are a community of impoverished, homeless, graying men desperate for work. Gill (2001) mentions that they are disconnected from family structures, mostly unmarried and living alone. Government and other welfare organisations have created shelters
where many of them live, including many who no longer go to hiring sites in search of employment.

In Los Angeles and Southern California five percent of day labourers could be regarded as technically homeless while the rest, who are not living at home and mostly not with their families, are paying for some type of shelter. In New York a third of the respondents did not have permanent housing, were living in over crowded conditions of ten people to an apartment or slept under highway overpasses, in parks or shelters and were regarded as homeless. In Washington 58% indicated that they live within 15 minutes of the hiring site without describing their living conditions (Valenzuela et. al. 2005:7; Valenzuela & Melendez 2003:5; Valenzuela in Cleeland 1999).

The conditions of housing and shelter of day labourers in Windhoek are only alluded to. Only 17% of the men with partners or families see them daily, indicating that they do not live at home. Many mentioned that the only support they receive from extended families is somewhere to sleep (Gonzo & Plattner 2003:61). Information on South African day labourers is mainly anecdotal. Day labourers in Elardus Park shared with us the information that some of them sleep in the open under bushes along the Wolwespruit. During the day some bury their few possessions in the scrub. A man was found alongside the Wolwespruit awho had built himself an underground shelter complete with a battery powered TV set, a carpet and hanging wall decorations. He had been residing there for some years. Some day labourers sleep at construction sites with relatives or friends or with wives or girlfriends who are sleep-in domestic helpers or at any other available shelter (Schenck & Louw 2005:87. 90). Woihe (2005:8) in the newspaper “Tshwane Beeld” referred to unemployed, “sluip slapers” (illegal sleepers) sleeping in the open. They have also been referred to as “bosslapers” (Those sleeping amongst the bushes).

Not only is a place to sleep important but quality of sleep is also. In Windhoek at least 35% of the respondents have sleeping difficulties. Gonzo and Plattner (2003:80)
quote a day labourer saying “I think a lot so I do not sleep well ... some nights I lie awake thinking what I should do to get a job, or where to get money whenever there is no food in the house.”

For most of the day labourers continuous change seems to characterise their shelter as they keep moving to whatever is available. The shelter to which they have access has a marginalising effect on family and other social relationships characterized mostly by disassociation and disconnectedness of homelessness. Not having adequate shelter has a systemic effect and affects the actualisation of other fundamental human needs; it is difficult to feed, rest and interact meaningfully and to regularly to build and maintain relationships to satisfy needs of protection, idleness (recreation) identity, affection and participation. Not having adequate shelter implies not having a fixed physical address which has identity and participation implications.

3.6.2 Access to food and water

Food and water are two of the most basic of subsistence satisfiers. When these satisfiers are absent over an extended period, people experience extreme poverty. “Hunger is perhaps the most extreme expression of poverty as the most basic bodily needs are not met” (Ndungane 2004:199). It depletes physical strength, the day labourers’ primary capital needed to earn a living. Their hunger could also be a physiological response of the body to what is essentially a psychological need for the satisfaction of the need for protection, participation and identity.

Valenzuela (1999:19) explains that under normal formal labour market conditions, food and water are readily available either at a factory cafeteria or close by, but that day labourers often have to work under conditions where there is no access to water and food at the work place or close by. This can be regarded as a form of abuse.

Three quarters of the population of day labourers in Windhoek reported that they
were always hungry. Many went for days without a proper meal due to lack of money in spite of the hard manual work performed by them when they had a job. (Gonzo & Plattner 2003:65).

Many also did not have anything to drink while on the streets in spite of the hot and dry Namibian climate. Even though relatives and friends might provide shelter, food was not necessarily shared, due to their own poverty. As someone said: "I can only watch as they quickly and secretly consume their food" (Gonzo & Plattner 2003:64-66). The situation in Elardus Park was equally desperate. About 60% had only one meal a day. Food was often shared. If one of a group managed to secure employment on a particular day, he would buy food to be shared. Some mentioned that they sometimes bought home brewed beer if they had only a small amount of money. This would ease hunger pains better than a little food. The beer was made by some of the women living with the men in the open. Men sleeping rough got water for drinking and cooking from the local garage. Some told us about leaking water pipes along Wolwespruit that provided water for washing (Schenck & Louw 2005:92).

In Elardus Park a number of concerned residents who wanted to organise food distribution encountered different attitudes about accepting food. Many day labourers were suspicious and reluctant to accept the food. They felt it was degrading as it might be left-overs or it might be poisoned. Whole or unbroken food was more acceptable, e.g. unopened bread, milk in unopened containers or canned food. Local day labourers assumed that foreigners, especially Mozambicans, were willing to accept food because it enabled them to save money that could be sent home. This offered a possible explanation for local residents’ experience that a good plate of food that given to a day labourer could be thrown in the refuse bin (Schenck & Louw 2005:92).

The daily living conditions and experiences of the day labourers at informal hiring sites in Tshwane was covered in Section C of Questionnaire (appendix 1) and the findings are presented in chapter six (6 sections 2.2.9 & 2.2.10).
4  THE SOCIAL INTERACTION OF DAY LABOURERS

4.1  Introduction

This section is about the coexistence of day labourers with other people and their social organisation. There is very little readily available information on the social aspects of day labourers’ lives. Most studies on day labourers relate to their general profile and economic situation. The social information accessed is very diverse and rather general, anecdotal, unconnected and seemingly contradictory.

To try to understand a little of the social relationships of the day labourers and social behavior it may be useful to think in terms of a configuration of circles within circles with the day labourer in the centre.

FIGURE 3: SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS OF DAY LABOURERS
Chapter 4: The day labourer: a social perspective

This is in line with the following propositions of Rogers' Person Centred Approach: Every individual exists in a continually changing world of experience of which he is the centre.

The literature indicates that day labourers seem to be involved in the following levels of social interactions:

- Society and the general public;
- The hiring site. This includes social interaction amongst the day labourers themselves and between the day labourers and employers;
- Their families.

It is not possible to separate and present the information according to these categories, as the different authors consulted and referred to in this section had different objectives and had very little comparable information. Turnovsky's (2004) observations include only those relations at hiring sites whereas the other authors consulted refer to a larger net of work relations. Turnovsky's observations are therefore presented first, followed by a separate section with the other information.

4.2 Turnovsky's description of the social relations of day labourers at an informal hiring site

Turnovsky's (2004) observations of the hiring site in Brooklyn, New York were presented as an introductory case study (section 2.1.1) of this chapter. In this section the social relations observed will be focused on and discussed.

Day labourers of the hiring site in Brooklyn, New York are very visible to the public. Some people are aware of them and stand in relation to them based on different degrees of proximity. Some such as employers and people from organizations may be in direct interaction with them, while others like residents and businesses located close by may be very aware of the day labourers but have little or no social interaction with them.
Turnovsky (2004:5-6) explains that all these people have perceptions that affect the lives of day labourers.

These perceptions are related to nationality, ethnicity, residential status and often singular experiences that have become generalised. These perceptions and the perceptions that day labourers have of themselves and one another are significant in the organisation and relationships of the hiring site and affect the lives and especially the employment of the day labourers.

The perceptions formed by the public around this hiring site are both positive and negative. Common negative public perceptions about day labourers are that they are: looking for work on the street corner; living in the open like many of the homeless; illegal residents; probably in conflict with the law; possibly criminals and uneducated, cheap labour and mostly Mexican.

Among employers and the day labourers themselves a perception of a “good or real” day labourer also exists. “A good or real” day labourer is always a man, illegal and desperate, hardworking, a fast worker, obedient, skilled at working with his hands, just trying to feed his family, sometimes described as Hispanic, but always as Mexican. This perception is mostly to the advantage of the Mexicans and those mistaken as Mexican (Turnovsky 2004:6).

The Mexicans perceive themselves as being the preferred group. Their perceptions of other day labourers are that they are at the hiring site for the same reason they are; that all have an equal chance for getting work and that everyone stays with his own (ethnic) group in his own place. The Mexicans do not speak to the Russians. Their perception is that the Russians do not like them, because the gringos (Spanish for foreigners especially British or North American) look for Mexicans first. The Mexicans say employers complain that Russians do not work hard, whereas they, the Mexicans, are very hard working and reliable (Turnovsky 2004:6). Employers seem to
share the Mexicans’ opinion of their ability to work hard. Their illegal status is not a problem with regard to employing them, but that does not imply assisting them in other ways.

On the one hand a Mexican man or Mexican looking man is assigned a top spot in the hiring queue, but on the other he remains at the bottom of society’s larger social order and at the bottom of the economic order because it is assumed that it remains more difficult for them than USA citizens to get regular employment in the formal economy (Turnovsky 2004:7).

Each ethnic group of labourers has a clearly distinguishable way of presenting themselves. The Mexicans as "regulars" at the hiring site pass the time reading the newspaper, speaking to one another or playing cards. They are rarely heard speaking English (Turnovsky 2004:7).

The “temps”, who are USA citizens and African-Americans, dress and speak according to the latest trends of the local urban youth culture. They pass the time in a more animated way than the “regulars”. They yell at passing cars and trucks. Their voices are loud, they jump around a lot and speak English.

The employers and “regulars” perceive the “temps” as irresponsible, dishonest, young, taking drugs, lazy, unskilled, proud and troublemakers. The “temps” do not conform to the stereotype of a typical day labourer and this makes them undesirable. Temps are perceived as being unable to do day labour. Their chances of finding work are thus limited and often unsuccessful. The “regulars” are intolerant of these “Young Americans” who they think do not understand the way of living of the poor because the “regulars’ perceptions are that as USA citizens they should be able to work anywhere. If they do not, they are probably undesirable as workers. Their efforts to maintain a work ethic does not seem to be recognized. The “temps’ perceptions’ are that although they speak English, their objective of making extra cash during summer is not recognised as
equally valid as the "regulars" motivation because they do not get jobs easily. The employers prefer Mexicans and Poles possibly because they are illegal immigrants and can pay anything. "Temps" want to make extra money and accept jobs that are not too labor intensive, shortlived and command good pay. Their English proficiency is not an advantage in the same way as lack of English proficiency is regarded as a disadvantage for immigrants. Their fluency is a discernable symbol of their nationality making them undesirable. The Afro-American day labourers are thus marginalised by regulars and employers. The "temps" are overlooked as a population of persons who are part of the working poor.

It appears as if all Latinos are not regarded as equal. Latino immigrants form two distinct groups. Mexicans and Ecuadorians constitute the first group and Panamanians and Colombians, who are mostly black men, form the second group. Skin colour and race become deciding indicators of nationality and culture. "Regulars" who are Latino immigrants, but also black, are excluded from the top of the hiring queue. With the African Americans they are often relegated to the bottom. The Latinos actually lost status if they lacked their cultural distinctiveness.

Turnovsky (2004:10) observed that there seemed to be a leader amongst the young black Latinos. He was an older man from Panama and acted as a foreman and spokesman for them. He explained that these men demonstrated their identity by their movements and physical positioning on the street corner. They separated themselves physically from the "temps" and stood closer to the Mexicans to mark themselves as the desired workers for potential employers. They often also took the trouble to distinguish themselves by wearing clothes (caps or T-shirts with a Panamanian flag or a soccer jersey from Colombia's national team) with national symbols.

At the hiring site in Brooklyn New York employers selected workers who appear to be Mexican or ask someone previously employed to find them some more workers. This places importance on ethnic social networks.
Just as employers construct a preference queue of day labourers, day labourers influence the hiring process by constructing their own queue for the employers based on previous experiences, stereotypes and cultural beliefs. Many of the men compete for jobs, based not only on pay or task but on recommendations made by other day labourers. Sometimes this is based only on the ethnicity and race of the potential employer. The Latinos prefer working for Chinese, who were said to pay better. When sought-after employers, like the Chinese or Americans stop their cars, all swarm around them, where if Hasidic men and Hispanic employers or other undesirable employers, who are lower on the hiring queue, arrive, those that can afford to refuse work quietly disperse.

This description by Turnovsky provides a valuable perspective on perceptions as they affect social interaction and how these in turn affect relationships and ultimately the accessing of employment by day labourers.

4.3 The social relations of day labourers at other informal hiring sites

The day labourer is in relationship with different groupings of people that affecting his life. These will be outlined in the following section.

4.3.1 The general public and society

In spite of their ubiquity, people in many places seem unaware of day labourers. They may see men hanging around but are unaware that their presence means that they are seeking employment. They also know very little about them and may not have had any personal contact with them. Gonzo and Plattner's (2003:7) following statement seems to be widely applicable:

"It seems that many people living in Namibia do not know much about these men, who they are and what they intend to do when sitting on the pavements of the street."
In contrast people from businesses and residents near hiring sites are very aware of the
day labourers but have minimal direct interaction and know very little about them (Nel
2007).

However this does not mean that the general public is without any perception of
the opinions that are expressed and actions taken. Japanese society has two sets of
contradictory perceptions about day labourers. On the one hand there is the perception
of the “noble outcast”, which is a very strong myth; on the other, some Japanese react
to day labourers with disgust and physical violence (Gill 2001).

The general perception of day labourers everywhere seems to be as described
by Turnovsky (2004:3 This is supported by a web page “Day Laborers” (2006) referring
to Farmingville, Long Island, New York which mentions “that of the most violent
murderers, rapists and child abusers are illegal aliens who work as day laborers.” What
is distinctive in the USA is the perception that the day labourers are mostly Mexican
(Branigan 2003, Valenzuela & Theodore 2005; Sharpe 2005; Wagner 2005). In Namibia
because of the low employment of day labourers they are perceived as lazy and
unproductive (Gonzo & Plattner 2003:7). In South Africa with the conditions of high
illegal immigration, unemployment, housing shortages and crime, day labourers are
perceived as illegal immigrants, sleeping rough (bosslapers) squatting and involved in,
or masking the presence of crime and a threat to safety. Their presence arouses
suspicion, discomfort and fear in the local residents (Schenck & Louw 2005:93; Nel
2007:85).

Gonzo and Plattner (2003:97) draw attention to the fact that the day labourers are
aware that they are perceived extremely negatively. They experience this through the
media, letters in news papers and chat shows that express mostly negative perceptions
of day labourers and through their underpayment implying their lack of value.
These negative perceptions and attitudes in society are also expressed in violent attacks against immigrant workers (Mangaliman 2005), being sworn at and being told to go home (Gonzo & Plattner 2003:7).

In the USA the attitudes and perceptions of the people have become concrete in legal issues and the development of public policy. On the one hand there are efforts at the prohibition of day labour and on the other there are organized efforts at immigrant and workplace protection and the creation of official or community-based hiring sites. These assistance efforts attempt more and less successfully to accommodate the needs of both day labourers and local residents and businesses. Some day labourers find the organised responses acceptable and make use of them, whereas others prefer not to make use of the centres. Likewise, some citizens complain that labourers loiter around the hiring centres, may be drunk and cause disturbances. Immigrants without documents may be especially reluctant to work with any government-based assistance agency. Society's efforts in responding to the presence and plight of day labourers is again referred to in the recommendations in chapter twelve (12).

Attitudes and perceptions are an important part of the context affecting the everyday experiences and existence of day labourers. The experiences of the day labourers individually and collectively affect their attitudes towards themselves and the attitudes and perceptions they have of others. How others perceive and act towards them is part of their experience of how they perceive themselves and their position in the community.

In the 2004 labour survey in Washington it was also established that many day labourers are active members of the local community. More than half are involved with churches, a little more than a quarter are members of worker centres, about a fifth participate in organised sport, some others frequent consulate offices, are members of home town and neighbourhood associations and frequent community-based organisations (Valenzuela et. al. 2005:7). To what extent this is the case elsewhere is
unknown. This type of integration into the community seems possible where the fundamental subsistence needs are adequately met.

4.3.2 Social relations related to hiring sites

These social relations are represented by circle two (Fig. 3) and include businesses, residents and employers of day labourers. Hiring sites are situated both in business and residential areas and elicit situation-specific responses.

- Businesses

People connected to businesses near hiring sites mostly experience the presence of day labourers negatively and complain about their presence (Partlow 2005). Fears exit that the large groups of men will drive customers away - especially single women (Hatcher 2004). Some maintain that customers complain and that business actually dwindles (Hendricks 2004; Schenck & Louw 2005). Unsanitary conditions have developed with day labourers urinating in the nearby woods and littering (Wagner 2005). Some businesses even call the police to deal with the situation.

On the other hand some businesses accommodate day labourers and build relationships with them as they maintain that their presence offers protection (Schenck & Louw 2005). Business community representatives at a meeting in Freehold, NJ. said that the immigrants were essential to the areas’ economy-particularly the restaurant, construction and landscaping businesses (Perez 2004). Sympathetic business people may offer day labourers jobs they do not really have but at a low wage. They cannot comprehend why such offers are not taken up and appreciated.

- Residents

As illustrated in the case study of a hiring site, in the main residents everywhere
feel threatened and are suspicious of the presence of day labourers (Schenck & Louw 2005:93) even though they try to be accommodating:

They are our neighbors, and I don’t want to shoo them out of the area, but I’d rather not have them seeking work in my neighbourhood. My wife doesn’t feel safe walking to the grocery store or the park.

(Hendricks 2004)

Residents’ complaints are similar to those made by businesses. In addition they mention that day labourers cause traffic problems, are noisy and sometimes disorderly, urinated in public, whistled at women passing by and left trash in the area. They are suspected of being involved in or masking the presence of crime (Rivera & Wiseman 2003, Woithe (2005:8). Often heard is a complaint that a high concentration of day labourers seems to make the neighbourhood less attractive to prospective home buyers and businesses.

Sympathetic residents offer food and are offended by refusals to take the food or, if the food is trashed, do not understand the cultural values and suspicions of the day labourers.

In her study on the perceptions of people affecting and affected by the day labourers at three hiring sites in Tshwane, Nel (2007) found that all the above findings were also applicable.

- Employers

Employers may include residents, local business people and contractors. Very little information exists on employers’ perceptions of their relationships and experiences of day labourers while a number of different studies have covered the day labourers’ version of the experience. This is discussed in chapter five (5).
From informal observations and passing comments by people the conclusion is drawn that there seems to be a perception among employers in Elardus Park that employing an unknown day labourer from a hiring site is a risk. One risk is that the day labourer may not be as skilled as he claims to be, but out of desperation for work takes a chance and says that he can do what the prospective employer wants. Because of day labourers' lack of proficiency in English and Afrikaans and most employers' lack of proficiency in the spoken African languages and lack of knowledge and understanding each others' cultures, there is enormous potential for frustration and misunderstanding and an intensification of stereotypes.

Like the day labourer interviewed by Turnovsky the day labourers in Elardus Park had stigmatised the employers of different cultural groups as follows:

- Afrikaans people paid better than the Greeks and the Indians, but they are lazy. They pay well because they are too lazy to do things themselves;

- The Greeks and the Indians are greedy and stubborn;

- The English think they are clever and have very high expectations

- African employers tend to be worse than white employers. They allegedly force day labourers to work harder for less pay, they do not provide lunch nor transport back to the site when the job is finished (Schenck & Louw 2005:92-3; Xipu:2004).

- A Zimbabwean day labourer in Elardus Park said that when they find out that you are a foreigner many employers pay you less (Personal communication 2007).

The day labourers are aware and appreciative of efforts to assist them, but “what
we really need is more opportunities to work for better wages" (Schenck & Louw 2005:94).

4.3.3 Relationships with fellow day labourers

- Friendships

The literature has presented two different perceptions of relationships amongst day labourers. Some authors found that friendships among day labourers are important. They look to one another for companionship, camaraderie, advice and support. Friendships, co-dependence, ethnic loyalty and other forms of networking help day labourers get employment, provide mutual support, assist with housing transportation and food (Valenzuela 2000:9; 2001a:345; Schenck & Louw 2005). There also seem to be situations where day labourers tend to operate more individually. Maisel (Beeld 17-8-2004:12) from MSR claimed that from his experience with day labourers friendships seldom develop among the day labourers in Cape Town due to the fierce competition for jobs at the hiring sites. They remain very solitary and in need of outsiders to assist with facilitating contact and organisation. This was also encountered by Valenzuela et. al. (2005:14) who they quote a day labourer as saying: "Sometimes we fight for work ... here it's every man for himself". It seems that when the economy slows down or employment opportunities decline, competition increases among day labourers. Amongst themselves workers often establish minimum wages for that site and they are nearly always higher than the state minimum wage (Valenzuela 2000:9; 2001a:345). Out of desperation for work workers may also improve their job opportunities by undercutting informally agreed upon minimum wages. When workers in their desperation for work agree to work for less others are upset and this causes conflict, because it devalues the work for all (Hendricks 2004). It also appears that at organised and formal hiring sites where a practice of job allocation has developed, the isolating competition is eliminated and companionship and camaraderie becomes more pronounced.
• Group organisation

As already described by Turnovsky most day labourers seem to be part of a group. Groups seem to be formed around place of origin, marital status and age and may therefore differ markedly from one another. Groups seem quite closed and a new person enters through acquaintance with an existing member. The groups provide members with physical, emotional, economic and social support which contributes to their survival. They reported caring for each during illness, e.g. collecting to pay for medical care, calling an ambulance, informing family. One day labourer commented:

Out there life is not easy and you cannot survive on your own. We stay in groups and look after one another. If someone lacks food because he has not picked up a job, we share with him. Luck changes and we may be on the receiving end next time.

(Schenck & Louw 2005:87).

They also gather as groups at different points at the hiring site from which they solicit employment. Positions are taken according to who arrives first on a particular day (Schenck & Louw 2005:87). The general nature of the social interaction and activities at different hiring sites differ as illustrated in the case studies.

Turnovsky described how the activities of different groups at a single hiring site also differ and is affected by their position on the hiring queue. It seems that the higher a group is on the hiring queue the more relaxed they seem to be. The groups lower on the hiring queue seem to take more action to draw the attention of prospective employers. Omar Sierra, a Latino day labourer in Los Angeles and member of a band comprising of day labourers, explained:
What do we do while we are waiting for work on the corner every morning? We are learning to live with each other, telling jokes and stories, playing games, arguing about football—a hundred interactions. We are learning to organize ourselves to the rhythm of our happiness and our sadness. We are creating a culture of liberation

(Bacon undated).

- Leadership

As described by Turnovsky it appears quite common that, a particular day labourer in a group serves as spokesperson. Valenzuela (Cleeland 1999) made a similar comment about hiring sites in Southern Californian where the veterans in terms of age and experience as played an important role, often serving as brokers or middlemen parceling out work to reliable friends and acquaintances.

- Relationships with other groups of day labourers

Among the South African day labourers at Elardus Park there was intense xenophobia. They refer to Mozambicans as “Makirikrampas” and Zimbabweans as “Makwerekweres” (derogatory onomatopoeic versions of ‘Mozambicans’ and ‘Matabele—Zimbabwean tribe). A common sentiment is that in a labour market with such high unemployment, low and unskilled workers are doing them out of jobs. They were suspicious of foreigners and blamed them for crime. Because Mozambicans are prepared to work for very low wages, they make it very difficult for locals to negotiate reasonable wages (Schenck and Louw 2005:91).

4.3.4 Family connections and contact

Consistent with their overall youthfulness slightly more than half of all the day labourers, except in Tokyo and Windhoek, have never been married or in a union that
could be considered as a marriage relationship. In Tokyo, where the men are on average much older, closer to two thirds have never been married. (Valenzuela et. al. 2002:203). Valenzuela et. al. (2002:203) do not explain why such a large number of the Tokyo day labourers, although older, have never been married. Gil (2001) explains it as being part of marginalization. He states that Japanese day labourers are marginalised men living a marginal existence because they are disconnected from mainstream society, disconnected from family structure, unmarried and living alone.

In Windhoek the percentage of married day labourers was less than in the USA (Valenzuela et. al. 2005:6; Valenzuela & Melendez 2003:i, 5; Schenck & Louw 2005:89; Gonzo & Plattner 2003:50). These men primarily supported themselves. A slightly smaller number than those supporting themselves was married and contributing to a larger household. It was interesting to note that in Elardus Park marital status was one of the criteria around which group formation took place (Schenck & Louw 2005).

In the areas where parental status was identified it seems that between 65% and 80% of the day labourers were fathers who contribute to supporting immediate and extended family as well as themselves (Valenzuela et. al. 2005:6; Gonzo & Plattner 2003:51; Schenck & Louw 2005:89).

What is known about day labourers in general is that they mostly perceive themselves as connected to their families although the majority has little direct contact with them. Most see themselves as responsible and family oriented men who assist family members or friends in the country of origin (Valenzuela et. al. 2005:5; Valenzuela & Melendez 2003:ii; Schenck & Louw 2005:89). It is said of them that "They have a great responsibility and need to work twice as hard to feed their families here and send money to their families in Mexico" (Banish 2005). Valenzuela (2000) commented that these unskilled men came to Los Angeles to make money to send back home. They did not want to be perceived as bad and lazy. In Elardus Park the day labourers explained that they were responsible and wanted to support their families who were living on the
pensions of an elderly or disabled family member. They were as aggrieved by the fact that local residents viewed them as possible criminals (Schenck & Louw 2005:93). It is this perception of connectedness that distinguishes them from fitting in with the definition of “homelessness”.

In Elardus Park it was found that most day labourers maintain contact with their families but felt that relationships are under stress due to inadequate income and distance from home. It is better to be on the streets trying to earn an income than at home where people are struggling. Because most of the day labourers are not living at home family relationships may have been reduced to financial contributions and infrequent and irregular visits.

Gonzo and Plattner (2003:51-2) also found that family relationships are placed under threat. Unemployment and life as day labourers means that many men see their wives or partners and children as little as once or twice a year. This contributes to the destruction of the family: spouses are separated for long periods, men have negative perceptions of themselves as husbands and fathers and providers. Fathers are unable to provide for their families and children are growing up poor and fatherless. Without drastic change, this situation is most likely to perpetuate the vicious circle of inadequate education and unemployment. Hishongwa (Gonzo & Plattner 2003:95) remarks that in Namibia’s colonial past (Namibia was a colony of Germany) it was the employment through the contract system that separated fathers from the families, now it is unemployment and poverty and resultant migration and day labour which is destroying families.

Connection to families or friends already in the urban areas is often given as reasons for entering the day labour market. Gonzo & Plattner (2003:66) found that in Windhoek more than half the day labourers had been assisted by relatives and friends with accommodation but considerably less had received assistance with food, money and employment possibilities. They pose the question whether this lack of support is
indicative of the breakdown of African traditional support systems or whether it can be understood in the context of the very high cost of living in Windhoek, high unemployment and the poverty of relatives.

Although it plays a role in their survival the social support system of the extended family and community cannot provide all the necessary support due to over-utilisation and too few resources.

4.3.5 How day labourers present themselves

Turnovsky (2004) observed that at the hiring site in Brooklyn, New York, different ethnic groups presented themselves differently. There does not seem to be any record of similar observations elsewhere. Overall, day labourers present themselves in clothes suitable for manual labour (Valenzuela 2005:2; Valenzuela 1999:1; Siegel 2003; Xipu:2005). For example painters may wear work clothes covered with blotches of paint and hold or display painting tools.

At some hiring sites in the early morning men are likely to be standing in groups sipping coffee, chatting and waiting patiently. At other sites many lean against the wall and at others sit around. Yet at others they gesticulate in an effort to attract prospective employers’ attention.

5 CHAPTER REVIEW

This chapter presented a social perspective on day labourers as a largely unknown population who, when they are noticed at informal hiring sites are seen as jobseekers or unemployed.

Various terms used to refer to day labourers and the different meanings attached to the word “day labourer” were explained. Hiring sites are an extremely effective device
for bringing together prospective employers and day labourers.

Day labourers have been present for many centuries in many countries, cities and towns. They are mostly relatively young migrant men from poorer areas and countries. Their numbers decrease as age increases. They are comparatively poorly educated with limited skills training and are prepared to live in poor conditions and perform mainly physical labour dangerous in unprotected conditions exposing them to abuse.

The social relations of day labourers related to hiring sites include relationships with their families from whom many are separated, fellow day labourers and people affected by and affecting the hiring site including businesses, residents and employers of day labourers.

Day labourers are men both legally and socially on the margins of civil society and stigmatized by the public. In chapter five (5) their economic marginalisation will be further exposed.
CHAPTER 5

DAY LABOURERS AT INFORMAL HIRING SITES:
A work and employment perspective

The action that takes place at an informal hiring site is visibly economic, but all of the practices, seen and unseen are social in nature. Turnovsky (2004:14).

1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter the social nature of practices at hiring sites was described. In this chapter the economic actions, related to work and employment, will receive attention. To describe day labourers from a work and employment perspective implies a difference in the meanings of work and employment.

In terms of the South African labour market Barker (2007: xvii) explains that employment refers to a state where:

[a] ll persons 15 years and older who during a specified period (for example seven days) have worked for five or more hours for a wage or salary or for profit or family gain, in cash or in kind. The self employed are included, as are persons who have been temporarily absent from work but still have a formal job attachment.

Max-Neef et. al. (1989:59-66) explain that work is more than employment. Employment is “a state of rendering services in return for payment” (Oxford Dictionary 1990 sv “employment”). Employment is limited to a salaried relationship subordinated to capital, whereas work is a force which mobilises social potentialities. Besides being a generator of income work also has qualitative dimensions. The Oxford Dictionary (1990 sv “work”) explains that work refers to the action, the application of energy, mental or
physical effort to a purpose, and to the result of an action, an achievement or a thing made. Work may also refer to the active part in a bigger whole, as in a clock work mechanism. This action, energy, purpose, result, achievement and inclusiveness affects the quality of people's lives, not only through the income it provides but also because of its potential to simultaneously be a satisfier of a number of fundamental human needs. As such work is a catalyst of social energies. The social potentialities mobilized by work include creativity, social interaction, communal identity, and solidarity/participation. Work also utilizes organisational experience and popular knowledge and satisfies individual and collective needs. Work is more than just a resource for income, it is a generator of numerous resources.

However, income generating work, whether as money or in kind, is a critical satisfier in the actualizing of subsistence needs. Through work a person can have water, food and shelter and also be in a position to (do) feed, work, rest and procreate. Work also makes it possible to have protection, and have and do creative action and have identity. Work has a circular effect; it affects the entire system of fundamental human needs influencing their actualisation. It can thus be argued that the absence of work, unemployment, has a systemic effect, affecting the actualisation of all the fundamental human needs, not only subsistence needs. Frankl (1968:120) stated that “the existential importance of work is most clearly seen where work is entirely eliminated from a person's life as in unemployment.”

A work and employment perspective on the day labourer implies describing the day labourer, his actions (application of energy), and the results of his action, his work relationships, employment conditions, his wages and quality of life in terms of actualisation of fundamental human needs.

Day labourers at hiring sites are one particular group of men engaged in the informal sector of the economy, or unemployed and outside of the economy, who, in
Chapter 5. Day labourers at informal hiring sites: work and employment perspective

spite of their ubiquity, are relatively unknown. Not only are they statistically unaccounted for but, relatively little is specifically known about them. Society has placed them at the margins socially and economically.

Most of the information about day labourers and employers is from the USA, as was indicated in the previous chapter, most of the day labourers are Latino immigrants, legal and illegal, whereas it seems from the limited data available day labourers in South Africa are residents and relatively young rural-urban migrants.

Although the USA and South African economies differ greatly in terms of rates of unemployment, initial comparisons made during visits and of available literature show similarities that make cognizance of the USA situation potentially useful.

2 HIRING SITES: ECONOMIC PERSPECTIVE

2.1 Introduction

The hiring site and the workplace are the main contexts of the economic interaction between the day labourer and the employer. The hiring site is unique to the day labourer and the workplace is common to all workers. In chapter four (4) the social dynamics among day labourers and the wider social context, accompanying the economic action at the hiring site was described. In this chapter hiring sites will be described primarily as market-places of economic activity, devices employed to gain employment.

2.2 Description

The place by the roadside in cities and towns where unemployed men congregate, especially during the early morning, hoping to sell their labour for the day
Chapter 5. Day labourers at informal hiring sites: work and employment perspective

for various, but usually physically strenuous jobs in return for wages is referred to in different terms. In the USA these market places, where labour is supplied and bought according to demand, are called “hiring sites” (Valenzuela), “labour exchange” in The Tortilla curtain (Boyle1995:27), “street corner labour markets” (Turnovsky 2004:1) “shape up sites” (Leonardo & O'Shea in Valenzuela & Melendez 2003:2). In Japan they are referred to as “yoseba” (Gill 2001; Valenzuela et. al. 2002:200) and in Cape Town as “waiting sites” (Maisel in Reynolds 2003:2).

2.3 History of informal hiring sites across the world

Historical references to day labourers standing at different places waiting to be employed are interesting and reveal that since ancient times economies since ancient times in different cultures have spawned day labourers because of gaps between the rich and the poor.

2.3.1 Middle East and Greece

In the Middle East day labourers have been known since ancient times. Referring to a well-known labour practice in Israel of the New Testament, The Bible in Matthew 20:1-7 tells the parable of the day labourers waiting all day in the market square to be hired. Valenzuela (1999:2) mentions that records exist that mention that in Athens in the fifth century a special part of the agora was set aside specifically as a hiring site for unemployed men to meet and participate in day labour transactions.

In Baghdad day labourers waiting for work still seem to be a common practice. On the 16th of August 2006 it was reported that “one bomb exploded late in the morning near day labourers waiting for work” (Rageh 2006:1).
2.3.2 Japan

Valenzuela et. al. (2002:98) tell the history of day labour in Japan and specifically Tokyo and compares it with the situation in the USA. The history of Japanese day labour can be traced back many centuries and shows the active participation of day labourers in the development of Japan's economy. One explanation is that day labourers in Japan emerged from the culture of serfdom and slavery, which had been nominally abolished. As early as the ninth century, "hinin" meaning "non-people" who had lost their citizenship because of non-payment of rice taxes were removed from village registers and were forced to rely on daily or short term menial labour. Their history is that of a continuous struggle between free workers attempting to express their autonomy and civil authorities seeking to control them.

The more contemporary history of day labourers in Japan is that in the early 1600s the demand for day labour in construction and infrastructure development increased. Day labourers were employed for jobs like cart pulling, rice polishing and fire fighting in Edo (now Tokyo). Later in the Edo era (1600-1867) rural migrants flocked to Edo as day labourers. During this time there were many open air hiring sites where employers negotiated job terms directly with workers. Gradually sophisticated systems of guilds and private employment go-betweens emerged that provided construction firms with organised channels through which they could access manual labour. These hiring sites and go-betweens as well as places of lodging developed in San'ya, Tokyo's largest "yoseba “ or day labour ghetto.

Day labour in Tokyo began as an unregulated enterprise dictated by market forces. By the early 1900s local government and philanthropic organisations, realising the wretched living and working conditions of day labourers, intervened. In 1907 the Salvation Army created a job introduction service and soon the Tokyo metropolitan government established the AKUSA WARD Shokugyou Shoukaishou, a public
Chapter 5. Day labourers at informal hiring sites: work and employment perspective

employment agency. Since then, the state has maintained a relatively strong presence especially in times of scarcity, making state welfare available. In the period before World War II (WW2) day labour filled a crucial role in the industrialisation of Tokyo. It was a boom period and day labourers were employed in a diversity of industries such as construction, dock work, shipping, manufacture, landscaping and cleaning. During the war they were forced to work in collieries, mines and factories of military hardware. After the war the day labour revived and was once again a resource for rural migrants and the urban unemployed. In the 1960s two factors created a great demand for day labourers, namely the continuous extensive reconstruction of Tokyo after its bombing during WW2 and the build up to the 1964 Tokyo Olympics. San'ya Tokyo’s major day labour ghetto grew and housed 15,000 day labourers. During this period a multi tiered system of subcontracting in the construction industry developed. On the bottom rung of the ladder were the “tehaishi” who hired day labourers; they had links to organised crime syndicates and used many tactics to exploit day labourers. They negotiated jobs on the streets. A number of riots erupted. The Tokyo Metropolitan Government created the Johoku Welfare Center to address the needs of the labourer with irregular employment and plan for their rehabilitation into mainstream society. Since 1970 the day labour market moved with the rhythm of the declined broader economy; in 1980s there was a rejuvenation through high-tech manufacturing, international trade and large public works projects; the recession in the 1990’s reduced San'ya to a community of impoverished, homeless, graying men desperate for work and dependent on welfare for survival. The day labour market in San'ya seems to resemble a welfare institution providing minimal employment to men in extreme poverty. The market in San'ya is just kept going because of a low supply of desperate, homeless men in need of work. Gil (2001) refers to the two ways in which day labourers look for work, neither of which is through direct engagement with the employer. The one is through the casual labour exchange that has been set up in the yoseba by national and local governmental agencies; the other is through informal negotiation with street labour recruiters called tehaishi (arrangers) who usually have some connection with the yakuza (the Japanese equivalent of the mafia).
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2.3.3 Europe

In London in 1827 construction workers met from five in the morning carrying their working tools to solicit work at the market place. In Budapest and throughout Hungary the Roma are recruited at hiring sites for temporary work from hiring sites. Polish workers are known to seek employment in Germany by gathering close to the border with Germany (Valenzuela 1999:2).

2.3.4 USA

The day labour market is a longstanding tradition of American life with mainly two historical roots, the “shape up” dockworkers of the east coast and the agricultural workers (Valenzuela & Theodore 2005).

As early as 1780, labourers, for example, cart men, scavengers, chimney sweepers, wood cutters, stevedores and dockworkers sought jobs daily (Valenzuela Kawachi & Marr 2002:196). Willentz (in Valenzuela & Melendez 2003:2) writes that from 1788 to 1830 more than half of New York’s Irish men were working as day labourers or cart men and a quarter of the Irish women were working as domestics. Since about 1800 “shape up” sites in New York and other Northeast ports provided a system of hiring dockworkers for the day or half-day by means of an apparently arbitrary selection from a gathering of men (Larrowe in Valenzuela & Melendez 2003:2). Every morning, the men would gather on the docks to wait for the “shape-up” call from a hiring foreman signaling for men to gather around him, usually in the shape of a circle or horseshoe, to be selected for work for the day or for a four-hour shift. As is still the case, the number of men seeking jobs outnumbered the available jobs (Valenzuela & Melendez 2003:2). In 1834, a place was set aside on the streets of New York where men and women seeking work could meet with prospective employers. The women were primarily African-American and concentrated in the domestic labor market (Martinez in
Valenzuela & Melendez 2003:2).

In California, at the beginning of the twentieth century, agricultural employers were forced to hire temporary farm labour because of the migration of farm workers to the cities. During the off-seasons workers migrated to the cities to seek work and, in many cases, to remain in the cities doing day labour. At this time schemes were also introduced to import Mexican labourers on contracts to do agricultural work. Some of them did not return to Mexico when their contracts expired but remained to become day labourers in the cities.

Valenzuela (in Cleeland 1999) attributed the rise in the number of day labourers in Southern California to the changing economy (65%) and immigration (35%). The changes in the economy include the rise of contingency work, where companies substitute day labourers for permanent workers, as they are cheaper and their work of better quality. The jobs are more flexible, more temporary and more part-time, with no fixed relationship with the employers. The housing boom since 1995 has given rise to an expanding construction and home improvement sector which includes a DIY culture in the home improvement industry, thus creating more day labour jobs. Unemployment in the USA is around 4% and day labourers are hired to perform many jobs USA citizens are not very willing to do. The available social security with unemployment benefits means that most USA citizens are not obliged to resort to day labour to ensure a minimum income.

The contemporary day labour market, comprises of two markets, the first being privately or publicly regulated employment agencies which arrange work opportunities for clientele needing local temporary employment. This form of day labour appeared during the Great Depression when thousands of homeless and unemployed people appeared in the cities, formalising the once informal work activity (Valenzuela Kawachi & Marr 2002:197). For example "Labor Ready Inc." in Chicago, has many client
companies that they supply with the required number of workers. However, labour agencies are also exploitative, charging excessive fees for transportation, equipment and cashing of cheques (Theodore 2003:1822).

The second and more visible form of day labour is dominated by Latino immigrants. This originated in the development of agricultural work and practices in California. It is much less regulated and includes different categories of hiring markets where workers gather to sell their labour. Valenzuela identified two primary categories of sites with sub categories, namely informal and informal hiring sites. The informal hiring sites include unstructured and unregulated sites which can be connected or unconnected sites.

- **Connected sites** are connected to some specific industry such as painting, landscaping, gardening (nurseries), moving and home improvement.

- **Unconnected sites** do not seem to have any connection to a specific industry but may exist for reasons such as vehicular traffic, police co-operation, historical reasons or building activities.

Society's response to the presence of day labourers, especially at informal hiring sites, has been mixed and includes action for prohibition, immigrant and workplace protection and creation of official or community based hiring sites. These will be discussed further in chapter twelve (12).

One of the ways of dealing with the increasing pressure for regulation has been the development of formal sites. Formal, regulated sites developed to incorporate day labour into the formal economy, to offer some protection and limit "migrant workers from gathering on streets to solicit jobs". The first day labour centres in California began in the 1980's and by 2003 there were at least 100. These formal hiring sites are either
controlled by a city or county or managed by a community-based organisation, e.g. NGOs, church, immigrant, social rights (Valenzuela & Melendez 2003:3-4). They include hiring halls that offer sanitary facilities and some services e.g. English language classes, other training, a tool exchange program and modest shelter space. Valenzuela (2001a:343) noted that there seemed to be two types of regulated sites, those that offer open and unlimited access to anyone seeking work on the streets and those that limit the number of men who can participate in the activities of the site. Open regulated sites have hardly any constraints to participation. The rules that do exist are developed by the day labourers themselves and serve to maintain order and equity in securing jobs at the hiring site. The rules are to maintain order, set times of employment and the order of the hiring queue and establish other regulations at the hiring site. Failure to comply with the rules could mean expulsion from further use of the hiring site or being barred from obtaining work that day (Valenzuela 2001a:344).

Limited regulated sites have control measures limiting participation. These sites are usually privately owned and controlled by a business or municipality. They usually limit the number of men who can participate at the hiring site on any given day and require the payment of a modest fee used for the upkeep and maintenance of the site. They also usually check for legal documentation (Valenzuela 2001a:344).

Hiring sites are an extremely effective device for bringing together prospective employees and jobs and the proliferation of sites attests to the increased number of employers seeking this relatively inexpensive, hard working and trouble free work force (Valenzuela et. al. 2005:11).

2.3.5 South Africa

Hundreds of unemployed men and women wait on busy street corners hoping to make just a few rand a day. They hope to be picked up by people looking for labour* (SABC News 2003).
Day labourers, including immigrants, at hiring sites are a relatively recent phenomenon in South Africa, although migration of rural people into the urban labour market occurred with the discovery of gold and diamonds in the second half of the nineteenth century. Ever since many non-South Africans have also been brought in on contract to work in the mines. In the past influx control legislation regulated the prevention of black urbanization and so there was an absence of day labourers congregating in public places. Influx control measures included not allowing black non-residents into the "white" areas. Workseekers were given a temporary permit for 72 hours, during which time they had to procure employment or return home to obtain another temporary permit. This was enforced ruthlessly. A black person could be stopped on the street at any time of day or night and requested by the police to present documents legalising their presence at that particular place (Clegg 2005:1-2). The Bill of Rights (chapter two of The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996) states: "everyone has the right to freedom of movement (21.1)" and "Every citizen has the right to enter, to remain in and reside anywhere in the Republic" which now makes it possible for day labourers to stand at informal hiring sites anywhere. An influx of many legal and illegal immigrants from other African countries, with less stability and limited job opportunities, also come to these sights.

Other clauses from the Bill of rights that indirectly relate to the position of day labourers and the possibility of protection and organisation of day labourers are clause 22 that states that "every citizen has the right to choose his or her trade, occupation or profession freely. The practice of a trade, occupation or profession may be regulated by law; and clause 23.1 that states that "Every one has the right to fair labour practices" and clause 23.2 that state that every worker has the right to form and join a trade union; to participate in the activities and programmes of a trade union and to strike.
3  DAY LABOURERS

3.1  Introduction

In this section the reasons for being involved in day labour and employment aspects like employment history and practices, daily routines, types of jobs and other employment related aspects will be explored.

3.2  Reasons for doing day labour

Uncertain whether they will get a job that day men gather daily at hiring sites waiting and hoping to sell their labour. There are a wide range of complex reasons for doing day labour (Valenzuela (1999:13). The decision to embark on day labour lies in the interaction between personal and contextual dimensions. Some of the reasons as perceived by the day labourers will be discussed in section four (4) of this chapter.

Valenzuela (2001a:349) writes that most day labourers resort to day labour merely to survive. They have no other employment options and are desperate. “I’m looking for any kind of job...” (Reynolds 2003). Survival is also the most frequently mentioned reason for day labour in South Africa and Namibia (Gonzo & Plattner 2003). Another related reason given is that it enables the men to make remittances to their family and friends (Valenzuela et. al. 2003:ii). They say: “... we have wives we have children...” (Reynolds 2003). They are clearly motivated by the need to actualise their own and their families’ subsistence needs. Related is the motivation to simultaneously actualise the need for identity: “We have dignity and we need and have to work.” (Day labourer from San Jose, USA (Mangaliman 2005).

In the informal economy day labour may present “the promise of economic opportunity” (Valenzuela et. al. 2005:1); it may range from being an opportunity to enter
the urban economy, a first job or a last possibility of acquiring some type of job, a stepping stone to better employment or a temporary measure between jobs, e.g., after a firing, lay off or other form of interruption of employment (Valenzuela et. al. 2003:9).

Considering the precarious nature of day labour the question arises why the day labourers are not employed in the formal economy. The reasons most often encountered include being unable to find a job in the formal economy due to the nature and demands of the formal economy, e.g., qualifications and skills and the typical employment characteristics of the average day labourer, e.g. lack of documents, lack of proficiency in English, no specific skill to market, lack of transport or licenses, being too old, racial discrimination in permanent jobs and abuse by employers (Valenzuela 2001a:349).

Some prefer day labour because they believe the pay for unskilled and semi-skilled labour is inadequate for survival (Valenzuela 2001a:346). In New York, in normal demand conditions (summer) day labourers in 2003 were earning an average hourly wage of $9.37 which was $4.22 more than the federal minimum wage (Valenzuela et. al. 2003:ii). A small number of men find day labour attractive because of its flexibility, wage options and diversity of jobs. These factors provide a degree of autonomy for these workers. Valenzuela (2001a:339) refers to them as disadvantaged survival entrepreneurs.

On the whole, day labourers would prefer to have full-time well-paid jobs in the formal economy with more certainty even though day labour in the informal economy does present a preferred option for some under their specific circumstances (Valenzuela 2001a:335; Schenck & Louw 2005:90).
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3.3 Employment history of day labourers

The information available on the employment history of day labourers is sketchy and therefore not comparable. Most of the information available is on the situations in Tokyo and Windhoek.

In the USA cities of Washington and New York just less than half the men have been day labourers and for less than a year. In Los Angeles it seems they do day labour longer, the average being 5.5 years. In all three cities day labour is the sole means of income for most of the men. In Los Angeles it is known that 60% have been employed permanently in the past and 86% would prefer permanent jobs. (Valenzuela et. al. 2005:6; Valenzuela et. al. 2003:ii, 9).

For some day labourers such as those in San'ya, day labour is a way of life. It is their sole means of income. In spite of fact that 80% of the men have previously held permanent jobs and 40% of them would prefer to be permanently employed, the average time they have been doing day labour is 16.2 years. (Valenzuela, Kawachi & Marr 2003:203).

In Windhoek, Namibia, Gonzol & Plattner (2003:52-54) found that 39% of the men, mostly the younger ones, had never been in full time employment and 22% had been unemployed for more than three years. The majority (61%) would prefer permanent jobs. Previous full-time employment had been in mainly in the building and construction sector (22%), the service sector as waiters, cleaners, shop assistants and petrol attendants (20%) and in mining and agriculture (18%). The reasons provided for unemployment after full-time employment were as follows: 42% were retrenched, in 33% of the cases the company closed down, in 11% the contract was not renewed and 11% were dismissed. Nearly 65% had lost employment for reasons beyond their personal control and probably related to the general state of the economy. Reasons for
not renewing contracts could, in some cases, be due to completion of the work and personal ones.

We thus see that most day labourers have been exposed to employment and income uncertainty through shorter and longer periods of unemployment, which would have affected the actualisation of their various fundamental human needs.

The employment history of day labourers in Tshwane is covered in Section C of the questionnaire (Appendix 1) in questions 31-35, and the research results are presented in chapter six (6 section 2.3.4).

3.4 Employment practices

Valenzuela (2000:6) states that it is difficult to capture the nuances and day to day activities of day labour as it is affected by cyclical variations of weather, seasonal ups and downs of the construction, home improvement and maintenance industries and the uncertainty of being selected by prospective employers.

Day labourers are usually hired in small groups. The selection is often made by a day labourer who has previously been employed. He is selected by the employer or is self appointed as a "foreman," usually due to his assertiveness or greater proficiency in English. This lead person then usually selects his friends for a particular job. He also liaises with the employer who relays job instructions and payment information via him (Valenzuela 2001a:345).

Valenzuela (2001a:344) states that in Los Angeles and Orange Counties the market is wide open but informal rules and norms seem to exist. For example, day labourers inform each other of exploitative employers and refuse to work for them. Day labourers themselves determine minimum wages and workers who do not abide with
these rules are reprimanded.

3.5 Day labourers’ routine

Melendez (Lunan 2003) is quoted as saying "Day labour is a full time work... they work the market full time... Finding work is a daily lottery."

In the USA, Windhoek and Elardus Park, the work day of a day labourer is managed by the formal and informal rules of the day labour market in general and the market at each site. For most day labourers day labour is full-time work in two respects. It is their only work and it takes all day, every day, whether they are employed or not. The day labour market does not have set hours of operation though there is a pattern. The majority of the men start to gather at hiring sites between 06.00 and 07.00, the peak hiring time being between 06.00 and 10.00. Some sites begin earlier, depending on the resource to which the site is connected, e.g. opposite a flower market. There are always some men who remain at hiring sites all day (Valenzuela, Kawachi, & Marr, 2003:197; Gonzo & Plattner 2003:59).

At Elardus Park most of the men disappeared from site after 10.00. Some would spend the day sleeping under bushes; others stayed on the street playing gambling games, such as “murabaraba”, “mmielo” or “casino”. Some time might be spent on washing and cooking (Schenck & Louw 2005:92).

There seem to be some variations in the number of days day labourers are engaged in job seeking behavior. In New York most look for work 7 days a week, whereas in Washington it is 6 days a week. In Windhoek it was found that those men with children spend more time and effort on job seeking actions than those without children. Among the fathers 56% spent 7 days and 24% spent six days a week seeking jobs.
Those with children were also more involved in searching for jobs in other towns and in approaching companies. They were also inclined to spend more hours at the hiring sites (Gonzo & Plattner 2003:61 & 63; Valenzuela et. al. 2005:9; Valenzuela & Melendez 2003:ii, 7).

In the USA men may be hired for a number of hours or for a day but are paid per hour. In Windhoek and Elardus Park day labourers are hired for a task or per day and are usually paid for the job or the day. Workdays generally mean 8 hours or until nightfall or until the job is completed. The absence of legal protection for day labourers means that there is much opportunity for exploitative labour practices (Valenzuela & Melendez 2003:7).

The daily routine of day labourers in Tshwane is covered in Section A of the questionnaire (Appendix 1) in questions 6-10, and the research results are presented in chapter six (6 section 2.3.2).

3.6 Jobs for which day labourers are employed

"Driven by the need to survive and feed their families they’ll tackle any job," Ryan from MSR.

(Mohlabeng Sunday Sun 28-8-2005:32).

"I’m looking for any kind of job," Swartbooi, from CapeTown

(Reynolds 2003:1).

Generally the day labourers perform a variety of jobs mostly related to the construction and home improvement/maintenance (including gardening) industry. Some
Chapter 5. Day labourers at informal hiring sites: work and employment perspective

variations are that in Washington field work/farming was included; and dry walling seems more prevalent in the USA than in Namibia and Elardus Park where gardening is high on the list (Valenzuela et. al. 2005:10, &11; Valenzuela 2001:343; Schenck & Louw 2005:90).

Many jobs for which day labourers are hired are dirty and dangerous involving, e.g. exposure to chemical waste and other occupational hazards. They are typically performed without workers receiving safety training or safety equipment. Boyle (1995:131) in “The tortilla curtain” graphically illustrates this:

She lifted the Buddhas from the cartons, dipped them in the corrosive, scrubbed them with the brush, the labels and packed them back up again. It wasn’t long before her eyes had begun to water and she found herself dabbing at them with the sleeves of her dress... And her nose and throat felt strange too... the passages seemed raw ..., as if she had a cold. ...Still, she kept at it, the Buddhas floating through a scrim of tears, until her fingers began to bother her. ‘They weren’t stiffening as they had yesterday, not yet, but there was a sharp stinging sensation around the cuticles of her nails, as if she were squeezing lemon into a cut, and she realized with a jolt that the big man had neglected to give her the elastic gloves. She held her hands up to the light then and saw that the skin had begun to crack and peel and all the color had gone out of her flesh. These weren’t her hands—they were the hands of a corpse.

Many jobs are labour intensive and may require physical strength (Valenzuela & Melendez 2003:ii, 9; Valenzuela Kawachi & Marr 2003:201; Schenck & Louw 2005:90).

The employment situation is unstable and a high degree of physical discomfort due to exposure and competitiveness is involved in securing jobs daily. This explains the youthfulness and physical strength of day labourers.

Jobs for which day labourers in Tshwane are hired are dealt with in Section C of
the questionnaire (Appendix 1) in question 31, and the research results are presented in chapter six (6 section 2.3.1.3).

3.7 Employers of day labourers

Without employers to employ day labourers from informal hiring sites, it is unlikely that day labourers would congregate there. Valenzuela et. al. (2003:10) state the obvious, often ignored when complaints about day labour are raised, when stating that “the day labour market could not possibly function without the large demand for prospective employers for this type of labor.”

In general it seems that in all countries private individuals and subcontractors in the construction industry rank the highest as employers of day labourers (Valenzuela et. al. 2005:1, Valenzuela & Melendez 2003:ii, 10). In Washington more day labourers are hired by subcontractors in construction than in other places in the USA (Valenzuela et. al. 2005:8). Private individuals who hire day labourers include homeowners who are often local residents. In Washington (Valenzuela et. al. 2005:1) 70% of the day labourers had been employed by residents in the last 3 months. In some places employers seem to hire the same day labourers repeatedly. In New York, 65% of day labourers are hired repeatedly by the same employer (Valenzuela & Melendez 2003:10). This demonstrates something of labourer-resident-employer interaction and relationships. Other employers of day labourers are private companies, factories, restaurants and other day labourers (Valenzuela 1999:14). Valenzuela (2005) mentions that the house renovation boom and DIY culture created many short-term jobs for day labourers. Questions on employers of day labourers in Tshwane were not included in the survey.
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3.8 Day labourer earnings

Mohr (2004:157) states that “the living standard of income earners and their families depends on the purchasing power of their incomes” implying that the remuneration the day labourer receives has a direct influence on the extent to which the day labourer and his dependants are enabled to acquire satisfiers to actualise those fundamental human needs entailing some purchases.

Determining the income of day labourers is difficult because day labour work fluctuates daily and seasonally. Workers are seldom repeatedly employed by the same employers nor do they consistently perform the same type of work. In research on day labour the following means have been developed to calculate day labourers’ income: the reservation wage as referred to by economists, wages earned in the month prior to the surveys and wages earned during good and bad months (Valenzuela & Gonzalez 2005:11).

In the preliminary study in Elardus Park (Schenck & Louw 2005) no specific information about jobs and wages was collected. The day labourers indicated that pay in Elardus Park and other eastern suburbs was better than in other parts of the city.

3.8.1 Reservation wage

A reservation wage is the lowest amount (per hour in the USA) for which a person is willing to work and which fluctuates according to demand conditions (Valenzuela 1999:10; Valenzuela & Melendez 2003:6, Valenzuela et. al. 2005:11). Valenzuela and Melendez (2003:7) note that negotiating their preferred wage is important to day labourers because it helps them control and to some extent limit employer abuses involving under- and non-payment. However, not all workers adhere to the reservation wage. “There are those that will work for less money than others-not all
of us have the same hunger" (day labourer as quoted by Valenzuela et. al. 2005:11).

The findings of the research in 1999 in Southern California (Valenzuela 1999:10) that with slight variations "day labour was clearly competitive and in some instances better than working under federal and state minimum wage employment" have been consistent with the findings of later research in New York and Washington (Valenzuela et. al. 2003:6; Valenzuela et. al. 2005:11). Day labour also included other benefits such as daily cash payments and non-payment of taxes. There were examples of many workers who had voluntarily left permanent low wage restaurant and factory jobs for day labour jobs in spite of their instability. Valenzuela (2000:8) observed that while wages and earnings of day labourers were mixed and unstable it was comparable with other types of low skill and low pay jobs in the formal market.

Reservation wage is covered in Section C of the questionnaire (Appendix 1) in question 44, and the research results are presented in chapter six (6 section 2.3.3.1).

3.8.2 Income during good and bad times

Because income is unpredictable and unstable with great fluctuation, the financial state of day labourers or what are regarded as good or bad times is directly dependent on how often they are employed. In New York a good week is seen as having 3-5 days work and having 1-2 days work was a bad week (Valenzuela & Melendez 2003:7). Monthly wages also have seasonal variations with a great fluctuation between good and bad months (Valenzuela & Melendez 2003:i, 7).

Approximate income during good and bad months is covered in Section C of the questionnaire (Appendix 1) in questions 47 and 48, and the research results are presented in chapter six (6 section 2.3.3.3).
3.8.3 Manner of payment

Payment is made mostly in cash, the preferred form, at the end of a workday or completion of a task. Valenzuela (2000:8) writes that collecting pay at the end of the workday was especially beneficial to working class and poor people who have to survive on a daily basis. They do not have to wait weeks for their money, they do not have to open a bank account which would be difficult for immigrants without documents and language skills to manage the process. They also avoid taxation and can walk away from a job.

In the USA day labourers rarely accept payment by cheque. Most also prefer to be paid by the hour. Being paid per day is more risky with regard to employer abuse (Valenzuela & Melendez 2003:7-8).

No questions on the manner of payment were included in our questionnaire as the study in Elardus Park had shown that cash payment per job or day were the only forms of payment that occurred (Schenck & Louw 2005).

3.8.4 Remittances to family

“We have children, we have wives” (Day labourer, Cape Town, Reynolds 2003).

Despite low wages the majority of day labourers assist households elsewhere whenever possible. The responsibility of this often seems to be the motivation for them to do day labour in spite of its difficulties (Valenzuela et. al. 2005:6, Valenzuela et. al. 2003:9; Schenck & Louw 2005).

There is a variation in the number of labourers sending remittances, the number of remittances and the amounts remitted. In Washington the numbers are high as 80%
Chapter 5. Day labourers at informal hiring sites: work and employment perspective

of the day labourers sent money representing 20% and 30% of their earnings to their countries of origin on an average of 10 times per year. The money is destined for food, clothing, medical expenses, housing, the education of children, debt, legal expenses and to open businesses. (Valenzuela et. al. 2005:6; Valenzuela et al 2003: ii, 9).

Questions about remittances by day labourers in Tshwane have been included in the questionnaire (Appendix 1) in questions 17, 78-82 and the research results are presented in chapter six (6 section 2.3.3.5).

3.9 Employment related abuse

Day labour is unprotected and exposes day labourers to many physical dangers. This includes the dangers involved in immigrating or migrating, searching for employment, employment abuse and the dangers involved in the jobs undertaken. The day labourers’ desperation for money, lack of skills, possible lack of understanding due to language difficulties and, in the case of illegal immigrants, fear of exposure, make them even more vulnerable and willing to take just about any job they are offered. Limited knowledge of English and in some cases visual illiteracy may make it difficult to follow safety instructions or speak to employers about safety measures (Lee 2003). In their search for employment day labourers may also be exposed to theft, beatings, assaults, robbery sexually abused or harassed (Valenzuela 2005:15).

A large percentage of day labourers everywhere have experienced various forms of abuse from employers. Employers do not believe that workers will report and take action due to many of them being illegal immigrants or perceived as having limited knowledge of worker rights (Valenzuela et. al. 2005:1&12). The most common abuses experienced are non- or underpayment. “Sometimes you get a job and somebody says he cannot pay you, now you must come back in a fortnight, and then he disappears” (Reynolds 2003:3). However, not all employers get away with it. “The Washington Post”
of 19th April 2005, reported on a case where 12 day labourers, who had not been paid for work, with the help of CASA a non profit immigrants’ rights group, won a case against the subcontractor who had employed them (Castaneda 2005).

Other commonly experienced work place abuse is no food, water or breaks. Less frequently experienced was being abandoned at work sites, violence from employers, harassment by police and security guards and threats of robbery. (Valenzuela et. al. 2005:1&12, Valenzuela & Melendez 2003:ii).

Different aspects of abuse experienced by day labourers in Tshwane in are included in the questionnaire (Appendix 1) in Section D, questions 49-59, and the research results are presented in chapter six (6 section 2.5).

3.10 Work related injuries and illness

Lee (2003) writes that day labourers are employed in high risk situations in industries, like construction, painting of structures, gardening and loading and offloading. Safety training is not included in the employment arrangements whereas employers in traditional work settings have to make provision for safety and the workers are covered by compensation benefits. Exposure to hazardous conditions leads to work related injuries or illness requiring medical attention, which employers may not provide and day labourers on their own may find difficult to access. This is because workers are reluctant to complain about unsafe work conditions, inadequate safety training and lack of incentive for employers to reduce work place injuries (Buchanan 2004:253-261).

One of the effects of injuries and illness is loss of time employed. Injury or illness and inability to send money home may contribute to deterioration of relationships. It can cause suspicion. The wife may wonder whether the reason for lack of or small or irregular remittances is due to the husband having become involved in a relationship
that is now preventing him from sending money home. (Lee 2003).

Questions about work related injuries experienced by day labourers are Tshwane is included in the questionnaire (Appendix 1) in Section E, questions 60-64, and the research results are presented in chapter six (6 section 2.5).

3.11 Discussion

Day labour has been described above as non-standard and specifically contingent employment of immigrant and other marginal workers in large and midsized cities in the USA working from informal hiring sites. This and the previous chapter give an indication of social and economic issues surrounding day labourers. The description provides a glimpse of the history of day labour operating from hiring sites, who they are and why they are doing day labour, their daily work routines, employment related experiences, their connection to the local neighbourhoods and economies and worker-employer relations.

In comparing the day labour in San’ya and Los Angeles Valenzuela et. al. (2002:205) remarked that although day labour in these two environments showed structural similarities it served different functions for different people. Day labour could serve the functions of being:

“a means to avoid poverty, an intermittent but permanent job market, a port of entry to a working life in a new environment, a market for acquiring job skills, a stepping stone to better or more permanent employment, an actual career choice and even an entrepreneurial venture” (Valenzuela et. al. 2002:205).

In Los Angeles the day labour market functions as an immigrant job market. There is a strong demand for day labourers and an effective supply of abundant day labourers, whereas in San’ya the market is barely operative. There is very little demand
for day labourers and the supply consists of relatively well educated and skilled, aging desperate homeless men who need work (Valenzuela, Kawachi & Marr 2003:205).

The available information about day labour in South Africa alludes to day labour being a means to survival and not even a means to avoiding poverty. The demand for day labour seems much lower than the supply making it a rather ineffective means to avoid poverty. The informal labour market is unable to accommodate all the available day labourers.

4 VALENZUELA’S EXPLANATIONS FOR CONTEMPORARY DAY LABOUR IN THE USA

Valenzuela offers different explanations for the existence and contemporary growth of day labour in the USA of which the following may contribute to the understanding of the day labour situation in South Africa, namely, supply and demand, globalisation, the growth of informality of employment, immigration and entrepreneurship (Valenzuela 2003:315-317; Valenzuela, Kawachi & Marr 2003:192).

4.1 Supply and demand

As was shown in the preceding section and the previous chapter, the supply of day labour as a product that is bought and sold has a long history in the USA. The availability of large numbers of relatively cheap and hardworking labourers keeps the market going (Valenzuela et. al. 2005:2). Particular characteristics of many day labourers, e.g. being immigrants, often without legal documents, lack of proficiency in English and often being low skilled feed the supply of day labour. However, day labour and other informal economic activity are not produced and reproduced by day labourers themselves, although supply side factors do play an important role in shaping the structure and character of these markets (Valenzuela et. al. 2003:205; Valenzuela
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2003:316; Valenzuela et. al. 2005:2). The demand side for day labour is determined by the national and local economy. Demand factors that drive the day labour market are the kinds of industries and categories of employers. These include small businesses, sub-contractors or private individuals who rely on day labour work (Valenzuela, Kawachi & Marr 2003:194). The historically low interest rates that make new home ownership possible has maintained the boom in housing construction and home improvements which in turn, have maintained the demand for day labour (Valenzuela et. al. 2005:2).

Valenzuela et. Al. (2005:2) maintain that a supply and demand theory only partly explains the existence of day labourers at hiring sites. It does not adequately explain the growth of the day labour market in the USA, why Latino workers dominate the day labour market or why day labourers continue to exist and search for work during robust and recessionary economic times.

4.2 Globalisation and economic restructuring

Valenzuela (2003:315) refers to Sassen who explained that: “Globalisation and the restructuring of regional economies, and the growth of informality, coupled with massive immigration, have resulted in unique labour markets where demand for part-time, low skill, and flexible work such as day labour proliferate.”

Valenzuela (2003:315) explains that global cities, that is, cities that are linked to the global economy, because they are important points of control and centres of finance for great multi- and transnational corporations, are the localities for millions of inhabitants and workers undertaking social, economic, and political exchange. These global cities are also connections to remote geographies and points of production, consumption, and finance. Such cities reproduce low-skill workers because of their dual, formal and informal economies. The expanding formal economy also creates a potential for a larger informal economy. Employment opportunities for informal workers
develop. This draws immigrants and results in a concentration of foreign-born workers who respond to the demand for their labour. In addition to the creation of employment in the informal economy Valenzuela (2003:315) writes that “Economic restructuring also helps us to understand the origins and growth of the day labour market”… “Economic restructuring profoundly affects who works, how one works, and how work pays”.

In the post war period the manufacturing industry in the USA began to decline and to a large extent has been replaced with a service economy. This new type of economic growth has caused extreme polarisation containing conditions promoting the informalisation and casualisation of work (Sassen in Valenzuela 2003:3150). Many employment opportunities for low skilled workers in the formal economy were lost. The loss of formal employment and the development of the service economy created a market for flexible or contingent work in an informal sector. Another aspect of restructuring has been the development of the high technology based industry that engages a smaller number of highly paid employees whose needs create a demand for the services industry and informal economy, including the services of day labourers. This explains the expansion of the tourist and business trades (finance, banking, insurance) as well as services in the hotel, entertainment, cleaning and food industries and the demand for the services of low skilled workers, who provide household and other types of services, employed.

4.3 Informality

The informalisation of the labour economy has been growing since the 1970’s as a consequence of globalisation and the restructuring of the economy in the USA. Informal work has become much more visible particularly in the large cities (Valenzuela 2003:315, Valenzuela, Kawachi & Marr 2003:192).

Day labour is one form of informal work (Valenzuela 2003:307-8; Vashishta
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Valenzuela (2003:316) explains that "Informal work refers to the underground sector, hidden work or the shadow economy of paid work beyond the realm of formal employment." It includes all work that is unregistered by the state and is therefore not taxed, not covered by social security and not protected or regulated by law. It includes not only work that is legal in other respects but also illegal activities such as prostitution, the manufacture and sale of illicit goods and drug pedaling. “Day labour, because it is cash based, unregulated by the state, and mostly untaxed is considered informal.” Informal work is not restricted to the lower end of the economy where day labourers are found. It exists at both ends of the job strata.

Valenzuela, Kawachi and Marr (2003:194) challenge the view that contingent employment is solely a supply-side issue i.e. that the casualisation of work is to be attributed to the large presence of immigrants and their inclination to replicate survival strategies of the third world. Contingent work is also the result of the flexibilisation of work, regional industrial restructuring and uneven urban development. The spread of contingent work has followed a path of least resistance, destabilising and undermining the already difficult conditions in low wage labour markets. This has increased labour market segmentation, racial polarisation and social exclusion within urban labour markets (Theodore 2003:1811).

4.4 Immigration

Valenzuela (2003:316, 2000:3) explains large waves of immigration during the past three decades in the USA as also having contributed to the growth of day labour
and other forms of temporary work. The constant and increasing demand for day labour and more accommodating public policy towards Latino immigrants are factors that explain increases in immigration to the USA. Of these, labour demand is the most useful for understanding the contemporary growth of day labour.

Due to changes in legislation relating to immigration e.g. the National Origins Act in 1965, the leading countries of origin for immigrants has shifted from Europe to Asia and Latin America with many of the Latinos resorting to day labour (Valenzuela 2003:317).

4.5 Entrepreneurship

Valenzuela (2001:335) explains that by using a broad interpretation of entrepreneurship it can be empirically demonstrated that a significant segment of the day labourers in the USA fit into the class of entrepreneurs, known as survivalist entrepreneurs. They manifest the characteristics of disadvantaged survivalist entrepreneurs. They have limited options for employment in the low-wage formal labour market and of necessity to survive, resort to day labour. Others, even though they may have employment in the low wage market, choose to do day labour because it holds more advantages for them, e.g. daily pay, being able to walk away from a job and a greater variety of work.

5 CHAPTER REVIEW

To begin to understand day labourers from an economic perspective the difference in the meanings of work and employment was outlined. Day labourers are underemployed but work in the market full time selling their labour at “hiring sites” as has been done in many places throughout modern history.
Chapter 5. Day labourers at informal hiring sites: work and employment perspective

Most day labourers resort to day labour in the informal economy out of desperation to survive; they have no other employment options. Day labourers are employed mainly by subcontractors in construction and by private individuals looking for a relatively inexpensive, hard working and trouble-free workforce for short term jobs. Day labour is unprotected and exposes day labourers to many physical dangers and employment and work related abuses.

Valenzuela explains contemporary day labour in the USA as the over supply of and low demand for low and unskilled labour in the labour market which is influenced by the larger processes of globalization and economic restructuring, informalisation of the labour economy, Latino immigration and entrepreneurship.
SECTION C

RESEARCH

“Courage my brother”.

Twenty nights and nineteen days the four surviving brothers walked to get to Johannesburg. At night they would leave their sticks on the ground, pointing towards the destination. They lost their fifth brother on the fifth day. A Boer shot him. Their dog was shot first by the Boer for walking through what he claimed was his land. Then the brother was shot for arguing that the Boer had no right to kill their dog. The brother survived another two days, but then passed away before they could get him close to any help.

At last they caught a glimpse of Johannesburg and they forgot their grief, at least for a while. They saw the bustle of the place their kin had spoken about like pure poetry: where you filled up your buckets with money from holes in the ground; where meat danced off the animal bone to walk, cooked, onto your plate; where music and love-making filled the evening air; where want or sorrow were unknown; where streets were made of bright colours and metal.

They were rushed into lines, pushed to the ground, numbered and stacked into hovels. They were fed brine and tears and were beaten to lash at rocks in the tunnels. They were lined up and counted and paraded in and out of dormitories under the armed watch of overseers. Many died. Others were put in their place.

To each other they said, “courage, my brother, I will look after your back” to the izinduna [headman] they said, “my lord, my boss, we are at your command. ” to each other they said, ” there will be a day of reckoning beyond these tears. Umhlaba uya hlaba.... indeed this is a world of thorns,” to others they say, ” you are women to do such light work. Look at our muscles” back home they said, ” We work in the land where you filled up your buckets with money from holes in the ground; where meat danced off the animal bone to walk, cooked, onto your table; where the sound of prayer fills the air.

Sitas A: Voices that reason. Theoretical parables 2004)
RESEARCH RESULTS

1  INTRODUCTION

The Research story (chapter three) described the unfolding of planning and execution of the research in a narrative form as a dialogue between the action (planning and execution) (which was presented in italics) and the research theory. To answer the research question which was formulated in chapter 3 section 4.2: 'What are the social and economic conditions and experiences of day labourers at informal hiring sites in Tshwane?' data collection on day labourers took place firstly through a survey using an interview questionnaire based on the literature study on day labourers in the USA and the National day labour survey in the USA; secondly, through three individual interviews with Koos, Lawrence and Andrew and thirdly, three group interviews with day labourers at hiring sites at Newlands Gezina and Pretoria North. *The voices of these individuals and groups are presented as subtext in italics.*

After the initial literature study on day labourers (chapters four and five) the field research was conducted. In this chapter the research results of the survey conducted from 27 to 30 September 2004 as well as the interviews conducted during 2005 will be presented.

1.2  RESEARCH RESULTS

The format of the presentation of the research results correlates approximately with the sequence of the topics in the questionnaire. The sections of the questionnaire (Appendix 1) were as follows:

- **Section A:** Ten questions on the hiring sites.

- **Section B:** Eighteen questions the on personal background and living conditions the day labourers.
Chapter 6. Research results

- Section C: Twenty questions on economic aspects such as employment and employment seeking history of day labourers, their income and remittances.

- Section D: Ten questions on different forms of abuse experienced by day labourers.

- Section E: Four questions on work related injuries.

- Section F: Six questions on health and access to health care.

- Section G: Fifteen questions on relationships social networks, associational and organisation involvement.

- Section H: Some qualitative topics and space for other relevant information provided by respondents.

To explain the research results references are made to the literature study on day labourers in chapters 4 and 5. References are also made to the literature study that was done subsequent to the survey. Throughout, the results will be explained in terms of Max-Neef et. al.'s different poverties (Chapter 8 section 2.5.3) meaning the absence of actualization of fundamental human needs as described in Chapter 2 section 5.2.

2 HIRING SITES

The research results elicited by questions in Section A of the questionnaire on hiring sites is introduced with the following case studies of three hiring sites in Tshwane that were included in the survey sample as well as being researched by Nel (2007) and Xipu (2005) as part of the larger research project mentioned in chapter one (1 section 2.6) and chapter three (3section 2).

2.1 Three case studies

These case studies are a compilation of information from the research by Nel (2007) and Xipu (2005) and my own observations and group interviews at the
Newlands, Gezina and Pretoria North hiring sites and some mention in the media to the Newlands site.

2.1.1 Newlands hiring site

This hiring site is situated on Roslyn street, in the upmarket eastern suburb of Newlands in Tshwane (Figure 4).

![Figure 4: Map of Newlands hiring site](image)

On the opposite side of the street there is a large building supply business, a filling station with a small shop and a large open field with a stream that runs during the rainy season. Near the stream are clusters of trees providing shelter where a large number of day labourers sleep at night. Early on winter mornings the smoke from open fires can be seen.
Chapter 6. Research results

The day labourers gather mostly on the side of the street opposite the building supply store, in front of the houses and two residential security complexes where some find shelter from the sun under the few trees along the street.

Xipu (2004) found that the day labourers were initially suspicious, suspecting him of being from the ANC (African National Congress – the ruling political party-) or government coming to chase them away, as they have previously experienced harassment by the police and the surrounding businesses.

The day labourers started appearing at the hiring site from as early as 6h00 and remained until around 14h30. From 6h00-7h30, the site functions mostly as pick-up point for pre arranged jobs but also a market place for piece jobs. Xipu (2004) quoted a day labourer as explaining:

When we stand here, we have a good chance of getting a piece-job because the business contractors already know us and come to this place when they need workers.

Nel (2007:50) noted that on a cool morning, by seven o’clock there was a lot of traffic as residents travel to work and take children to a school nearby. Some stopped to refuel and make purchases at the garage shop. A security guard walked up and down in front of the building supplies store. There were about 15 men. Some went to buy coffee and bread form the garage shop. Some men arrived at the hiring site carrying plastic bags with overalls, lunch boxes and water bottles. Between 7h30 and 9h00 the activity at the site peaked and the number of day labourers increased to about 80. Potential employers also arrived during this time. As contractors parked their vehicles day labourers ran to negotiate with the contactor. Sometimes there were lengthy interactions between employers and day labourers, at other times the
day labourers merely climbed on the vehicles. This was probably due to earlier negotiations. When a contractor left, those left behind settled down again waiting for the next potential employer.

Before making their purchases at the building supply store some customers made arrangements with specific labourers to hire them; others did so afterwards. Some contractors approached specific day labourers and informed them that they were about to negotiate contracts, and if successful, they would return and hire them. Some day labourers started displaying tools of their trade (bricklaying, paving, plastering, carpentry and painting), others marketed themselves in visible ways by standing, acting or moving around pointing to their tools. From about 10h00, the mood changed from for work-seeking to socialising. It was as if the labourers became resigned to the fact that they were unlikely to secure a job for that day. They then engaged in animated conversations.

However, they still kept a vigilant eye on customers who came to the hardware store. From 14h30 most men left the site. A few remained all day, apparently hoping that home-owners who come after work to buy supplies for urgent or small jobs might make arrangements with them for jobs for the following day.

Xipu mentions that day labourers expect to be paid between R120.00-R180.00 per day. A day labourer James told Nel (2007:50) that he does building jobs earning between R90 and R120 per day between three and four days a week. He usually buys coffee and half a loaf of bread at the garage shop. He does not
experience problems with employers but sometimes the police chase the men from the hiring site.

Weather conditions and seasonal changes influence the activities at the hiring site. In winter activities start later due to the sun rising later. When it rains, the day labourers usually shelter under the roof of the filling station. They also depend on the filling station for water and toilet facilities. The manager of the garage is not happy about the situation and complains that the day labourers tend to disturb customers who are concerned about crime and car thefts. However, the day labourers insist that they have actually reduced crime in the area as they do not allow trouble makers to stand at the site. Another unique feature of this site is that many day labourers speak Afrikaans the language of most potential employers. The perception of day labourers is that speaking the employers’ language has advantages because “the employers know that you will be able to understand instructions and do what they want you to” (Xipu 2004).

The day labourers tend to group themselves according to home language, age, and friendships. These groups sometimes compete for a particular spot which is better placed than the others to attract the attention of potential employers. The best spot is a tree where they display their tools and place their plastic bags. It also provides protection from the sun and a place to sit.

Social support and networking appear to be important. Those labourers who are known and trusted by employers play a role in finding piece jobs for others. When a potential employer arrives at the site, he does not pick any day labourer, but looks for those with whose work he was previously satisfied.
Some of the labourers are very lucky as employers know them and they get piece-jobs almost every day. If these labourers are your friends, then they can recommend you when there is extra work to be done. It is important to prove yourself to the employer that you are a good worker so that he will hire you the next time around.

(Xipu 2004).

The most common perception of residents, businesses and the police is that day labourers sleep in the open veld, some stay over with live-in domestic helpers and some return to the townships (Nel 2007:56).

The businesses primarily regard the day labourers as a nuisance and try to distance themselves from them. They feel the presence of day labourers affects business negatively. They regularly request the police to remove them from their premises on the grounds of trespassing. The police do not have authority to do this but they do search the men for any illegal items, check their documents and remove illegal immigrants. The head of the local police station mentioned that Roslyn street was not a crime hotspot but he did not think all the day labourers were honest job seekers and workers. Some use work opportunities to familiarise themselves with premises and take down key numbers to be able to enter the premises later. However the police also have informants amongst the day labourers (Nel 2007:52-54).

Residents generally have no direct interaction with the day labourers, mostly due to fear or safeguarding privacy. Many residents ascribe the day labourers’ presence to the location of the hardware business and perceive the day labourers as masking the presence of crime, creating unsanitary conditions, causing discomfort by their constant presence and negatively impacting on property value. Owners of the businesses believe that contractors and residents employ day labourers. Residents mentioned that day labourers’ presence is encouraged by their being employed by contractors trying to avoid complying with the legislation on the Basic Conditions of Employment (Barker 2006:77). Most residents living around the site,
who were interviewed, did not employ day labourers (Nel 2007:54-59).

Woithe (2005:8) reporting in the newspaper “Tshwane Beeld” (31 August 2005) on men sleeping in the open in Newlands and Waterkloof Glen areas, writes that residents are fed up and have formed a residents'-committee to attend to the situation. With the cooperation of the hardware store they intend to create a type of employment bureau. The local councillor is of opinion that employers who collect and drop labourers should be fined because they contribute to the problem. The councilor is of opinion that most of them are illegal immigrants who do not have decent housing and that there are insufficient policing available in the area to deal with the situation. According to the police the men are unemployed or are occasionally employed by the building material business in the area. Others stand around all day in the hope of being employed. At night they return to sleep among the bushes. The residents complain about the noise, smells, litter, alcohol abuse and increasing crime. This has increased expenditure on security. The metro police are aware of the situation and have fenced off the open area but this has not deterred the men. They still sleep there. They have forced the fence open, or enter the area through the bridge over the storm water drain.

2.1.2 Gezina hiring site

This hiring site is located in the central business area of Gezina and extends along an entire street block (Jacobs Street between Voortrekker and HF Verwoerd Streets), near a railway station, on a line to a township (Figure 5). Most businesses trade in building and home improvement materials. The day labourers tended to stand on the southern side of Jacobs street opposite a hardware store. A woman had set up a food stall in the parking lot where day labourers bought food. Some also bought coffee from the café around the corner.
Activities started as early as 6h00 and lasted until about 13h00 during the early hours of the morning, (6h00-7h30). Similar to the site in Newlands, the site operated like a pick-up point as day-labourers are picked up by employers based on specific arrangements made the previous day. Some potential employers also arrived at this time and informed specific labourers that they were negotiating contracts and that if they got business, they would come back and hire them for the day.

Between 7h30 and 9h00 the number of day labourers increased up to about 200. This is also the time when activities aimed at canvassing for work was most pronounced. The skills advertised included bricklaying, paving, plastering, gardening and painting. Marketing activities were not as pronounced as at Newlands. Nel (2007:60) saw a man arriving with a dustbin on wheels which he parked next to the vendor and then he unpacked his tools to display them.
After 10h00, the mood appeared to change from looking for work to socialising. Nel (2007:61) commented that it is as if the day labourers realise that "the boat has sailed" and many disappeared, while others remained and played games such as "marabaraba" and "cards". They also tended to engage in animated conversations about a variety of subjects such as women, alcohol and crime. It appears that, to some day labourers, day labour work is not a "real job", but a means to access pocket money. Therefore they tend to use the money earned on entertainment. As one day labourer said: "When I earn R100, I like to spend it by going to a tavern with my friends where there is Kwaito music, to have cold beers with "isifebe" (a sexy loose woman) sitting next to me" (Xipu 2004).

The mood at this site was generally aggressive. (This observation was also made by the fieldworkers during the survey). During the initial contact Xipu (2004) was confronted and asked to state whether he sided with the day labourers or businesses. The day labourers were very vocal about what they perceived as the injustices and brutality they had to endure at the site. They complained about a number of issues which can be summarised as follows:

- Business owners do not allow them to stand next to their promiscos. They set vicious dogs on them and when they report the matter to the police nothing is done.

- One employer did not pay one day labourer's wages at the end of the day, saying that he would pick him up the next day and pay him the whole amount when the job was finished. The employer did not keep his promise, thus robbing the day labourer of a day's pay.

- Another day labourer was paid R40.00 when he expected to be paid at least R80.00 as he felt he had worked very hard that day. The
employer did not negotiate the pay with him when he picked him up as the
day labourer had to jump inside the van quickly in order to be ahead of
other day labourers in competition with him.

- African (black) employers tend to be worse than white employers. They
  allegedly force day labourers to work harder for less pay, they do not
  provide lunch and they do not provide transport back to the site when
  the job is finished.

- Some motorists driving through the site are hostile and reckless and
  some day labourers have been hit by speeding cars.

- Some corrupt police officers solicit bribes from day labourers who are
  illegal immigrants, thus, plunging the day labourers into deeper poverty
  and desperation.

There is tension and conflict between the day labourers and the surrounding
owners of businesses. A nearby caravan business is the only business sympathetic
towards them allowing them to store their belongings on its premises. Opposite the
caravan business is a large hardware shop which offers good opportunities for
piece-jobs, as customers tend to need people to do menial jobs. The security guards
guarding the hardware shop usually disperse the day labourers requesting them to
stand across the street. A security guard told Xipu that the older day labourers were
more cooperative than the younger ones.

The younger ones stand next to our premises defiantly, saying
that this is a new democracy and that Mandela fought for this
land for them. That is why we call the police from time to time
to clean up this street.

(Xipu 2004)
Chapter 6. Research results

Some of the day labourers at this site tend to abuse alcohol. Once they get paid, they do not turn up the next day, even when specific arrangements are made by employers to pick them up. They only come back to the site once their money is finished. One employer informed the researcher that if you want to get skilled workers, you must get to the site as early as possible, because after 10h00 they start drinking and no longer show any interest in getting a piece-job.

At the hiring site there is no shelter or trees. Behind the site is a park with trees, drinking water and public toilets but the day labourers are prevented from entering the park. When it rains, they have no option but to stand in the rain against which most are not protected.

At this site the day labourers form groups according to language, age, and friendships. The day labourers interviewed said that the older day labourers are generally more cooperative and reliable. In contrast, the younger ones are more militant and tend to stand on "forbidden" areas. The immigrants keep a low profile and are less conspicuous as they are the main targets of police raids. They can be distinguished by the darker pigmentation of their skins and their accents. They are usually blamed for undercutting wages and for allegedly taking job opportunities away from South Africans: "These Makwerekweres (derogatory name for Matabele Zimbabweans) are spoiling the employers by charging R20 per day when we charge R100 per day. They must go back to Zimbabwe and leave us alone" (Xipu 2004).

The employees of the businesses are not present in the area after hours and do not have definite perceptions of where the day labourers sleep. They assume they go home to the townships by train. As at the Newlands site, employees from the businesses have little direct interaction with the day labourers; they tend to distance themselves and keep them off the parking lot. The police do not perceive them as a problem. They maintain that the day labourers know each other and screen newcomers; they do not want criminals or illegal immigrants, who are willing to work for less, at the site. There was an incident in the past where a man who robbed a
client was caught and arrested by day labourers. Business employees think that contractors and nearby residents employ day labourers (Nel 2007:62-66).

2.1.3 Pretoria North hiring site

This site is located in the suburb of Pretoria North in Pretoria street, between Earl and Deetlefs Streets (Figure 6). Pretoria Street has a constant flow of traffic in a predominantly lower middleclass residential area with one street block of businesses. The day labourers stood on the northern side of the road on a very narrow sidewalk in front of a small hardware store and an open on which building material and plants are to be found. They are not allowed to stand across the street in front of the shops. They tended to sit on bricks and cement blocks. Others stood along the pavement keeping a vigilant eye on potential employers.

Figure 6: Map of Pretoria North hiring site
This is a smaller site where the number of day labourers reaches about 50. The mood here was also different. They did not gather in groups talking; they stood apart from each other and many sat. These day labourers appeared to be apathetic, desperate and hungry. During the survey the fieldworkers also observed the apathy and desperation. They seemed tired and irritated by the questions asked and were suspected of not giving correct information.

The entrepreneurship observed at Newlands and the aggression experienced at Gezina were absent. No tools were displayed on the pavements and no elaborate gestures were made to attract the attention of employers. Instead there was a prevailing atmosphere of poverty and gloom. Many wore faded jeans and torn T-shirts covered with paint blotches. Most did not engage actively with potential employers. Instead they waited hopefully. One of the day labourers described his position as: "Life is tough when you don't have a permanent job and when your family is far away. Sometimes we stay for two days without food" (Xipu 2004).

When Xipu initially made contact with the day labourers here, they wanted to know if he could immediately provide them with a job. Most of them drifted away
when he explained that he was doing research and that the benefits could come in the medium to long term, if the research recommendations were implemented. It was after several visits to the site that a relationship was formed and more day labourers responded to the researcher.

The day labourers at this site expected any wage between R30 and R50 per day which is much lower than Gezina (R100) and Newlands (R180).

As at the Gezina site, the daily activities at the site started at 6h30 and continued until 10h00. The day labourers usually say that they can do "any job", which mostly includes bricklaying, paving and gardening. There is a gardening service in the area which hires a number of day labourers on an ad hoc basis. To get a piece-job in the gardening service, day labourers need to have networking contacts with those who are regulars, especially the edge-trimmers (more skilled), who seem to enjoy the highest status in gardening. A day labourer explained as follows: "When you befriend an edge-trimmer and buy him "itakana" (liquor) regularly, you are sure to become one of the regulars in the gardening service" (Xipu 2004).

Another significant feature about this site was that it seemed to be an entry point for illegal immigrants into the day labour market in Tshwane. One illegal immigrant confided to the researcher (Xipu) that being a day labourer at this site was a "dream-come-true" for him as his family of origin was living in acute poverty in Zimbabwe. He said that he had risked his life to get to the site: he jumped an electric fence at the border of South Africa and Zimbabwe, swam across a crocodile-infested river and walked for days without food. He said:

Day labour work is the most feasible way of generating an income. You don't need an ID document or certificates to get a job. In order to survive, all you need to do is to keep a low profile, to stay away from the police, to get a girlfriend who is a stay-in domestic worker for accommodation and to impress your employer the day you get a chance to do a piece-job. I
don't want to go back to Zimbabwe because there is poverty there. At least here I can work, save money and send it to my family in Zimbabwe.

During the survey the fieldworkers also noticed the presence of many with whom they experienced language barriers.

The perceptions of businesses and residents about day labourers at this site are generally similar to those at the other sites (Nel 2007:69) e.g. there is very little direct interaction with the day labourers; they are suspected of being linked to local crime. They do not know much about the day labourers or where they slept. At this site no mention was made of the presence of the day labourers decreasing property value. Business employees also thought contractors and nearby residents employ day labourers.

The police know that some sleep on the premises of a currently empty factory, which has led to complaints from the public. It is difficult to distinguish between honest job seekers and those who may be collecting information to commit crime. There have been house burglaries without forced entry which have created the suspicion that “day labourers” may familiarise themselves with a place and at a later stage use the information to commit crime.

2.1.4 Reflection

These three hiring sites in Tshwane seem to indicate that like the hiring site in Brooklyn, New York they are geographical spaces that have become human spaces. Each hiring site is a small unique community within a larger community and yet the hiring sites also seem to have a lot of commonalities whether the sites are in New York (USA) or in Tshwane (RSA).

2.2 Research results on hiring sites

The 10 questions in Section A of the questionnaire on the hiring sites were
based on the literature study on hiring sites (chapter 4 section 2.2 and chapter 5 sections 2). These questions elicited the following results. (In the discussion of the results references will also be made to the case studies of the labourers Koos, Lawrence and Andrew presented in the next section 3).

2.2.1 Number of informal hiring sites

Before the survey 80 informal hiring sites had been identified. The survey included a question (5) on whether the respondent was aware of any other hiring sites. A further nineteen previously unknown sites were mentioned increasing the estimated number of sites to 99. This seems to indicate that sites are constantly changing, appearing and disappearing and some may be difficult to find. Any count of sites and day labourers is at best an estimate (Valenzuela 1999:3).

2.2.2 Frequenting of different hiring sites

The questionnaire included questions (1-4) to determine whether day labourers move between hiring sites or mostly remain at the same site.

Most men (70%) indicated that they stand at only one hiring site, though 56% have previously stood at other hiring sites. The reasons for standing at particular hiring sites seems to be an interplay of economic and social factors, i.e. that there are more jobs available (35%) and friends frequent the place (20%). Factors like
proximity to place of residence (11%) better pay (9%) connections to employers (7%), the only known site (7%) and less harassment (1%) and other (10%) are of less importance. Other factors include that the site is near to places where public transport stops.

The case studies on the day labourers provide the following illustrations. Koos (2005) had only stood at this hiring site since arriving in Tshwane.; Lawrence (2005) had been coming to the same site for the past twelve years and Andrew (2005) has been coming to this site for the past two years, before that, while he was still at school, he used to have a Saturday gardening job (which he still has) in this area. He now comes here every day.

Most of the men (48%) had heard about the particular hiring site where they stood, from friends and slightly less (36%) had located the hiring site themselves. Koos' (2005) brother who worked nearby had suggested this site

Reasons for standing at a particular site was often that the men were able to earn more at that particular site than at other sites. In the research by Schenck and Louw (2005:87) day labourers mentioned that they preferred coming to Elardus Park, a south eastern suburb of Tshwane, because, on average. They were paid more for a day's work than in other areas of Tshwane. This was also confirmed by Lawrence (2005): Even though Elardus Park was one of the hiring sites furthest from his home, the pay was better here when he did get a job.

2.2.3 Time spent at the hiring sites

The questionnaire included questions (6-10) to determine day labourers' routine or movements on a typical day (chapter 5 section 3.5).

The respondents reported that they start arriving at the hiring sites from about 6.00 am in the spring months (September and October) (the season during which the survey was conducted) although most seem to arrive closer to 7.00 when
employers also seem to start arriving. These findings on their arrival time were confirmed by the observation of Nel (2007) and Xipu (2005) of the activities at the hiring sites.

There seem to be two main times when day labourers leave the sites, namely between 10.00 and 12.00, and 15.00 until which time and a smaller group remained. These results are confirmed by the following: *I had met Andrew at about 8.00 on a particular day. At about 11h00 that day, I saw him again, and when I asked him he said he was now going home. When I spoke to Koos at 9.20 and asked Koos about the other two men whom I had seen earlier, he explained that they had got tired of waiting and had gone to join the other day labourers at a nearby shopping centre. Koos said that he was prepared to wait until 13:00 before leaving. His observation was that some employers seemed to prefer to pick up day labourers later when there weren’t so many to rush and scratch the cars. It was also safer at this isolated spot. The police often dispersed larger groups, e.g. near the shopping centre, but here he was seldom chased away. Near the shopping centre there is a need for the police as there are many who create trouble, like stealing cell phones. ‘It’s a mixed lot there; not all are waiting for jobs.’* (Koos 2005).

Asked what they do after leaving the sites, most day labourers indicated that they rest or do nothing. Some play ‘marabaraba’, cards and other gambling games, read newspapers, return to their homes or sleeping places and to do household chores or engage in selling, e.g. sweets.

2.2.4 Reflection

The research results have provided some description of the visible economic action that takes place at hiring sites as well as some of the other social practices.
3 PROFILE OF THE PERSON OF THE DAY LABOURERS

The Oxford dictionary (1990 sv "profile") refers to a profile as being an outline as seen from one side. It refers to only being an outline, not a filled in, detailed picture and also implies being partial in its one-sidedness. Similarly survey results only present an outline and often one-sided results. In the following presentation of the results some filling in is added through references to the case studies, personal observations and also the subsequent chapters.

Section B of the questionnaire included questions on the profile of day labourers and elicited the following results:

3.1 Case studies of day labourers

Before presenting the research results on the day labourers, I want to present three short incomplete case studies of Koos, Andrew and Lawrence who I spoke to personally. [These are probably not their names as they are not African names but common South African names. In addition to their African name many Africans in South Africa adopt a second English or Afrikaans name as they are more acceptable and user-friendly in negotiating a job. By assuming these names a poverty of identity is taken on (chapter 8 section 2.5.3) for the sake of actualising the most basic fundamental human need of subsistence through employment as day labourer.]

3.1.1 Koos

It was Friday, 18 February 2005, at the T-junction in Elardus Park, Tshwane. I had passed the place twice previously that morning. At 7.30 there had been five men, at 9.00 there had been three men and now at 9.20 there was only one man. He was standing on the side of the road, at the corner opposite a church in the shade of a tree, resting his arms on the electricity box. I was traveling in a car and stopped with the intention of speaking to the man if he was willing.

He straightened up as I approached. I explained that I wasn’t looking to hire a day labourer but would like to talk to him. I offered him a loaf of bread, which he
received gratefully. I introduced myself and asked how I should address him, to which he answered that I should address him as Koos.

Koos could have been about 35 years old. He spoke Afrikaans well and could read and write Afrikaans. He said he could speak a little English. I enquired about the other two men that had left. They were from Mozambique and spoke no English or Afrikaans. Communication was a problem. He communicated with them through a mixture of languages. Because of language restraints they encountered difficulties as they said yes to everything and would often end up making a mess of jobs.

Koos was from Reitz in the Free State province and had first come to Tshwane eight months ago. His brother has been working close by on a construction site for a long time. He had encouraged him to come to Tshwane saying that Koos was more likely to get a job here than in Reitz. He was also hoping to get a more permanent job but in the meantime stayed with his brother on the construction site. His brother had come to Pretoria earlier and had also worked as a day labourer doing piece jobs until he got construction work. His brother was knowledgeable and could advise him about where to go and what to do. If he didn’t get work, he would get some food from him. His brother had also previously borrowed money from his employer to help Koos.

Koos was actually isiZulu-speaking and still has a family home at Newcastle in KwaZulu-Natal. His grandparents or great grandparents had moved to Reitz and worked on a farm. His parents are still on the farm. His grandparents live in the township at Reitz. They both receive old age pensions and they help his wife and children, twins of eleven. The children both attend school. He himself had also attended school in Reitz until grade seven. The farmer used to transport them to school in Reitz every morning, but after school in the afternoons they had to get home by themselves.

He had learnt painting and tiling by being an assistant in Reitz and on the farms. Work was scarce in Reitz due to the drought and the government’s new labour laws. Farm labourers now live in the town and are hired if farmers need workers. He had come to the greener pastures of the city. In Reitz you could not easily earn more than R45 a day. Here people were prepared to pay R75, which was much better. He hadn’t had work for the last two weeks but had a paint job lined up for the following week at a house around the corner. He had got the job through a friend who was working there while the people were building a duet flat that they were going to rent out.

He had been home in December for the first time. Since being back he had not been able to send any money home. Other than lack of work he had not experienced bad treatment of any kind from anybody. He had not been ill at all. If he was ill he would leave it to his brother to make a plan.
3.1.2 Andrew

I struck up conversations with Andrew and Lawrence while distributing food to day labourers in Elardus Park.

It was 8.30, cold, overcast and had rained the previous night.

We had been distributing warm soup and bread and I thought I recognised the very youthful looking slender man from a previous visit. I initiated a conversation with Andrew as he later identified himself. He spoke Afrikaans well enough to understand my open ended questions. Yes, he had been here last week. Work was bad this week. He hadn't had a job yet. Last week he had had two in addition to his regular Saturday job.

He is Setswana speaking and comes from Hammanskraal daily where he lives with his widowed unemployed mother. He has an older sister and a younger brother at home. He is 20 and has been standing at the hiring site since 2003. Before that he had been at school. He completed grade 11 but couldn't manage to keep himself at school with the regular piece job he had on Saturday in Elardus Park. He still has that job and it is his only regular income.

He has never had a regular job and agrees to do any job. He said he could paint and thatch. He attended a skills training course at Temba in thatching and painting. He has learnt other skills through experience.

During the course of the conversation I explained what the research was about and asked if he would consent to our conversation being used. He agreed. Someone else interrupted us and said it was permissible as long as they weren't photographed.

Afterwards when I was at the shopping centre, Andrew and two others approached me for R6 transport fare each to go back to Hammanskraal.

As they were leaving Andrew said he would like to talk to me some day—perhaps the next week. I never saw him again.

3.1.3 Lawrence

When we stopped with the food Lawrence immediately approached the table where we were distributing food and said that he had not had anything to eat yesterday and that he was very thankful for the food. He looked slightly older than Andrew and was interested when Andrew signed the consent form. I then asked him if he would talk to me. He first signed a form and then the conversation continued.
Lawrence came from Soshanguve and is Setswana speaking. He has a partner and a child of three. He goes home only when he has about R500 to be able to give the family. He cannot go empty-handed or with less. He sleeps in the open or wherever he can find a place. He was evasive when I tried to get more specific information.

Lawrence has been coming to this site for twelve years. He comes to this site even though it is the furthest point from home, because pay is better. In the north he can be paid about R50, here he gets paid R75-R85 for the same job. He is now 30 years old and has never had a regular job. He completed grade 12. He is skilled at many things which he has learnt through experience, such as tiling, paving, and painting.

Where applicable, information from the interviews with Koos, Lawrence and Andrew as well as the group interviews at hiring sites Newland, Gezina and Pretoria North, will be integrated as part of the discussion of the survey results.

3.2 Research results on personal background and conditions of day labourers

In Section B of the questionnaire 18 questions focused on the personal background and present subsistence conditions of day labourers at informal hiring sites.

3.2.1 Number of day labourers in Tshwane

Valenzuela (2003:6) cautions that any particular count of day labourers very likely underestimates the day labour population, because it includes only those seeking employment at that particular point in time. It does not include those who were not seeking employment at these times or those that were excluded for other reasons, e.g. already having secured a job.

The following profile is based on a sample of 10% of the 2420 originally counted in Tshwane. During the survey further hiring sites and day labourers were
located. After the survey in September 2004 the number of day labourers was estimated at approximately 3030 (Xipu 2005:43). This estimate is based on the counts made during the three days of the survey as well as the numbers previously counted at the hiring sites but not included in the sample.

3.2.2 Place of origin

Questions on the countries and provinces of origin of day labourers included Questions 11 and 12 to get an indication of the extent to which day labourers were from Tshwane and if not, where they came from. In the US most day labourers were from Spanish speaking countries south of the USA and typically labour migrants. (Chapter 4 section 3.2)

- Country of origin

Figure 7 gives a breakdown of day labourers’ country of origin.

![Country of birth of day labourers](image)

Figure 7: Country of origin of labourers

According to the survey day labourers in Tshwane in 2004 seem to be mostly (88%) South Africans, with only 10% coming from the bordering countries of
Zimbabwe and Mozambique. The other unspecified 2.1% are assumed to have been born outside South Africa. It is assumed that they may not want to disclose their origin. None of the respondents in the survey originated from the bordering countries of Botswana, Namibia, Lesotho, and Swaziland.

The fact that most of the day labourers in Tshwane are of South African origin is confirmed by the cases studies of Koos, Andrew and Lawrence who were all born in South Africa. However it was found during the group interviews that two of the three men at Newlands and all three at Pretoria North were from Zimbabwe.

Although refugees, illegal immigrants, including drug dealers (Du Plessis: 2005-see prologue) are frequently referred to in the media they are not well represented in the survey of day labourers in Tshwane. This information is consistent with the preliminary study (Schenck & Louw 2005:88) which indicated that those men included in the study seem to be genuine job seekers.

The results indicating there were no day labourers from Lesotho, was different to what had been encountered in the pilot study where there had been men form Lesotho. From observation during food distribution during 2005 at one particular point in Elardus Park, a large proportion of the day labourers seemed to be from Lesotho.

The above results showing that most day labourers are from within South Africa differ from the situation in the USA where most day labourers were cross-border migrants.

- **Province of original abode**

Data on the province of origin in RSA of the day labourers was required to determine whether there were any obvious patterns.
Results from question 12, figure 8 (above) indicate the provinces that the day labourers migrated from to Tshwane. These figures were rounded to the nearest full percentage. It is interesting to note that only 11% of the day labourers were from Gauteng in which Tshwane is situated. The vast majority, 88%, of the day labourers came from outside Gauteng province to seek employment in Tshwane. Almost 60% of the day labourers originated from the Limpopo and Mpumalanga provinces. These provinces border on Tshwane in the north and east respectively. They are predominantly rural, poor and provinces through which respondents from Mozambique and Zimbabwe enter South Africa (Blaauw 2005:13).

Harmse et. al. (2007:15 &16) explain that “provinces in which a high percentage of the GDP of the country is produced tend to have lower levels of unemployment but higher numbers of day labourers” and “many of day labourers standing on street corners in the metropolitan areas come from rural areas where the levels of (economic) development are low and the unemployment is high, to look for work in the urban areas. “Just how applicable the above explanation is, will become clear in the description of Tshwane (chapter 7) where the economic prosperity and level of unemployment is described.
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Chapter 6. Research results

Data on the provinces of origin of day labourers also indicates that day labourers are part of the continuing historical pattern of migrant labour. The migration pattern of day labourers revealed in the research is typical of the migration dynamics and spectrum of migrants in Southern Africa. Their socio-economic circumstances are typical of the consequences of labour migration as described in chapter 11 section 2.4-2.6.

These migration patterns seem to illustrate how low and lack of development, especially in predominantly rural provinces, seems to contribute to the internal (labour) migration of day labourers. Migration seems like a voluntary form of displacement (a term more often used to refer to situations such as forced resettlement). Rodgers (2006:132) explains that the experience of displacement contributes to the social and economic marginalisation of populations and signifies a chronic vulnerability to further displacement.

On the other side of the spectrum the number of unemployed men from Tshwane itself at informal hiring sites, is conspicuously small and the reasons for this are not obvious. It raises the question as to whether job seeking by standing at informal hiring sites is done mostly by labour migrants who may not know of other ways of gaining employment. Could it be that local unemployed men have better networks to find casual employment and do not have to put in the same effort for similar returns? (Chapter 8 section 5.5.4; chapter 7 section 2.3.1.3 (d) (social networks)). Future research could possibly be done on this.

For day labourers from other provinces it is likely that the consequences of migration could mean experiences of poverties of protection, identity and affection. If the migrant is not successful in his quest to find employment, poverties of subsistence, participation and creation particularly relating to lack of work are also experienced (chapters 2 section 5.3.12 and chapter 6 section 2.5.3).
The emergence of African day labourers, many of them migrants from rural areas, at informal hiring sites seeking jobs in areas previously reserved for whites only by Apartheid laws, has only become a legal possibility since the political changes since 1994. The Bill of Rights in the Constitution of South Africa now includes the freedom of movement (clause 21). Municipal bylaws on loitering in public places have also been repealed making informal hiring sites possible.

3.2.3 Home language

Information on the home language (question 13) of the day labourers is important as an approximate verifier of their places of origin but also as an indication of their possible social marginalisation in Tshwane. The home language of the day labourers also indicates what language preferences could have been considered for the questionnaires and selection of field workers had the budget allowed it. The information Koos shared with us illustrates his and the other day labourers’ marginalisation.

Koos (2005) was actually isiZulu speaking and still had a family home at Newcastle in KwaZulu-Natal. The other men who had already left the site were from Mozambique (probably XiTsonga and Portuguese speaking) and spoke neither English nor Afrikaans. Koos said he communicated with them through a mixture of languages. He also related that they encountered difficulties because they said “yes” to everything and would often end up making a mess of jobs.

Both Andrew (2005) and Lawrence (2005) speak Setswana which is not the most commonly spoken African language in Tshwane.

Table 5 below provides an exposition of the places of origin and of the home languages of the day labourers in Tshwane.
TABLE 5: DISTRIBUTION OF DAY LABOURERS, HOME LANGUAGE AND PLACES OF ORIGIN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Day labourers</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Day labourers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Limpopo</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>Tshivenda</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sepedi</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mphumalanga</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Xitsonga</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Isindebele</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Siswati</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North West</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>Setswana</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gauteng</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Cape</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>Isixhosa</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free State</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>Sesotho</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KwaZulu Natal</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>IsiZulu</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elsewhere</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The day labourers' home language must be viewed against the context that the most widely spoken African language in Tshwane is Sepedi followed by seTswana (chapter 7). Sepedi is also one of the languages spoken in Limpopo. The largest group (33%) speak Sepedi and are probably most at home in Tshwane. Isindebele is spoken by 10% of the population which is spoken in the Mpumalanga area bordering on the CTMM. XiTsonga is spoken by 10% and is a language spoken in
Mpumalanga as well as in the bordering country of Mozambique. Tshivenda is spoken in Limpopo province and the southern part of the bordering country, Zimbabwe.

The distribution of home language seems to indicate migration from the poorest provinces and immigration from Zimbabwe and Mozambique through Limpopo and Mpumalanga respectively. The latter is also confirmed by Portuguese being the dominant language among the languages other than the official South African languages. The distribution of home language more or less corresponds with the language distribution of the places of origin.

The high incidence of languages other than Sepedi and Setswana implies having to find one's way in an unfamiliar language and culture. This indicates poverty of identity and freedom due to imposition of alien values upon local and regional cultures, forced migration, political exile and lack of tolerance for diversity of identities (Chapter 8 section 2.5.3).

3.2.4 Gender distribution

In the USA and in the study in Elardus Park the day labourers were predominantly male (Schenck & Louw 2005:87). In this survey, based on observations by the field workers (introductory section of the questionnaire), the findings were also that the day labourers were predominantly (97.5%) male. The few women (2.5%) located during the survey at a single hiring site had all previously been employed full-time by a factory, but had been laid off, though now they still work half-time on a rotation basis. This seemed to the employer's way of avoiding compliance with labour law regulations.

The gendered nature of day labour can to a large extent be explained by the unprotected lives day labourers lead (Blaauw et. al. 2005:12) that seems better
men than women, although this is not exclusively so. Another explanation is that women who do "piece jobs"/ day labour as domestic workers seem to make more use of their social networks to search for jobs (Schenck & Louw 2005:57). Women on the street are likely to be associated with prostitution.

3.2.5 Age

The questionnaire included a question (14) on age group and not a specific age of the day labourers. In the pilot study the question asked them their age which many were reluctant to answer. In conversations with day labourers I respected their reluctance: *I did not ask them their ages but estimated from their stories that Koos was about 35, Andrew 21 and Lawrence 30 years of age.* (Andrew 2005; Lawrence 2005; Koos 2005).

![Age distribution of day labourers](image)

**Figure 9: Age distribution of day labourers in Tshwane**

Although the day labourers range in age from under 20 years to over 60 years, on average they comprise a young work force. In fact 56% are between 21 and 30 years old and almost three quarters are less than 35 years old. The numbers decrease as age increases. (Chapter 4 section 3.4).
This data shows that day labourers are highly representative of new entrants into the labour market who are unable to acquire other (or permanent) employment and youth unemployment (Chapter 10 section 5.5.2).

The age distribution is also typical of the ages of across-border migrants (Chapter 9 section 2.1.4). Logically their age distribution also reflects the ages at which a person is more likely to be physically stronger and healthier and better able to survive the harsh conditions typical of the life of a day labourer.

Psychologically these young men are restrained from being part of the expected social rhythm of making an important transition into the adult world, self actualization, self reliance and economic independence. Through being day labourers their maturation to full adulthood is stunted. Their alienation from the structured world of employment also implies exclusion from expected social experiences which further affects their socio-psychological well being (Gonzo & Plattner 2003:23-24). The age distribution of day labourers is therefore indicative of a poverty of identity (Max-Neef et. al. 1989:33).

3.2.6 Marital or couple status

Data on the marital/couple/co-habitation status and number of children are important as indicators of the social development of the individual day labourer, of
commitments and relationships and the possible effect of day labour on commitments and also of the number of people and families affected by the lives they lead. The questionnaire included a question on marital/couple/co-habitation status (Question15). Figure 10 below provides an exposition of the marital status of day labourers and figure 11 on their parental status.

Consistent with their overall youthfulness a significant number (56%) have never been married. A slightly smaller number (39%) are either married (including customary marriages) or living with a partner. The case studies illustrate similar tendencies:

Koos (35) was married with two children who were living with his grandparents in Reitz; Lawrence (30) had a partner and a three year old child to whom he went home if he had at least R500 to give them; Andrew (21) was apparently unattached living with his mother and two siblings. (Andrew 2005; Lawrence 2005; Koos 2005).

![Marital status](image)

**Figure 10: Marital status**

The age of day labourers supports the assumption that youth unemployment has a delaying effect on marriage (chapter 8 section 5.2.1). They are unable to support or contribute substantially to a household which prevents them form
engaging in the expected age related relationships in expected ways e.g. of paying lobola (bride price). These situations seem to indicate poverty of affection, creation and identity (Max-Neef et. al. 1989:33).

3.2.7 Parental status and dependants

Parental status gives an indication of the day labourer’s dependants and of actualization of affection. The questionnaire included questions on parental status (Question 16) and on dependants (Question 17). Figure 11 presents the parental status of the day labourers.

![Parental status diagram]

Figure 11: Parental status

Consistent with their age and marital status, 34% of the day labourers maintained they had no children and 23% and 20% maintained they had one and two children respectively. On average they had one or two children.

Although 16% of day labourers indicated that they were only supporting themselves with their earnings, Blaauw et. al. (2005:15) calculated that on average each day labourer could be supporting or contributing to the support of 4 people (including himself). More than half the respondents (56.2%) support up to four people (including parent and siblings). By using the frequency results of the
(including himself). More than half the respondents (56.2%) support up to four people (including parent and siblings). By using the frequency results of the questionnaire it is estimated that the informal market of day labourers at hiring sites in Tshwane provides some income for at least 10,000 people.

One man mentioned that having a wife and child to support was the thing that gave him the courage to continue with day labour (Gezina group 2005).

3.2.8 Contact with home

The frequency of contact with the day labourers' homes is a continuation of the exploration of the actualization of the needs for affection as well as protection, participation and identity. The questionnaire included a question (18) on the frequency of their contact with their homes. The responses evoked are presented in figure 12.

![Frequency of home visits](image)

**Figure 12: Frequency of home visits**

Only 21% of the day labourers go home daily and 5% go home weekly. Just less than 75% of the day labourers have homes outside Tshwane which they visit when they have enough money to get there and to contribute to the households. For many contacts are infrequent and probably irregular which affects family
relationships (chapter 4 section 4.3.4). These results are confirmed by the case studies:

Andrew (2005) lived with his widowed mother and two siblings and went home most days if he had money to pay for transport. Lawrence (2005) did not live with his partner and child. He went home if he had at least R500 to give to the family. Koos (2005) had been home once since arriving in Tshwane eight months ago. That was over the Christmas festive season. He had now been back in Tshwane nearly three months and had not been home once.

The limited contact of many day labourers with their homes indicates in many cases a poverty of subsistence as well as poverty of affection due to the lack of means to maintain normal relationships (chapter 4 section 4.3.4).

3.2.9 Shelter

Associated with the previous questions were questions 19-21 about subsistence (shelter and food), based on chapter 4 section 3.6.1. These were questions on where the day labourers slept so as to get a picture of the shelter to which they had access. Only 23% are able to sleep at home regularly. The others (77%) sleep elsewhere. Many of these forms of shelter could also be regarded as representing varying degrees of temporary homelessness. The type of shelter mostly used is presented in figure 13.

The men seem to sleep in back yard rooms (25%), hostels and shelters (12%), shacks (24%), construction sites (13%) or "rough" in the open under bushes, bridges etc. The following extracts from the case studies illustrate the numerical data.
The man from Zimbabwe who rented a back yard shack in Mamelodi township explained: “Some days I don’t go home. If I get a piece job then there is money to go home otherwise I go back to the bushes and sleep there.” (Newlands group interview 2005).

Even though the manager did not approve, Koos (2005) stayed with his brother on the construction site where the latter worked. He left very early each morning and only returned in the evening when he would not be noticed. Andrew (2005) went home. Lawrence (2005) was evasive but said he slept rough or wherever he could find shelter.

The vast majority, (82.2%-88%) have never been threatened, assaulted or robbed where they sleep but many are fearful.

A Zimbabwean man who did not have a fixed address and mostly slept rough said that he was afraid of being killed. It had happened to someone also sleeping rough and unprotected. He explained that sometimes at night people (usually South Africans) shout at you and they try to steal your documents or your shoes forcing you to walk around barefoot. This makes him very vulnerable because his
experience was that the police are suspicious of people who are barefoot, they suspect them of being foreigners and then demand identification. This situation is the worst at the end of the month when the ‘tsotsis’ (African ruffian) know that the men may have money (Newlands group 2005).

You can’t just stay here overnight and sleep in the bushes. You have to be part of a group and comply with their rules otherwise it is not safe (Pretoria North group 2005).

The circumstances under which the day labourers most frequently or even occasionally sleep emphasizes the extent of their poverty of subsistence and simultaneously indicates the poverty of protection, affection, identity and freedom.

About 60% of the day labourers who do not live at home rent some form of lodging. Their expenditure on lodging is presented in table 6.

**TABLE 6: EXPENDITURE ON LODGING PER MONTH**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>Number of DL</th>
<th>% of day labourers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;R50</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>61.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R50-R99</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R100-R199</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R200-R299</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;R300</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In terms of the average income of a day labourers most (61.6%) spend less than 7.5% of their total income on lodging. It is not clear how the above corresponds with the type of shelter to which they have access. The following cameo is probably representative of many others:
A man from the Newlands group (2005) with no fixed address and who often sleeps rough summed up the bad end of the spectrum: "We do not have accommodation. With no piece jobs we are unable to pay our landlords, who want their money every end of the month or week. Some understand that we may not have money then, others don't. Jobs and accommodation are our biggest problem."

Theodore (2004:1820) aptly states that: "[b]ecause of the very low incomes they earn and the instability and (associated) uncertainty ... these workers have little hope of escaping homelessness" (in Tshwane).

### 3.2.10 Food

Hunger is not mentioned in the studies on day labourers in the USA, but it was a prominent feature in the research by Louw and Schenck (2005) in Elardus Park, Tshwane (chapter 4 section 3.6.2). Therefore a question (23) on their perception of access to food was included in the questionnaire. The results are presented in table 7 which provides details about day labourers' perception and experience of food accessibility during the previous month.

**TABLE 7: PERCEPTION OF FOOD AVAILABILITY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food availability</th>
<th>Percentage of day labourers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes did not have enough to eat</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had enough to eat but not always the food of choice</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had enough food of choice</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refused to answer</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the above table we see that half the day labourers sometimes did not
have enough to eat. This is illustrated by the following from the case studies:

When Koos (2005) didn’t get a job and had no money to buy food his brother provided food. Lawrence (2005) immediately came to the place where we were distributing food and took the soup and bread thankfully saying that he had not had anything to eat the previous day.

These results show the wide prevalence of the most basic povertes of the needs of subsistence, freedom and probably affection (Chapter 6 section 2.5.3).

In the interviews it was mentioned that the availability of food played a role in whether the men return home if they have not been successful in getting a job. A man in the Pretoria North group (2005) explained:

If you know that there is food at home you go home earlier if you don’t get a job, otherwise you wait at the hiring site the whole day for work in the hope of being able to take some food home.

From the above it is obvious that many of the day labourers experience poverty of subsistence for example, lack of food, shelter and rest (Max-Neef et. al. 1989:33).

3.2.11 School Education

Because education and training contributes to access to work, questions (24-28) covering formal schooling, skills training and language proficiency were included in the questionnaire. The lower a person’s education the more difficult it is to obtain permanent better paid employment. The lower the education of a person the higher the risk of being the first to be retrenched. The human capital produced by education and skills also determines the human capital of the following generation and the possibility of breaking the cycle of poverty (Chapter 8 section 2.5.1). Figure 14 represents the level of formal school education of day labourers.
At least 5% of the day labourers had no, or less than three years of formal school education. Most (92%) of the men interviewed had at least completed grade 3 and 21% had passed primary school. These men probably represent those possessing little or no particular skills and only have their physical (manual) labour to offer on the job market. At least half of the men had more than 10 years formal school education. Of these, 15% had passed grade 12. More than 30% of the men had passed grade 11. In personal communications some day labourers had mentioned that after failing grade 12 they were not able to raise the money to repeat the year and therefore only had only completed grade 11.

The differences in education are illustrated by the following from the case studies and group interviews:

While living on the farm with his parents Koos had attended school in Reitz and completed grade 7. The farmer used to transport them to school in the mornings but they usually had to get home of their own accord (Koos 2005).
Andrew completed grade 11. He had kept himself at school until then, with a Saturday job near this hiring site, which he still held. During his last year at school, he quit because it had become too difficult to make enough money to stay at school (Andrew 2005).

Lawrence had completed grade 12. (Lawrence 2005.)

The school education of three men in the Gezina group (2005) ranged from none to grades 3 and 6 attained through night school adult education in Giyani and Mapayeni, rural areas of Limpopo province.

Most (77%) of the day labourers seem to have had to discontinue their education due to poverty. Other reasons for leaving school were failing and lack of interest. Because of this low level of education they were likely to remain caught in the poverty trap (Chapter 8 section 2.5.1). The poverty which previously deprived them of education is being maintained despite the fact that it is one of the main concerns, they are unable to provide adequately for their children’s education.

These results regarding education of day labourers indicate a poverty of understanding (Max-Neef et. al. 1989:33).

3.2.12 Skills training

Like formal schooling appropriate skills training is directly related to employability. With reference to chapter 4 section 3.5.2 the questionnaire included a question (26) on skills training.

Training which had been received was mainly in painting (14%) followed by security work (9%) and carpentry (5%). Various other skills such as electrical work, plumbing, welding, panel beating, laboratory analyst, computer literacy, driving, TV repairs, fashion design and dressmaking and waitering on tables had been acquired by some of the men.
Koos had learnt painting and tiling working as an assistant labourer in the town of Reitz and on the farms. Lawrence had picked up tiling, paving and painting skills on the job. Andrew had received training in thatching and painting at a college in Temba (Tshwane North). He had also acquired other general skills on the job. (Andrew 2005; Lawrence 2005; Koos 2005).

In general the skills levels of the day labourers are low making their prospects of entering or returning to the formal employment sector low (Blaauw et. al. 2006:462).

Other than construction and maintenance related training (15%) from the responses of the day labourers there is no clear pattern as to what training would improve their employment opportunities.

It is interesting that gardening, the job for which day laburcers are most frequently hired does not appear on the list at all. It is not evident whether they would rather not do gardening, or if training is not needed for the gardening jobs they do, or if it is the unskilled persons to take the gardening jobs.

Blaauw et. al. (2006:463) comment that the need for training in construction was consistent with the improvement of this sector in the economy. Day labourers at grass roots are aware that there is an increasing demand for labour in the construction industry.

These results revealing low levels of skills training among day labourers also indicate a poverty of understanding and creation (Max-Neef et. al. 1999:33)

3.2.13 Proficiency in English and Afrikaans

The questionnaire included questions (27-28) on the day labourers' proficiency in English and Afrikaans. English and Afrikaans are the languages
spoken by most of the residents in eastern Tshwane where the hiring sites are concentrated and where day labourers are most likely to be hired. Tables 8 and 9 represent the perceived proficiency in English and Afrikaans.

**TABLE 8: LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY IN ENGLISH**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>None</th>
<th>Little</th>
<th>Manage</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE 9: LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY IN AFRIKAANS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>None</th>
<th>Little</th>
<th>Manage</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At least 66% of the day labourers maintain that they at least manage to understand English and 55% maintain they manage to understand Afrikaans. Slightly less can respectively speak the languages. However, attempts to enter into conversation in either of these languages revealed a level of understanding too low for conducting conversations beyond very basic concrete facts in the present tense. It appears that they may overrate their language proficiency.

*Koos spoke Afrikaans well and said he could also read and write it. He could speak English a little. I enquired about the other two men from Mozambique who had already left. They spoke no English or Afrikaans. He communicated with them through a mixture of African languages. He said they encountered difficulties because they said “yes” to everything and would often end up making a mess of jobs. Andrew and Lawrence spoke Afrikaans well enough to answer open questions in an understandable Afrikaans. (Andrew 2005; Lawrence 2005; Koos 2005).*
Xipu (2005) wrote of the Newlands hiring site that a unique feature is that day labourers speak Afrikaans. They say that because most employers are Afrikaans-speaking whites, speaking the language enhances their chances of getting a piece job: "White employers in this area mostly speak Afrikaans and they like workers who know Afrikaans because they know that you will be able to understand instructions and do what they want."

It seems that proficiency in the languages spoken by the potential employers may be important in getting a job. If the day labourer himself cannot speak English or Afrikaans he needs to join up with someone who can.

In this section the relationship between the poverty of understanding and access to other satisfiers was illustrated (chapter 6 section 2.5.3).

From the above it seems that proficiency in the languages, a form of poverty of understanding, obviously has a systemic effect. This form of poverty of understanding contributes to diminished employability, which contributes to poverty of participation, creation, protection and subsistence (Max-Neef et. al. 1989:33). This makes training in language skills very important as a form of assistance to day labourers.

3.3 Reflection

The social profile compiled from the research results so far reveals a population which, due to economic poverty, also experiences many other poverties that can be expected to affect their employment, economic and social situations.

Many of the conditions revealed through the research results concerned not only the different poverties experienced. The conditions are also a violation of the human rights of day labourers because, according to The Bill of Rights of the Constitution of South Africa, day labourers also are entitled: to be treated with dignity
(clause 10), not to have their lives threatened in terms of the right to life (clause 11), not to be exposed to violence (clause 12) not to have possessions seized (clause 14), to sufficient food and water (clause 27), adequate shelter in terms of adequate housing (clause 26), basic education, including adult basic education (clause 29).

Many of these conditions are also indicative of the day labourers’ social marginalisation. Men coming from rural areas, where they have a defined place and status in the society, to the anonymity of the city where they are without status and have limited access to resources like education, shelter and leisure activities experience many forms of marginalisation (Burton & Kagan 2003:4, 7).

4 EMPLOYMENT AND EMPLOYMENT SEEKING HISTORY

The results presented in this section are based on the responses to Section C of questionnaire.

Koos’s story in 3.1.1 (especially paragraphs 4 and 6) which will not be repeated) is typical of many day labourers’ employment and employment seeking history. This is substantiated by the Nkusi Report (De Lange 2007:12) which found that in the years 1994 to 2004 930, 000 people had been evicted from farms. Each year that additional legislation to protect farm workers was introduced more people were evicted than was the case previously. What was intended to improve conditions for farm workers had had the opposite effect. The legislation had been introduced without putting in place concomitant measures such as legal representation to ensure that people were not illegally evicted from farms.

Based on chapter 5 sections 3.3-3.8 3 the 20 questions (2S-49) in section C of the questionnaire on employment, wages and earnings, work related life and relationships elicited the following responses.
4.1 Employment history

Knowing whether the current day labourers were previously more formally and permanently employed provides an understanding of the dynamics of the flow in and out of the informal day labour market (Blauw 2005:20). Employment history also shows the measure of economic stability and security to which the day labourers and, their dependents are exposed.

Aspects that provide this picture are the length and nature of previous permanent employment, types of employment and reasons for leaving.

4.1.1 Previous formal permanent employment

Formal employment is explained in chapter 10 section 4.2.1. Based on chapter 5 section 3.3 the questionnaire included questions (32-35) on employment history referring to permanent employment not formal employment. Permanent employment may have been interpreted as long-term and not as formal and permanent. Some meaning or accuracy may have been lost in translation.

Forty two (42%) percent of the day labourers had previously been permanently employed in the formal sector of the economy (chapter 10 section 4.2.1); 56% did not have experience of previous permanent employment; they only had employment experience as part of the informal sector of the economy (chapter 10 section 4.2.3)

The high percentage (56%) of day labourers who did not have experience of previous permanent employment shows that the most day labourers experience the phenomenon of long term unemployment which occurs in countries with a high unemployment rate (chapter 10 section 5.5.3). These numbers are illustrated by the following personalized experiences:
Koos (2005) was about 35 and had always done piece jobs. He had never had a permanent job but was hoping to eventually get a more regular job; Andrew (2005) who was 21 had a regular job on Saturdays and Lawrence (2005) who was 30 had been doing piece jobs from this site for the last 12 years since he was 18.

### 4.1.2 Duration of previous permanent employment

Figure 15 provides a breakdown of the length of time of the sub sample of the 42% of previously permanently employed day labourers. Twenty percent (20%) of the day labourers had been employed for less than a year; 39% had been employed for between one and three years which means that a total of 59% had been employed for three years or less. Another 13.6% had been employed for 4-6 years and 21.5% had been permanently employed for longer than 10 years before resorting to day labour. Blaauw et. al. (2006:466) comment that it seems that many of the day labourers held stable employment for relatively long periods before resorting to day labour.

![Duration of previous permanent employment](image)
4.1.3 Type of previous permanent employment

As many as 39% of the day labourers had been employed in the construction and maintenance sector; another 59% had been employed as shop assistants, cleaners, security guards, winch operators, postmen, petrol attendants and gardeners while the employment sector of two percent was unspecified. Blaauw et. al. 2006:465) comment that a further breakdown of these figures shows that 45% of the day labourers had been employed in the service sector (if the security industry is included).

Most of these jobs are in the realm of employment requiring low skills and have a high uncertainty factor i.e. workers are easily replaced due to the large number of available workers.

4.1.4 Reasons for termination of permanent employment

Of the respondents, 42% had previously been permanently employed, but had experienced termination of services, become unemployed and entered the day labour market.

Reasons for termination of permanent employment are significant in illustrating the extent of choice and vulnerability of labourers. Lack of choice is illustrative of the poverty of protection and participation. Table 10 provides the stated reasons for terminating permanent employment.
TABLE 10: REASONS FOR TERMINATION OF PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>Day labourers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lay offs</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quit jobs</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discharges</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wage too low</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unspecified and refused to answer</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Found a better job</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If the unspecified reasons and refusal to answer are ignored, 72% of the men (made up of 54% lay offs and 18% discharges) who experienced termination had not chosen to do so, whereas 21% (quit jobs 19% and wages too low 2%) had chosen to terminate the jobs.

It is significant that no day labourers indicated that they terminated employment because they had found a better job, although those who had quit jobs due to low wages had probably hoped they would find a job which was better paid. Significantly none terminated due to retirement indicating that they expected to or wanted to work. At least 54%, or possibly 72%, of the terminations may be related to economic factors that led to the reduction by employers of the number of employees. This illustrates the extreme vulnerability of unskilled and less skilled workers in the employment market. Blaauw et. al. (2005:24) suggests that other institutional factors may be at play as well, as illustrated by the six female day labourers encountered in the study. These six women were actually part of a group of twenty women who had been laid off in order for the business to remain smaller than the minimum size prescribed by the current labour legislation in terms of which minimum wages and
other conditions of employment are mandatory. The business now hires the same workers as casual workers, thus avoiding the institutional cost involved in adhering to all the prescriptions of the relevant labour legislation. (There are, of course, two sides to this story. Small to medium size businesses often battle to stay afloat with all the mandatory obligations.)

If it is kept in mind that day labourers are mostly young, the 21% that chose to terminate employment is congruent with the characteristics of youth unemployment. Proportionately more youth than older people leave their jobs of their own accord (chapter 10 Section 5.2.2).

Based on questions (36-37) day labour is not the workers’ choice; most day labourers would prefer a permanent job. This is slightly different to findings in the research in Elardus Park where some day labourers had indicated that they preferred day labour to employment in low-paid jobs because they retained the power to decide to leave a job or a boss if conditions were bad. On hindsight however, it is not clear whether the respondents had possibly given the answers they thought we wanted to hear. The unstructured nature of the interviews and the language barriers could also have influenced the answers or interpretation of their answers.

In view of the high rate of unemployment in South Africa, the length of unemployment and the low level of skills of day labourers, it seems unlikely that, even for many of the younger men, day labour can be regarded as a stepping stone to more permanent formal employment, or a stopgap during a period of temporary unemployment as Valenzuela et. al. (2002:205) interpreted the situation of day labourers in the USA to be.

4.2 Present employment situation

Valenzuela (2000:6) stated that it is difficult to capture the nuances and day to
day activities of day labour work as they are affected by cyclical variations of weather, seasonal ups and downs of the construction and home improvement and maintenance industries and the uncertainty of being selected by prospective employers.

4.2.1 Days job searching/waiting at hiring site and days worked

In an attempt to capture an image of the typical day-to-day life of the day labourers in this research they were asked to provide details of their activities during the seven days prior to the survey.

The questionnaire included questions (29 and 30) on the number of days spent searching for a job and the number of days employed during the previous week. Figure 16 shows a comparison of the number of days day labourers spend waiting for work and job searching and the number of days they were employed.

![Days waited and worked](image)

**Figure 16: Days waited and worked**

The days and time the day labourers had been at the hiring site in the hope of getting a job varied. As many as 20% of the day labourers had waited all seven days of the week at the hiring site in the hope of securing work. 52% of the men had
waited for jobs for 5 or 6 days and 26% between 1 and 4 days. The other 2% had not been on the street or refused to answer the question.

An explanation for the variation in the number of days waited is that 25% of the day labourers have regular jobs ranging from 1 to six days a week. They only stand and wait at the hiring site on days they do not have regular work.

Many (21%) of the day labourers had not had any jobs the previous week. Of these a small number mentioned that they had not been waiting at hiring sites every day. Many, however, had waited in vain every day. The few who had worked for 7 days had been working on a single job like painting. The largest group, 30% had worked two days, and 23% had worked one day.

Koos had not earned anything during the last two weeks, but he was hopeful that he may have a paint job lined up for the following week at a house around the corner from where we (Koos and researcher) stood talking. This job was through a friend who was assisting with a building job. He had been on the street this whole week without getting a single job. Andrew had had his regular Saturday job and two other jobs in the past week. Lawrence had not had any jobs in the past week. (Andrew 2005; Lawrence 2005; Koos 2005).

The long working days and weeks with no predictable rewards show the harsh reality and survivalist nature of day labour. Merely to survive the men use all
their time and energy in the hope of sometimes getting a job. This battle for survival forces them out of the ordinary rhythm of life into one with an abnormal rhythm with no time (or money) for rest and enjoyment (Bruwer 1994: 42). There is a poverty of enjoyable idleness and leisure due the necessity of constantly working in order to survive; they do and not have free time and relaxation that results in peace of mind (Max-Neef et. al. 1989:33).

This way of life increases the strain on family and other relationships, for which no time remains, extending the dimensions of poverty beyond the economic. For many of these men there are no alternatives available in a labour market that requires far more human capital (education, skills and experience) than they have to offer (Blaauw et. al. 2006:462).

4.2.2 Types of employment

Data on the work a person performs and the income earned is a major determinant of the quality of life. Income is a direct and indirect satisfier of numerous fundamental human needs of the day labourers themselves and the families of which they are part and to which they are connected. Based on chapter 5 section 3.6 the questionnaire included a question (31) on the types of jobs day labourers performed.

In the week prior to the survey gardening (69%) and painting (65%) were the jobs for which day labourers were most frequently hired. Other jobs mentioned were construction, loading, carpentry, bricklaying, plastering, plumbing, paving and tiling.

Whether gardening is always the most frequent job is not certain. It was the end of September, the beginning of spring, with home-owners very engaged in gardening. This may be one of the cyclical variations related to seasonal periods with which day labourers have to contend to which Valenzuela (2000:6) alerts us. The picture might have been different in another season. On a winter’s morning in
June 2007 a day labourer told us that he usually had gardening jobs two days a week but when he arrived for his job that particular week the employer said that seeing as it was winter and there was nothing to be done in the garden he did not have work. The day labourer left without being paid anything and uncertain when he would be able to earn anything at that house again.

The other jobs mentioned all needed specific skills. It is not clear whether the day labourers actually performed skilled jobs, e.g. plumbing or tiling or whether they were assisting as labourers or whether the work they performed required physical strength.

*Koos, Andrew and Lawrence do any available jobs. (Andrew 2005; Lawrence 2005; Koos 2005).*

### 4.2.3 Regular jobs

Twenty three percent (23%) of the day labourers disclosed that they had regular jobs for some days of the week. About an equal number indicated that they had jobs for one and two days of the week. On the other days they stood at the hiring sites hoping for further employment. They are clearly constant job seekers (chapter 8 section 5.5.4) and underemployed in the informal sector (chapter 10 section 4.2.4)

### 4.2.4 Tools and working equipment

Specific tools and equipment are required for many of the construction and maintenance jobs for which day labourers are hired. At many hiring sites, they exhibit tools like ladders and paint brushes, building towels, garden forks and spades to demonstrate employability.
On inquiry about the necessity of having tools 48% of the day labourers maintained that they had missed job opportunities in the past due to lack of equipment and tools for building, painting and gardening. Barely able to survive many day labourers cannot afford to buy equipment that would increase their chances of being employed.

4.2.5 Rehiring by the same employer

The questionnaire included a question (49) on whether day labourers are repeatedly hired by the same employer.

Only 30% of day labourers had had the experience of being hired by the same employer more than 3 times. It is not clear whether this is indicative of the market, i.e. that the type of jobs day labourers are hired for are once-off jobs, or whether the employers have negative experiences and are dissatisfied with the skill and standard of work done. If the latter, this may be related to day labourers’ desperation for jobs resulting in their claiming to be skilled when in fact this is not so.
From the above it would seem that day labourers experience extreme insecurity regarding employment. It is no small wonder that, when asked 90% indicated that they would prefer regular permanent employment.

4.3 Income

In the wage market, income earned directly affects quality of life. Income determines access to the subsistence satisfiers of having as well as influencing access to many other categories of satisfiers of the fundamental human needs. In the preliminary study in Elardus Park 2001 we did not obtain information about income (Schenck & Louw: 2005). Based on chapter 5 section 3.8 the questionnaire included questions (44-48) on income.

Getting specific information on income was difficult because of its irregularity and fluctuation. To reach estimates of income indirect questions about reservation wages and jobs and wages of the previous week were asked.

4.3.1 Reservation wage

Day labourers participating in this study indicated an average reservation wages of R85. However it seems that ‘reservation wage’ was interpreted as preferred minimum wage because 60% of the men said that the least they had been paid for a day’s work was less than R50.

4.3.2 Daily wages

The range of payment received for a day’s work generally seems to be between R30 and R120 per day or per job. It is not clear whether R30 is paid for a short job or whether it is the wage paid for a whole day’s work. Wage negotiation before being employed does not often take place. Day labourers seem so desperate and keen to be hired that they get on to the trucks without knowing what the job is
that they have to do or what they will be paid. Inability to negotiate with the employer because of restricted language proficiency in English and Afrikaans may compound the situation.

4.3.3 Average income during a good and bad month

Based on questions 47 and 48 the day labourers said that income during a good month seems to be upwards of R800 and during a bad month income is less than R600 (2004).

4.3.4 Earnings during the previous month

Because income is directly related to the number of times a day labourer is employed it did not make sense to ask about average income per month. They are not paid per month but per day or per job. It was therefore decided to inquire about the previous months earnings. Question (46) provided the data presented in table 11.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day labourers</th>
<th>Cumulative percentage of day labourers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R0-299</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R300-599</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R600-899</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than R900</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the day labourers interviewed 25% had earned less than R300 during the previous month, 48% less than R600, 74% less than R900, and 26% more than R900. Blaauw et. al. (2006:468) explain that an income of R300 is 26% lower than
the national poverty line of R394 per month per adult in 2004 which indicates that a quarter of the respondents experience abject economic poverty in a bad month. A day labourer can barely support himself let alone an average of four dependents. Even in good months the day labourers and their dependents experience severe economic poverty.

For 48% of the respondents the previous month had been a bad month. This may be specifically related to the season i.e. late winter-early spring (August September period). The pattern may be different at other times of the year. A question that remains unanswered is whether some months or periods are worse and others better? Was the survey done in a good, bad or average period?

*The Zimbabwean men at Pretoria North (2005) mentioned that June to August were better months for them. There was less competition. They suspect that local people with homes come to hiring sites less frequently when it is cold. They also found there was a greater demand for day labourers over the weekend and at month end.*

Day labourers experience not only low levels of income but also uncertainty of income. The low and irregular monthly income of day labourers clearly shows that many experience a severe poverty of subsistence which was also evident in the data on food availability, shelter and water access and quality. The irregularity of employment is reflected in the irregularity of their existence. (Anderson in Theodore 2002:1819).

**4.3.5 Remittances**

Based on chapter 5 section 3.8.4 questions (78-84) were included in the questionnaire to obtain an idea of the role of remittances. The expectation is that remittances will be influenced by the day labourers' irregular and varying income. In table 12 the frequency of remittances made during the past year are presented.
TABLE 12: FREQUENCY OF REMITTANCES MADE DURING THE PREVIOUS YEAR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency of remittances per year</th>
<th>Percentage of day labourers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-6</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-12</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12+</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unspecified</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most (39%) day labourers seem to manage to remit money home three to six times a year and a slightly smaller number (34%) remit money once or twice a year. Just less than 25% of the day labourers make remittances approximately monthly to bi-monthly. The largest percentage (40%) of day labourers prefer to take the money home themselves. 17% sent the money with relatives, 15% made a bank transfer (although 39% indicated that they had bank accounts) 14% sent money by post and 11% send money home with friends. A few (2%) will send money home with people who are not friends or relatives.

Although the number of men who have bank accounts is much higher (39%) than those who make bank transfers (15%) this may be due to the recipients not having access to banking services due to distance, banking hours or other unknown factors.

If it is taken into consideration that these remittances are not necessarily made regularly but when the day labourer has enough money to contribute and
travel home, as in the example of Lawrence, the situation is accompanied by uncertainty. The family back home lacks security not knowing when there will be money and how much. The uncertainty must create stress and tension in existing relationships. As in the example of Koos, the old age pensions received by his grandparents, provide an element of predictability for his wife and children. Conditions would be worse for them and stress there would more for the already burdened support systems if it were not for government old age pensions and other grants, e.g. child support. The size of annual remittances are presented in table 13.

**TABLE 13: SIZE OF ANNUAL REMITTANCES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rand</th>
<th>Percentage of day labourers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R0-500</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R500-1000</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R1000-1500</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R1500-2000</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R2000+</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unspecified</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the table above we see that about 33% were able to remit R1500 or more during the previous year. If this is the only income of dependants at home it is very little. Blaauw (et. al. 2006:470) calculated that the average day labourer contributes to the support of four people. We thus see that the amounts remitted are
totally inadequate to make substantial contributions to households living in poverty. On average the amounts only enable the average day labourer to contribute, but not in a dependably way, to the support of family and other dependants. According to the day labourers most of the money they remitted was spent on food and children's education.

4.4 Reflection

The social profile revealed a population which due to economic poverty, also experiences many other poverties. In this section it has become clear, partly due to their social profiles, that they also experience subsistence poverty due to low and uncertain employment and income i.e. extreme economic poverty which also contributes to further poverties and the poverties of their dependants.

The subsistence poverty of day labourers and their unemployment, or at best insecure and casual unemployment, defines their position as economically marginalised (Burton & Kagan 2003:2, 6).

These conditions are also a violation of the human rights of day labourers according to the Bill of Rights of the Constitution of South Africa, according to which day labourers also are entitled to expect social security, appropriate social assistance (clause 27) if they are unable to support themselves and their dependents. In many cases day labourers in many cases have never been employed permanently in the formal economy through which they may have gained access to unemployment benefits. They have no access to any form of social security. This is further support for the institution of the controversial Basic Income Grant (BIG) (Tutu in South Africa: poverty debate 2004).

5 ABUSE

Based on chapter 5 section 3.9, Section D of the questionnaire included
questions 49-59 to explore the abuse experienced by day labourers.

Other than lack of work, Koos had not experienced bad treatment of any kind from anybody. (Koos 2005).

The Pretoria North group (2005) told about personal experiences of abuse by employers and the police.

5.1 Abusers

Poverty of protection of day labourers is experienced in the form of abuse by employers, businesses near hiring sites, police, security guards and one another. In an effort to elicit comparable data day labourers were asked about abuse experienced during the previous year. The results on the abusers are presented in table 14. The total in the following table does not add up to 100% as some day labourers experienced abuse by more than one party.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abusers</th>
<th>Percentage of day labourers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employers</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public and businesses</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security guards</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Pretoria North group (2005), who were all three Zimbabweans, mentioned that if some police know you are from Zimbabwe and looking for a job feel sorry for you and leave you in peace. Others get you deported. They take you to Lindela (centre from where illegal immigrants are deported) and deport you from
there: "when we get to Zimbabwe we sell our clothes and shoes to get money to get home and make plans to return to South Africa."

5.2 Types of abuse experienced

From questions 49-59 it was determined that at least 77% of the day labourers had experienced some form of abuse by employers. The following are percentage of day labourers that had experienced the following forms of abuse: non-payment (60%), being abandoned at the work place (60%), insulted or threatened (58%), no provision of breaks, water or food that had been promised (52%) being paid less than the amount agreed to (36%), assault (30%).

Abuse by people associated with businesses near the sites included refusal of services, like access to water and use of toilet). Around 75% had to a varying extent experienced all of the following: assaults and harassment, threats, having the police called and robbery.

Abuse by police included confiscation of papers, assault, robbery and being photographed (80-90%). Other forms of abuse experienced by more than 60% were insults and harassment, arrests, threats and being forced to leave the site.

Day labourers were understandably reluctant to answer positively about experience, knowledge of or involvement with abuse or possible involvement with activities that could be regarded as criminal offences. About 25% of the day labourers had been witness to abuse in the form of insults, harassment, beatings and fighting. However, very few had witnessed any other forms of abuse.

Over and above the poverties already experienced by day labourers many of them also experience poverty of protection in their employment.
6 WORK RELATED INJURIES

Data on work related injuries were obtained through the questions in Section E of the questionnaire. Work related injuries experienced by day labourers and how they are dealt with are indicative of the uncaring and unprotected nature of employment as a day labourer. Based on chapter 5 section 3.10 questions (60-64) were included in the survey and elicited the following responses.

6.1 Incidence

Of the day labourers 24% had had experience of some form of work related injury during the previous year 50% of which had not received adequate medical care because of their inability to pay. Other reasons were: not being familiar with the city, not knowing where to go and transport difficulties due to the cost. Those who had received medical care had been financially assisted by family or friends.

6.2 Work time lost due to injuries and illness

Due to work sustained injuries and ill health 17% of the day labourers indicated that they had lost opportunities to look for work. Table 15 presents the time lost due to injuries and illness.

**TABLE 15: WORK TIME LOST DUE TO INJURIES AND ILLNESS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Days lost</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-7</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-14</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-21</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22-31</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-61</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7 HEALTH STATUS AND ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

Data on the health status of day labourers and their access to health care was obtained through questions in Section F of the questionnaire. Questions 65-70 elicited the following responses.

Health care in the survey, explored medical care related to injuries sustained in the work place and health care in general.

7.1 Health condition of day labourers

In spite of the shelter and food poverty experienced 75% of the men perceived their health status as varying from good to excellent. This is consistent with their relative youth or it could be indicative of only the relatively healthy men being able to survive the day labour market. It is not known how many men cease standing at hiring sites due to illness or death. As many as 17% did indicate that they were suffering from serious medical conditions like TB, asthma, ulcers, diabetes, hypertension, stomach ulcers and cancer. Less than 1% mentioned sexually transmitted diseases despite the high incidence of HIV in South Africa.

All indicated that they knew where to go if they needed medical care. However 21% stated that during the past year they had not received the medical care to which they felt they needed. The reasons were not explored but possibly are the same as in cases of work related injury.

One of the suggestions made by the day labourers for better medical care was access to a mobile health clinic.

7.2 Reflection

Abuse, work related injuries and health conditions and access to health care are all related to poverties of protection and subsistence. These conditions are also a
violation of human rights according to the Bill of Rights of the Constitution of South Africa mentioned in 3.3 Additional to having a right to fair labour practices (clause 23) they also have a right to have access to health care services (clause 27).

Many of the experiences of day labourers described in this section expose their vulnerability and experiences of discrimination, exclusion and oppression which are all forms of marginalisation (Burton & Kagan 2003:2).

8  RELATIONSHIPS, SOCIAL NETWORKS AND ASSOCIATIONAL INVOLVEMENT IN COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS

Data on relationships were obtained through questions in Section G of the questionnaire as well as inferences from other data already obtained.

Because fundamental human needs are an interrelated system and impossible to separate, many of the results already presented have been related to the subject of this section which is about the actualization of needs of affection and participation in different relationships.

The day labourers' predominantly migrant status, irregular employment that is a full time occupation, low irregular income, inadequate shelter and food are all factors that affect the relationships, networks and associational involvement of day labourers. In the following section a few of these aspects are specifically addressed by questions 71-82.

8.1 Relationships with other day labourers

As described in chapter four (4.3.3) social networks and interaction are important for the day labourers to help them deal with their very harsh conditions. Answers to questions 71-73 provided the following data:

At least 64% of the day labourers belonged to informal groups. The reasons
provided for group composition were: coming from the same place, speaking the same language or arriving at a place at about the same time. They were dependent on one another for support in order to survive the harsh, uncertain existence of day labour. They rely on one another for different forms of assistance. The types of assistance mentioned by day labourers is presented in table 16.

**TABLE 16: TYPES OF ASSISTANCE OFFERED BY THE GROUP**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assistance</th>
<th>Percentage of day labourers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finding work</td>
<td>73 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport/lift</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loans</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General favours</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelter/housing</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socialising</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care when ill</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family matters</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The total in the above table does not add up to 100% as some day labourers mentioned a number of forms of assistance experienced.

Under other circumstances these various forms of assistance would be rendered in a protected employment situation or within family relationships. It seems
as if the group in some ways provided for and complemented what was missing because of being away from their families.

8.2 Organisational affiliations

Considering that day labour, especially when jobs are scarce, absorbs all available time and returns from day labour are low, the assumption was that participation in any form of organisational activity would be minimal. It was therefore surprising that in response to question 74 as many as 65% of the day labourers mentioned that they did sometimes attend religious gatherings. Another 47% belong or go to sports clubs or organisations. This is even more surprising if it is borne in mind that sports club membership entails fees. These numbers are 100% higher than in the USA. It is also possible that this question could have been misunderstood and that the results represent day labourers wishes rather than the actual situation or that sports club membership could have been interpreted and translated as supporting a specific team, sometimes being spectators or participating informally. (The passion for soccer in South Africa is visible in the often seen rudimentary soccer post on any open piece of field. Perhaps there are more “informal’ clubs or groups than is generally known.)

Questions 75-77 were about organising day labour. Almost three quarters of the day labourers indicated that they would make use of a formal day labour centre or hiring hall if it was available.

8.3 Family relationships

In the questionnaire there were no questions asking directly about family relationships. However a number of questions on marital and parental status, (2.2.6 and 2.2.7), contact with home (2.2.8), shelter (2.2.9) and remittances (2.3.6.5) provided information on personal and family relationships. Useful information gained from the individual and group interviews will be also be presented.
As already explained it is assumed that day labourers have very little time and involvement with their families. However from the available information it seems that family ties are important as 33% are married under either by customary or common law and 6% are currently in a relationship with a partner while only 4% indicated that they were separated or divorced. The unconnectedness of the others may be related to their youthfulness and other findings that youth unemployment tends to result in the delay of marriage and permanent relationships. This corresponds with the assumption that many day labourers may be of rural origins where traditional cultural customs like payment of lobola (bride price) are still maintained so marriage would have to be delayed due to economic circumstances.

At least 61% of the day labourers report having one or more children while some young day labourers are the children of households, which means that most day labourers are involved in relationships and have dependants and relatives to support.

*A man from the Newlands group (2005) said that it was because he had a wife and child that he had not given up hope and continued with day labour.*

Most day labourers do not live at home with their families. The research seems to indicate that in most cases contact between day labourers and their families is infrequent and irregular with only 24% going home daily and able to maintain relationships with family members. Even those who live in Tshwane do not go home every day.

*A Zimbabwean man (Newlands group 2005) who lives with his wife and one child in a shack in Mamelodi said “some days I don’t go home because I don’t have the money to pay the transport.”*

We see that 31 % of the respondents only visit their families once or twice a year.
Lawrence (2005) went home when he had at least R500 to contribute.

Koos (2005) had now come from Reitz to which his grandparents had migrated from KwaZulu-Natal to work on a farm. His parents were still staying on the farm but his grandparents had retired to the township at Reitz. They both received old age pensions and they helped to care for his wife and children, twins of 11. The children were both attending school. Now he was living with his brother.

Koos (2005) had gone home in December for the first time, after being away for six months. He had returned during the first week of January. It is now March and since returning he has not been able to send any money home.

Many of the men involved in day labour spend most of the year in Tshwane struggling to earn enough money to remit to their families. Of the day labourers 34% visit their families once or twice a year and 12% visit once a quarter. These contacts usually mean that money is also brought home. Remittances without contact, an indirect way of maintaining family ties, are also made. Many mentioned that they do not go home without money to contribute to the family as they feel they cannot go home empty handed.

The need for day labourers to maintain contact with families other than by visiting is a possibility for further research/assessment and service. The possibility of linking literacy and contact with families as was done by Jimmy Yen (Hersey 1988:151-92) will be elaborated on in the recommendations.

8.4 Reflection

The separation from their homes and families imposes on day labourers a poverty of participation and identity. They are marginalized from family life by not being present but also by not being able to care for and assist family members adequately. A form of contact is maintained by many through remittances
contributing financially to their families’ support.

Day labourers experience social marginalisation or exclusion. For most their main socialisation is with other day labourers. With minimal contact with their families they are unable to maintain strong ties and often also with their culture (Henderson and Thomas 2002:8). Family relationships can be assumed to be placed under strain as the fathers and also sons of families cannot provide sufficiently in their subsistence let alone other fundamental human needs. Poverty and lack of time for anything other than searching for jobs and working excludes day labourers from structured social and community life (sport, recreation, social organisations) thus increasing their marginalisation and exclusion.

Max-Neef et. al. (1989:24) noted that this type of isolation, marginalisation and, in some cases, political exile destroys people’s identity and breaks up families, destroying natural affection and creating guilt feelings. These guilt feelings may actually lead to conflict and avoidance of contact. These frustrations seem to erode the creative capacity of people, leading into apathy and loss of self-esteem (Burton & Kagan 2003:7).

In the recommendations it will be discussed how, in rendering services to respond to the situations, social work services could also be utilized.

9 DAY LABOURERS’ SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING THEIR GENERAL SITUATION

In response to questions 75-77 and other information communicated by the day labourers the following suggestions were made about improvements to their situation as day labourers:

- Any form of assistance in getting jobs would be welcomed.
Day labourers expressed an interest in formalising hiring sites with basic facilities. As many as 73% expressed interest in a formal day labour centre or hiring hall. They anticipated the possibility of shelter, water and toilets and some form of regulation and assistance in acquiring employment. This could also include agreements about possible minimum payment to be introduced by an outside agency and assistance in negotiation of payment before being hired.

Those day labourers, who were not interested in making use of a formal hiring site, said they knew too little about what it entailed, therefore they could not say whether they would be interested. Others were clear that they did not want one as they might not like the rules regulating them; still others thought that there were better job opportunities on the street.

There was some interest (58%) in the protection that membership of a labour union representing day labourers could offer.

Others inquired about what could be interpreted as the need for a basic income grant, the distribution of food parcels to them and their families.

Training to increase their employability was expressed.

Easier access to health facilities, e.g. a mobile health clinic was specifically mentioned.

10  CHAPTER REVIEW

10.1 Summary of research results

The research results were presented in this chapter. The aggregated survey results were complemented with a qualitative subtext of references to the individual
and group interviews and comments. The following is a summary of the research results.

The survey performed in Tshwane in September 2004 revealed an estimated minimum of 3030 day labourers at 99 hiring sites in Tshwane. These day labourers are the unemployed who are actively seeking jobs in spite of extreme economic, social, personal and environmental (in the broad sense) constraints.

Day labourers are mainly (90%) South African, migrants from rural areas to Tshwane, Gauteng. They speak at least 12 languages. They are almost exclusively male, the majority are young and single (56%) with 66% having children to support.

Very few (5%) day labourers have no formal education albeit their educational level is low. Educational attainment ranges from none to grade 12. More than 50% had completed primary school and a quarter had completed grade nine or its equivalent. Very few have had formal skills training.

Day labour is lowly paid, often physically strenuous work. Home owners and subcontractors seem to be the primary employers of day labourers, mainly for gardening and building construction and related jobs. The most frequently paid amount is R50 irrespective of the job. The overwhelming majority earn less than R800 per month. On average day labourers support four people (including themselves). Remittances to families are small and irregular.

Day labourers do not see themselves as not working. For them day labour is a full time occupation. The majority stand at hiring sites waiting for jobs 5 - 7 days per week, with most working only 2 to 3 days a week and at least 20% not working at all in a week. Day labour may be a temporary form of employment to which men return in between more permanent work. It may be the way to a more permanent job or it may represent the withdrawal from the permanent labour market. Most day labourers
would prefer permanent jobs.

Day labourers live and work under harsh conditions. Fewer than a quarter of the day labourers sleep at home with their families; a quarter of the men sleep in backyards and fewer sleep in shacks in informal settlements; 12% sleep in hostels or maybe shelters for the homeless; 7.5% sleep rough in the open veld and 4% sleep on construction sites, probably with a relative or friend. More than half do not live at home and a large number could be regarded as homeless. In spite of these very vulnerable conditions, less than 20% have ever been insulted, harassed, threatened or robbed at night.

Day labourers are exposed to different forms of abuse, the most frequent being non- or under-payment. About half of the men have experienced at least one instance of non-payment of wages. Many report underpayment, working longer hours than agreed upon, not receiving promised food, having no breaks or provision of water and of receiving insults.

Day labourers would welcome assistance, firstly with obtaining employment, secondly an improvement of conditions at informal hiring sites and thirdly assistance to their families.

10.2 The poverties experienced

The research results show that the day labourers in South Africa experience irregular employment which affects the actualisation of a whole range of other fundamental human needs. In terms of poverty being any unmet fundamental human need (Max-Neef et. al. (1989:33), day labourers experience extreme poverty of subsistence as well as all the other poverties discussed in Chapter 8 section 2.3. Due to the inability to meet subsistence needs a person experiences increasing lack of protection, as economic and other crises develop in the family, relationships are
affected that may destroy affection, lack of money and presence cause poverty of participation that can give way to feelings of isolation and marginalisation, and declining self esteem could generate an identity crisis.

10.3 The violation of human rights

In this chapter it has become evident that the experiences of day labourers illustrate the violation of many human rights to which day labourers are entitled in terms of the Bill of Rights, chapter 2 of the Constitution of South Africa. If the situation of day labourers is compared with the provisions of the Bill of Rights it seems that day labourers experience injustice through the violation of the following rights:

- Dignity in terms of clause 10 according to which every person has inherent dignity and the right to have their dignity respected;
- Not to have their lives threatened in terms of clause 11 according to which every person has the right to life;
- Not be exposed to violence in terms of clause 12 according to which every person has the right to be free from all forms of violence from either public or private source;
- Not to have possessions seized; the right of protection of possessions (clause 14);
- The right to stand at informal hiring sites in terms of clause 21 according to which every person has the right to freedom of movement;
- Not to be exploited as a worker in terms of clause 23 according to which every person has a right to fair labour practices. According to a spokesperson from the Department of Labour there is no legislation particularly pertaining to day labourers (Nel 2007:35);
- The right to shelter or temporary housing in terms of clause 26 according to
which every person has the right to have access to adequate housing;

- The right to adequate access to health care in terms of clause 27 according to which every one as a right to have access to health care services, sufficient food and water and social security, and if they are unable to support themselves and their dependents, appropriate social assistance.

- The right to basic education, including adult basic education in terms of clause 29.

In the name of social justice these violations of the human rights of day labourers call for organised societal responses to protect and ensure the broader social, political and economic entitlements of which they are deprived.

10.4 Marginalisation and social exclusion

In terms of Burton and Kagan’s (2003:6) criteria of marginalisation the day labourers experience: social and economic deprivations which excludes them from leading full social lives at individual, interpersonal and societal levels, limited control over their lives and the resources available to them, stigmatisation and negative public attitudes; limited opportunity to make social contributions and limited social contact other than with their peers causing them to become isolated. All these result in lack of positive relationships which leads to further isolation and marginalisation.

Using Leonard’s (Burton & Kagan 2003:5) definition that social marginality is a position of being “outside the mainstream of productive activity and or social reproductive activity” it seems fitting to refer to day labourers at informal hiring sites as men at the margins.

10.5 Further exploration

The survey research results stimulated a further literature study to increase the theoretical understanding of aspects related to the day labourers standing at
informal hiring sites in Tshwane. The first aspect explored was the effect of Tshwane as spatial context to the data gathered (chapter 7).

Other aspects that seemed relevant were how the following aspects manifested in South Africa; poverty (chapter 8), and urban poverty (chapter 9), unemployment (chapter 10), and labour migration (chapter 11). These aspects will be referred to again in the reflection on the results in chapter 12.
SECTION D

FURTHER LITERATURE STUDY

Peter came to Gaborone

Peter came to Gaborone to look for work; he stays with his sister and her family in small house in Broadhurst. He had some work in construction but he has been laid off; he has not been able to send any money home to his wife and family for the past month, and his wife’s brother sent word that they need food. He needs to pay his sister something too. He is trying to decide whether to go home without any money or stay a little longer and hope that there will be more work again soon. He feels very depressed and doesn’t know what to do. He has been going up and down the streets asking for work but no one has given him any. He sees many people looking for work on the construction sites; and he doesn’t know how to get taken on; or why some people get work and he doesn’t.

Hutton 1996:15
CHAPTER 7

TSHWANE: THE CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a description of the city of Tshwane as the spatial, economic and political context within which the study of day labourers at hiring sites took place. Tshwane is also situated within the province of Gauteng of South Africa (Figure 17). The assumption is that the day labourers will be better understood within the context of the larger whole of their environment as ultimately responses to the day labour situation have to be contextual.

Figure 17: Map of South Africa locating Tshwane
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O'Donoghue and Maidment (2005:40) explain that the environment can be either entrapping or enabling. It is entrapping if the available resources, support and the prospect of social mobility and belonging are minimal and contribute to people becoming marginalised. The habitat is perceived as enabling, if it provides resources and support that enable social mobility, social belonging and social connectivity. For the purposes of this thesis it is important to include the economic aspect (included by Swanepoel & de Beer 2006:10) in the description of the entrapping or enabling habitat.

To provide a geographical context for the study the following section begins with a description of Tshwane within the larger context of Gauteng followed by a more detailed description of Tshwane.

2 GAUTENG

Figure 18: Gauteng

Gauteng, (a seSotho word for the Place of Gold) South Africa’s smallest, richest, most industrialised and most highly populated of the nine provinces, is also a
province of contrasts. It has many features that can be regarded as factors (pull factors) which draw to it the estimated 15,000 day labourers standing at informal hiring sites all over Gauteng (Schenck 2007).

With 7.5 million people (2001), Gauteng is home to just less than 20% of the South African population. The majority of the population are African and compared to the other provinces it has a relatively large share of Asian and White people. Large parts of Gauteng are classified as urban and it is also the province with the highest rate of urbanised population.

Gauteng covers only 1.5% of the national land area. It is regarded as the economic hub of South Africa. It is South Africa’s trading centre, financial core, locus of headquarters of many firms and is the most important manufacturing region. This explains why it offers more than a quarter of all formal employment opportunities (27% in 1991) and generates more or less a third of the national GDP (37% in 1991 and 34.8% in 2006) which makes the per capita income nearly twice the national average (Rogerson 1996:168; Gauteng News, March 2007).

Gauteng has experienced sustained economic growth since the mid 1990s reaching a growth rate of 5.8% in 2005 after a period since the mid 1980’s of economic “ill-health, stagnation and even precipitate decline” (Rogerson 1996:170). However this growth has not been enough to substantially lower the high unemployment rate.

These facts and positive perceptions provide some explanations for the influx of men and women to Gauteng where there are chances of finding some form of employment, albeit by standing at informal hiring sites.

However, the above facts represented are one-sided; on the other side, like the rest of South Africa Gauteng is a region of enormous social and economic contrasts though they are less severe in Gauteng, for example, the income inequality in Gauteng is lower than in the rest of the country. It is particularly significant for this study that the
share of income received by Africans has increased from 37.2% in 2001 to 39.6% in 2006 (Gauteng News, March 2007).

Poverty is South Africa's single greatest burden and while the rate of poverty in Gauteng is high, it is lower than the national average. From 2001 to 2002 there has been a decline from 8.45% to 7.35% of people in Gauteng living below the poverty line with Tshwane having the lowest poverty rate. The percentage of people living in informal dwellings has also declined from 18.7% to 14.4% between 2002 and 2005 due to the provision of newly-built houses (Gauteng News, March 2007).

With regards to employment and unemployment, in 2000, of 7.5 million people of 2.79 million were employed making the unemployment rate 25.8% which was lower than the national rate of 26.4%. The gap between the strict and expanded unemployment estimates is less in Gauteng than elsewhere, suggesting that more unemployed people in Gauteng actively job seeking and there is thus also less long-term unemployment. The highest unemployment is among African people (1.34 million) (Gauteng News, March 2007; Provide 2005:1-26; Rogerson 1996:167-179).

Another of the contrasts is racial inequality expressed in various ways. Rogerson (1996:169) writes:

Racial inequalities are expressed visibly in the stark contrast between, on the one hand, the high living standards and residential circumstances of the most luxurious suburbs on the African continent and, on the other hand, often adjacent or relatively close-by "environments of urban poverty" manifest in the formal townships and especially the informal shackland settlements that have proliferated … over the last decade (1986-1996). The predominantly white towns and suburbs … are well resourced and enjoy good infrastructure, whilst the black townships and informal settlements represent degraded living environments with poor infrastructure and social facilities. The region’s population who reside in squatter encampments endure the most squalid life-threatening environments of all. … these shack areas … are estimated to shelter approximately 19 percent of Gauteng’s total population.
These inequalities and contrasts of affluence and squalor are some of the manifestations of the historical racial imbalances in income, wealth, privilege, power and planning that have failed to provide adequate resources, facilities and services to black communities or allow them equal opportunities. These conditions have been exacerbated by apartheid spatial planning that through the location of townships imposed huge social and economic costs on the urban poor as a result of high transport costs (Rogerson 1996:171).

Tomlinson (2001) warns that whereas previously spatial divides and disadvantages were created by apartheid planning, a new distribution of disadvantage is taking place. A concentration of business and financial services, retail and high value-added manufacturing is developing between the central business districts (CBD) of Johannesburg and Tshwane, especially along the M1/N1 Freeway. Consequently the CBDs of both Johannesburg and Tshwane are no longer central and have lost their CBD status. They have been invaded by the informal economy. Elsewhere as one moves south and north along this corridor, where most people live, unemployment increases as unskilled jobs (in agriculture, mining and manufacturing), have been lost and replaced by insecure informal jobs. Tomlinson adds that the situation is exacerbated by the fact that HIV infection is three times higher in the unskilled population than in the professional population.

In Gauteng the informal economy has also increased in importance. There are an estimated 1.7 million people (1990), mainly Africans, involved in the informal economy in Gauteng. The informal economy is evident in the many street and pavement activities in inner cities, formerly white urban spaces, other business areas, formal black townships and informal settlements. In the inner cities and business areas one finds flea markets, hawkers, taxi drivers, street barbers, and shoe shiners, and a range of illegal activities like trade in stolen goods, drugs, home brewed liquor, “motor supplies of questionable origin” and prostitution. In specific business and residential areas, which are mainly white, day labourers also stand at informal hiring sites selling their labour. In the central business areas large numbers of international migrants from
Chapter 7. Tshwane: the context of the study

Asia, Eastern Europe and other African countries are found, especially in activities of street vending, shoe repairs and sewing. The presence of foreigners presents a potential for conflict. Home based enterprises like child-minding, "spazas" (retail shop run from homes) and "shebeens" (liquor selling outlets from home) are found in black townships and informal settlements. Informal urban cultivation (ruralisation of the city) on peripheral vacant land is also a survival enterprise of the most marginalized and vulnerable groups. Most of these enterprises which are merely survivalist in nature, are undertaken by the most desperate people unable to secure regular wage income. The others are small businesses lacking formality but with development potential (Rogerson 1996:171-173; Blaauw 2006:460).

It must be remembered that the unemployed and many working in the informal sector depend on the extended family for support, but many of these families are stressed themselves and overburdened due to the need to divert resources to care for relatives infected with HIV and dying from Aids. Support systems are decaying and support is often minimal, as family structures cease to exist (Tomlinson 2001).

3 TSHWANE

Tshwane is one of the four metropolitan areas of Gauteng and manifests most of the general characteristics of Gauteng described in the previous section. Yet it also has some unique characteristics that make it different to the rest of Gauteng, where development has historically been the consequence of the gold mining industry.

3.1 The name Tshwane

The name Tshwane seems to have at least two possible plausible origins. One is that it was the name of the son of Chief Mushu of the Ndebele people, who settled in the Pretoria area about 100 years before the arrival of the white Voortrekkers in the early 1800s. Chief Mushu and his tribe had moved from Zululand and first settled at Mokgapane (Mooiplaas, east of Pretoria). He later moved from Mooiplaas to what is
now the Pretoria area, on the banks of the Tshwane river named after his son Tshwane. The small monkeys which were abundant along the banks of the river are also known as tshwane and the Voortrekkers named the river the Apies (small monkeys). The word ‘tshwane’ also refers to the fact that "we are the same" or "we are one because we live together", which is the logo of the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality (CTMM) (Erasmus 2004:330; CTMM Profile 2004:13).

3.2 Location of Tshwane

Globally Tshwane is situated 25° 44' S and 28° 11' E in the northern part of Gauteng the between east-west foothills of the eastern Magalies mountains. The Magalies mountains are important in that, historically most of the economic and infrastructure development and the settlement of Whites took place south of the Magalies
mountains in the former municipality of Pretoria. Now the Magalies mountains form an east-west divide through Tshwane (CTMM Profile 2004).

As the most influential northern city in the country Tshwane is also strategically situated for day labourers migrating from other provinces or bordering countries. It is centrally positioned right on two major arteries in the southern African region at the confluence of the N1 and N4 national roads. The N1 is on the North-South route that links Africa over its longitude from Cape Town to Cairo. The N4 links the west (Namibia) and east coasts (Mozambique) of southern Africa (CTMM Profile 2004:15).

The City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality covers a total area of 2198km². The area measures approximately 65 km in length and 50 km in width. It forms part of the Tshwane -Johannesburg - Ekurhuleni city region and it lies north of Johannesburg and north-west of Ekurhuleni. This vast conurbation forms the economic power-house of South Africa and indeed of Africa. Tshwane's inner city is situated approximately 60 km from Johannesburg's city centre and the same distance from the Oliver Tambo International Airport. To the north and west Tshwane borders onto, and even extends into, the North West Province, with the Limpopo Province's boundary only a short distance away.

Tshwane lies at an average height of 1330m above sea level and has a very moderate climate warming to the north. On average the Tshwane area is at least 3 degrees warmer than the Johannesburg area which makes it a sought-after area to live in. It is and more hospitable or survival for day labourers who may have to sleep rough or live in shacks and stand in the open seeking jobs (CTMM Profile 2004:17).

### 3.3 Population

Tshwane has a total population of about two million people. The population of Tshwane comprises 18% of the population of Gauteng of whom 73% are African and about 24% White, the others mainly being Coloureds (people of mixed origins) and
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Indians. Because of the strong diplomatic presence and cosmopolitan character, a number of other world languages are spoken within Tshwane. The largest number of migrants originate from the provinces of North-West, Limpopo and Mpumalanga. Many of these are people of rural origin, seeking employment in Tshwane. This places pressure on housing, other infrastructure and social facilities.

3.4 History

In the first half of the 1900s the white Voortrekkers migrated from the south, purchased land from the Ndebele people and formed a number of independent republics. Towards the mid 1900's it was decided to develop a centrally situated town as administrative centre for the different republics. The town was named Pretoria after a Voortrekker leader, Andries Pretorius and his son Marthinus, who was the first president of the Transvaal republic. After the unification of South Africa in 1910, Pretoria remained the capital of the Transvaal province and became the administrative capital of South Africa. As the apartheid policy crystallised, Pretoria became its epitome.

The following extracts from an article by Lotter (2002:347-368) on the history of the urban management of Pretoria and how it has affected economic empowerment in Tshwane provides more insight into the conditions of day labourers when standing at informal hiring sites seeking employment.

Lotter (2002:347) states that Pretoria, a typical apartheid city, is macro fragmented where the goal to keep two population groups separated, resulted in a system of mono functional land use and many laws and by-laws limiting, especially black peoples' movements. Whereas the purpose of urban management is to increase economic opportunities in urban areas, in apartheid cities urban management was employed to promote the modernisation and entrenchment of the white urban population and limit that of the “non-white” population. (Fair in Lotter 2002:347).
Various laws such as the Group Areas Act (Act No 51 of 1950) were imposed to grant the white population property rights and to determine and limit the areas where "non-whites" could live. In Pretoria there was only one residential area each for Indians and Coloureds. Regarding the black population there were influx control measures and a policy of limiting the supply of houses for Blacks in Atteridgeville, Mamelodi and Tembisa. (Tembisa is no longer part of the CTMC). From 1968 to 1984 no new houses or sites were allowed in the black townships of Pretoria (Bruwer 1994:96).

Bruwer (1994:96) wrote that around 1980 South Africa was considered to be 9% under-urbanised due to the effectiveness of apartheid measures in limiting the settling of the black population in urban areas. Many black people employed in the cities were not allowed to live there. They lived outside the city in nearby homelands and commuted daily at great expense and inconvenience or were migrant workers from the homelands residing in the notorious single sex hostels. A relatively small number of black people had temporary legal rights to reside in the townships. Only those with proof of many years of residence in the urban areas had permanent residence. In spite of the townships being influx-controlled, the urban population grew. Townships became overcrowded and more and more people ended up in shacks in backyards. From 1989, as apartheid was imploding and freedom of movement was allowed, many more people (mainly black people) moved into the cities. Controlled squatting began as land was made available to people resulting in many people, who had previously been restricted from doing so, moving to the cities. With not enough land being made available land invasion took place. Some black people who could afford it moved into the former all white suburbs.

Pretoria, as the administrative capital of Apartheid South Africa, was expected to be an example of apartheid urban management (Friedman in Lotter 2002:349). In this situation the white population’s continuous need for black labour and a need to retain economic, social and political dominance had to be managed. White interest groups focussed on their immediate geographic areas at the expense of the interests of other geographical areas or the total urban population. For the white community the
emphasis was on ensueing that only the necessary number of black people was available for their labour.

The first phase of this process came with the forced removals of Bantule, Marabastad, Lady Selbourne, Eastwood, Highlands and Newlands and the creation of segregated townships on the urban periphery such as Atteridgeville, Mamelodi, Eersterus and Laudium. This had the effect of displacing those who could least afford it furthest away from places of work and economic opportunity. It also destroyed the economic livelihood of many families. The second phase, at the height of ‘grand apartheid’, came with the establishment of townships such as Winterveld, Mabopane, Soshanguve, Hammanskraal and Ekangala. The aim was to create a whites-only city with decentralised industrial areas such as Rosslyn and Babelegi served by black labour located in ‘homelands’.

(Mufamadi 2001:2-3).

As administrative capital and an educational centre, the majority of the white population were employed in the government sector (including education) and did not have particular interest in the manufacturing sector. The local government also did not have a specific policy for the development of the manufacturing sector. The major manufacturing developments within Pretoria were initiated by central government (e.g. Iron and Steel Corporation (ISCOR), the military industries and Rosslyn and Babelegi (developments north of the Magalies mountains). The local government’s decisions on the provision of manufacturing land and low cost housing were chiefly based on preventing the presence of black people in white urban areas and maintaining a policy of mono-functional land use. Incentives in the form of cheaper land were granted to manufacturing firms that employed white workers.

In local government, decisions about the development of new manufacturing areas and the provision of services to black factory workers were determined by the presence of black people in white urban areas. Factories and townships for black people were located far away from white residential areas. The location of manufacturing firms far from white residential areas was relatively unimportant and
ideologically convenient for the majority of the white population. For the black population the location of factories was of less importance than the provision of basic needs like housing and jobs.

South Africa followed an urban planning framework similar that to much of western Europe and the USA at particular phases according to which urban land use is meticulously planned and mono-functional. Sharp divisions between residential and manufacturing areas were maintained (Lotter 2002:353), which was congruent with the apartheid ideology. Consequently until 1991 all manufacturing activity, except in the Indian township, Laudium, occurred in areas under the control of white controlled local governments and were far from residential areas.

Mufamadi (2001:1) explains the spatial consequences are that Tshwane has a very definite urban core with an inner periphery, where 40% of the population lives, and which produces 91% of the economic output and an outer periphery in the north-west and north-east, which is home to 60% of the population where there is very little economic activity. This means that high volumes of long-distance commuting between the outer periphery and the urban core takes place every day, which means the costs of the daily life for the poor are higher, particularly in terms of time and travel distances to work, the purchase of goods and recreation. It also necessitates large transport subsidies to make it possible for workers to get to their workplaces. In terms of all social indicators of education, employment, per capita income, service levels, housing - the people in the inner and outer periphery of the CTMM are disadvantaged (Mufamadi 2001:20).

It is within the urban core that most of the hiring sites are found and from the areas of the outer periphery that many of the local men come. They are often unable to return home and sleep rough if they have not been successful in getting a job.
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3.5 Present situation

The previous mayor of Tshwane, Father Smangaliso Mkhathwana referred to the city of Tshwane as a tale of two cities, one mostly white and affluent and the other one mostly black and impoverished. The one has sprawling, leafy suburbs and it is renowned for its more than 50,000 jacaranda trees and beauty in spring which has earned it the name of ‘Jacaranda City’. Adjacent to this affluence are townships and informal settlements, semi-rural areas, and villages that historically were poorly served by the municipal government during the apartheid era (Becker 2005).

The urban situation in which day labourers find themselves is changing. The regime change of 1994 has resulted in a paradigm shift from colonial type policies to a democratic Constitution and Bill of Rights, as well as a range of policies supporting this new value system, including a new system of integrated and developmental local government (Cloete 1999:92).

Nel (2007:40) explains that before 1994 it was illegal for people to stand around in public or on street corners waiting for work. They could be removed from the streets according to the bylaws pertaining to loitering. If they were non-white there were also laws prohibiting them from being in so-called white areas. The democratic Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) with its Bill of Rights, with a clause addressing the right of freedom of movement (clause 21) makes it obvious that the day labourers at informal hiring sites are a post-1994 phenomenon in South Africa.

Other political changes indirectly influencing Tshwane as context are that after the first multi-racial and democratically elected government came into power in 1994, Pretoria lost its position as provincial capital of Gauteng to Johannesburg, but retained its position as administrative capital of South Africa. In 2000, Pretoria became part of the larger City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality (CTMM) which was formed by
amalgamating 17 separate local authorities, many of which had been the township and industrialised areas created away from Pretoria to keep Pretoria a whites-only city (CTMM Profile 2004, Erasmus 2004:330; Mufamadi 2001:3).

Accordingly, after its inception in 2000 the municipality of Tshwane first concentrated on services to the previously disadvantaged areas, providing greater access to services through the electrification, provision of clean water and sanitation to houses and also by introducing the Indigency Programme for the poor through which they could receive these services free of charge for six months and have arrear debts written off. Where possible people in the Indigency Program are assisted in gaining employment, albeit temporary, or contract work to assist their rehabilitation. Later the emphasis moved to creating nurturing conditions for entrepreneurship including education and skills training programs. According the strategic planning of the CTMM future development of basic infrastructure services and economic development will be concentrated north of the Magalies mountains, to address the existing backlog and to create employment opportunities closer to where most of the people are living (Becker 2005).

Political changes may eventually have an effect on organised responses to the situation of day labourers in Tshwane. The Municipal Systems Act (No 32 of 2000) has introduced an Integrated Development Plan (IDP), according to which municipal planning must be developmentally orientated. Local government planning includes “a growing focus on explicit anti-poverty frameworks and strategies to deal with exclusion and link the different economic activities across the formal and informal boundaries” (Parnell & Pieterse 1999:70). If the day labourers’ needs for day and night shelters and water at centralized hiring sites are to receive attention the municipality will have to engage in developing the strategy and it will probably be necessary for this planning to eventually be included in the CTMM’s Integrated Development plan (Theron 2005:135).
3.6 Economic environment

Economists depict Tshwane as wealthy, due to the export of furniture, electronics, metal, machinery and cars and agricultural products (Becker 2005:1).

3.6.1 Income

The per capita income in CTMM is far above that of the national economy and it is the city where the per capita income has increased most sharply over the period 1996-2004 (CTMM Profile 2004:46; Naude, Rossouw and Krugel 2006:24).

The per capita income in CTMM has since 2000 excelled that of the whole of Gauteng and, according to forecasts, the gap will increase over the next few years (CTMM Profile 2004: 45) and yet Naude et. al. (2006:23) claim that the average wages per worker has actually declined from 1996 to 2001.

3.6.2 Poverty

From 1996 to 2002 there was an increase from 24.3% to 29.1% in the number of people living in poverty. In the same period the national figure also showed an increase of nearly eight percentage points and Gauteng experienced an increase of ten percentage points due to population growth. However, despite the fact that the percentage of people living in poverty has increased, it is still far below that of the other municipal districts of Gauteng and the national level (CTMM Profile 2004:40; Becker 2003:1).

3.6.3 Employment and unemployment

In 2002, the economically active population (EAP) of CTMM totalled 47.2% of the total population which is higher than the national average of 38.3 %, but lower than Gauteng's average of 52.7 %. In all areas of CTMM the EAP increased between 1996
and 2002 increasing unemployment and inequality. Yet between 1996 and 2001 Tshwane was the city with the lowest increase in employment. This implies that there are more people available for entering the labour force and as such are searching for jobs (Naude et. al. 2006:2, 23).

The gap between the economically active population and formal job opportunities is widening. From 1996 to 2002, the EAP increased by approximately 220 000, while job opportunities increased by only 180,000. For the same period, informal employment more than doubled, from just more than 43 000 in 1996, to approximately 98 000 in 2002 (Provide PBP2005:38).

As compared with most of the other major South African cities Tshwane has a relatively low unemployment rate and a slightly lower than the regional average rate. However, it is higher in the traditionally black areas than in the white areas. There could be more people actively seeking jobs than in other provinces (Provide PBP2005:26). According to the Labour Force Survey (LFS), Feb. 2002 the “strict” unemployment is now 18.93% of the population with the unemployment rate among youth in the age group 20-24 years being 31.9%.

Despite the increased numbers of employed people, the labour absorption capacity of the CTMM was unable to accommodate the number of job seekers and as a result the level of unemployment over the period 1996-2002 increased. This is most notable in Ga-Rankuwa, Temba and Soshanguve where unemployment increased by 6, 7% and 6%, respectively. The unemployment rates of both Wonderboom and Pretoria’s unemployment rates have increased at a rate lower than the average for the CTMM (3% and 4%, respectively).

3.7 Non-economic environment

Max Neef et. al.’s (see chapters two and three) approach to fundamental human needs and poverty is echoed in the study of Naude et. al. (2006:25) who state that
human well-being is multi-dimensional in nature and can be measured by using economic and non-economic indicators. They used non-economic measures to determine the quality of metropolitan city life in South Africa and their findings further enrich the picture of Tshwane.

In terms of economic indicators Tshwane ranks second only to Johannesburg but lowest of the six largest cities if both economic and non-economic indicators are used. Naude et. al. (2006:25) interpret this as an indication that the city is unable to turn the general economic quality of life into the non-economic well-being of people. The non-economic well-being of people in Tshwane has actually deteriorated since 1996. Examples of this are that:

- The crime rate in Tshwane is lower than the metropolitan areas of Johannesburg, eThekwini (Durban) and Ekurhuleni (East Rand).

- Tshwane is rate third regarding numbers of vehicles and traffic congestion and possibly therefore also dangerous gas emissions.

- In spite of the notable increase of service delivery especially relating to housing, water, sanitation, and electricity, as well as access to health and education, Tshwane performs badly in terms of health (life expectancy), educational (literacy) and income equality outcomes, using Human Development Indices (HDI) and residents responses. It is interesting to note that in spite of Tshwane’s poor performance on health issues it is the city with the second lowest HIV prevalence rate.

- Of all the cities CTMM has the largest percentage of forests, bodies of water and wetlands, indicating natural beauty and availability of open spaces and access to nature. Yet it also has more degraded land than is expected from the levels of per capita income. This reflects the tendency for the poor to live in areas where the natural environment is more
3.8 Other environmental elements

In the case studies on the three hiring sites and the references to media statements discussed in chapter six (Stiehler 2001: 9; Woithe 2005:8) an indication of the attitude of mainly white people in Tshwane towards day labourers was described. In chapter three, mention was made that there was also a lack of awareness of day labourers among the black field workers. The people from businesses near hiring sites regarded the day labourers as primarily a nuisance and tried to distance themselves from them. They felt the presence of day labourers affected business negatively. In some places the police were requested to take action. Many residents felt uncomfortable about the day labourers' presence and avoided contact; they were also concerned that the presence of day labourers might increase or mask the presence of crime; they created unsanitary conditions, caused discomfort by their constant presence and were suspected of negatively impacting on property value (Nel 2007:85).

On the other hand there is understanding of their presence and concern about their well-being (Muller 2002:1-2). There are individuals and church groups and other organisations which reach out and distribute food and clothing/blankets. There are also a number (about 25) of small shelters, mainly for homeless people that also accommodate day labourers. The CTMM have a shelter for about 350 homeless people in the CBD used by some day labourers. A resident in the east (actually outside of the CTMM) has a shelter on a small holding where day labourers are accommodated. A national organisation, Men on the Side of the Road (MSR), have a branch in Tshwane offering some services specifically to day labourers at informal hiring sites. The Department of Community Development of the CTMM was involved in the development of the establishment of MSR in Pretoria and is trying to facilitate more coordinated services for day labourers.
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The above description provides some very broad paint brush strokes of the context in which day labourers standing at informal hiring sites in Tshware find themselves.

4 Chapter review

This chapter endeavoured to provide a description of the city of Tshwane as the habitat of day labourers at informal hiring sites. This description reflects how the contents of previous chapters on poverty, the state of the economy, the labour situation unemployment and migration manifest in Tshwane. Gauteng is described as context for Tshwane followed by a more detailed description of Tshwane as a city of contrasts and contradictions with an apartheid past that has shaped its present configuration. Tshwane’s demographics are presented followed by an economic and non-economic overview of Tshwane as well as a few softer facts which could affect the existence of day labourers at informal hiring sites.

In the following chapters different aspects contributing to a theoretical understanding of the phenomenon and the possible experiences of day labourers are explored.
CHAPTER 8

UNDERSTANDING POVERTY TO CONTEXTUALISE THE SITUATION OF DAY LABOURERS IN TSHWANE

1 INTRODUCTION

After much reading and reflecting on poverty and finally reaching the point of putting it into writing and then rewriting it, I realise that I am writing about the views and voices of others in the hope of developing my own voice and some understanding of the poverty of the day labourers. My experience is articulated by Richardson (1994:516) who wrote: “I write because I want to find something out. I write in order to learn something I didn’t know before I wrote.”

Interestingly, Valenzuela, a prolific writer on day labourers, director of the Centre for the Study of Urban Poverty, UCLA, and primary source on day labourers for this study, does not refer to them in the context of poverty although much that he writes about them can be regarded as manifestations of poverty, e.g. lack of water, food, adequate shelter and underpayment. Could it be that by avoiding the term he avoids the (power) discourse of poverty? I wonder whether using the term “poverty” could seduce one into a contracted and limited view of those experiencing lack, deficiency, deprivation or want and an impoverished disposition towards the complexity of the day labourers’ situation and experiences. Could the term “poverty” simplify a situation and provide those using it with “power” over the poor? With this in mind I choose to explore existing knowledge on poverty because day labourers, in the South African context, are a face of poverty.

As background to understanding poverty, Sachs (2005:27-32) mentions, that up to about two hundred years ago poverty was so pervasive that except for rulers and
large landowners who were a small minority, just about everybody was poor. For thousands of years there had been no mentionable sustainable economic growth in any country, very slow change in living standards and slow growth in the total world population. During the period of modern economic growth from the onset and spread of the Industrial Revolution, the population has increased six fold and the world's average per capita income has grown nine fold. In the rich counties it has been up to twenty fold. Presently vast income inequalities reflect two hundred years of uneven economic growth and have spawned poverty in a context of inequality. The experience of poverty becomes evident because of the interrelatedness of humankind. Poverty cannot be known in isolation: the abundance of some highlights the want of others (Bruwer 2001:9). This is evident in the definitions and statistical indicators used to identify poverty.

I have become aware that there is a spectrum of ways to view poverty (Jones & Nelson 1999:10); however they all refer to lack, deficiency, deprivation or want. On the one hand the spectrum ranges from a purely quantitative monetary economic perspective to a social, people or person-centered qualitative and descriptive perspective but on the other poverty is like a chameleon changing according to the environment and the perspective from which it is viewed.

The discussion on poverty in this chapter is incomplete and biased to the understanding of poverty and how it relates to the poverty experienced by day labourers as part of the "poor". It will be discussed as follows:

- Perspectives on poverty
- Defining poverty and measurements to identify who is poor
- Poverty in South Africa
Chapter 8. Understanding poverty to contextualize the situation of day labourers in Tshwane

2 PERSPECTIVES ON POVERTY

On reading about poverty initially it seemed that other than agreement that poverty refers to scarcity, lack, deficiency and deprivation of some kind, there is very little agreement and clarity about what poverty is. A clear, agreed upon, definition seems nonexistent and will probably never be attained (Allen1990:934; Harrison 1993:416; Hutton & Mwansa 1996:62; Bruwer 2001:7).

MacPherson and Silburn (1998:1) provided some clarity on this apparent seeming lack of agreement by explaining that although the word “poverty” is familiar it is understood differently by different people. Different disciplines define poverty differently, it means different things in different countries and cultures and the outside experts view it differently to the inside experts. The specific meaning depends on who is using the term poverty and the meaning attached to it. Different underlying concepts or meanings lead to different understandings that, in turn, give rise to different means, methods and measures to determine who is poor, estimate the numbers of people in poverty and gauge the depth of impoverishment.

Davids et al. (2005:37) mention that by the end of the twentieth century the following were the prevailing approaches to poverty and development: the income perspective, the basic needs perspective; the social exclusion perspective, the sustainable livelihoods perspective and the human development perspective. Within each approach there is a particular view of poverty. None of the perspectives is exclusive; they all overlap and contain elements of the other but each have a distinctive emphasis. I will now describe these perspectives.
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2.1 The income perspective

The income perspective links poverty to income and describes poverty in terms of lack of household and individual income. This may be done in a number of ways using mainly absolute measures as indicators (Jones 1999:11). A number of these measures are described in section 3 of this chapter and are used to give an overview of poverty in South Africa.

Poverty defined only in economic terms and referring only to that which is lacking does not recognise the other riches people may have (Burkey 1993:5). The income perspective disregards the non-income sources of support of the poor (Jones 1999:10, Davids et. al. 2005:41). Figures for poverty at national levels tend to lead to an under assessment of the number of poor. Thus the extent of their poverty cannot be simplifiedly indicated only by their income.

It does not show the intricacies of poor people's lives, the wider range of issues faced by .... (the) poor in relation to social, health and education conditions".

(Jones 1999:11)

The income perspective is the most common definition favoured by most governments for bureaucratic decision making about welfare support in the form of grants, subsidies, setting of wage levels and job creation and full employment. Some of these solutions can easily lead to dependency where the poor rely exclusively on social welfare (Jones 1999:10; Davids et. al. 2005:38-39).

2.2 The basic need perspective

Two definitions of poverty, from a basic needs perspective, used by the World Bank are that poverty is "the absence of access of basic services or means to meet
basic needs" and "the inability to attain a minimum standard of living," (Jones 1999:11, Davids et. al. 2005:39).

When a basic needs perspective to poverty is followed, the assumption is that problems of poverty will be solved by provision of facilities and services. It also presumes that if these services exist, all poor people will have equal access whereas the reality is different. Unless issues around the management of the services and the sustainability of the action are resolved basic needs will not be met. For example, in Zambia it was found that although water had been provided by means of boreholes, soon afterwards they were no longer effective due to the people still being too poor to contribute sufficiently to their upkeep: spare parts were very difficult to obtain, not enough people had been trained to maintain them and effective water committees with clarity on what needs to happen for a water supply to be maintained had not been put in place (Musonda 2004:127). A basic needs perspective easily disregards the fact that poverty is usually a series of interlinked difficulties (Jones 1999:12). For example, the circumstances of the poor may mean that they are likely to eat poorer food, which means poorer health and therefore they are less likely to find and/or keep a job, which leads to less income which means children may have to work or partly fend for themselves. They may only be able to afford poorer housing, which affects health and security which further affects health and so the cycle continues.

However, if there is appropriate provision for basic needs the form of services, as a means to an end and not as the ultimate solution, the downward spiral of the cycle of the poverty breaking can be broken. The bottom line is that basic needs approaches are most effective if they are designed by, with and for poor people. This introduces the next perspective.
2.3 The social exclusion perspective

According to the social exclusion perspective poverty is defined in terms of exclusion from benefiting or enjoying the general prosperity of society (Davids et. al. 2005:40). To be excluded is to be deprived of an opportunity or certain conditions or rights, which is more than an economic issue (Arcoverde 2001:3). Social exclusion is broadly defined as "the process through which individuals or groups are wholly or partially excluded from full participation in the society in which they live" (European Foundation in Zegeye & Maxted 2002:10).

Social exclusion refers to relative dimensions of poverty where most people's basic needs have been met but vulnerability and deprivation of a different kind are encountered. Individuals and households remain unable to participate in and enjoy the average or normal life of the community due to the lack of access to resources (MacPherson & Silburn 1998:17; Davids et. al. 2005:40).

The concept of social exclusion focuses on processes, on mechanisms and institutions that exclude people. It goes beyond the static description of a situation of deprivation and puts the focus on the causes and mechanisms underlying these conditions. By focusing on institutions a better understanding of context-specific causes of exclusion is created (de Haan in Zegeye & Maxted 2002: 10). Exploitation, domination, oppression and alienation are regarded as the main causes of exclusion (Davids et. al. 2005:40). Indicators of exclusion are multiple, part or composite. They emphasise political, social and economic components of poverty and equality. For example:
Employment is seen as serving the multiple functions of providing income, conferring social legitimacy and granting the individual access to full citizenship rights, that is inclusion in the system.

(Davids et. al. 2005:40).

On the other hand "Unemployment is an exclusion process that resonates in other social exclusion processes" (Arcoverde 2001:1).

The social exclusion perspective is mostly followed by northern hemisphere governments and NGOs. From this perspective poverty is defined in terms of cultural and political norms that make people unable or unwilling to participate in society e.g. institutionalised racism and sexism, and geographical isolation. (Zegeye & Maxted 2002:10; Davids et. al. 2005:40).

2.4 The sustainable livelihoods perspective

The description "sustainable" refers to continuation over the longer term and "livelihood" to that which constitutes a means of living or sustenance (Chambers in Zegeye & Maxted 2002:58). Rakodi (2002:3) describes a livelihood as:

[T]he capabilities, assets (including both material and social resources) and activities required for a means of living;” and explains that “a livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks and maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets now and in the future ... while not undermining the natural resource base.

The sustainable livelihoods perspective sees poverty as multi-dimensional and from the peoples' perspective. It “[p]laces households and their members at the center and focuses on households as livelihoods (De Haan et. al. 2002:1). This is to recognise that all poor people are not poor in the same way but that poverty differs from place to
place and person to person. The well-being or poverty of individuals and households also changes over time. Poverty cannot be represented adequately only by income-related poverty lines or simple measures of consumption. It requires a holistic and participatory appraisal of the range of livelihood activities and strategies of a household. The sustainable livelihoods perspective focuses on the assets and strengths and the vulnerability of people in coping with hardship and maintaining the quality of life they have achieved. This perspective is people-centred and builds on the available assets. The emphasis is on building people's wealth rather than on their poverty and emphasises the participation of individuals and communities in defining and reducing their own poverty (Rakodi 2002:10 xv; Davids et. al. 2005:40).

The sustainability of livelihoods can be explained with reference to five types of assets or capital upon which people build them. Capital is "... stuff that augments incomes but is not totally consumed in use (Narayan & Pritchard in Rakodi 2002:10). Capital includes capabilities e.g.:  

2.4.1 **Human capital** refers to the quantitative and qualitative labour resources available to households. This refers to the number of household members, their available time and their competence and know-how (education and skills), ability to work and sufficiently good health to enable them to engage in economic and other income earning activities. Lack of human capital in the form of skills and education affects the ability to secure a livelihood more directly in urban labour markets than in rural areas (Rakodi 2002:10).

2.4.2 **Natural capital** refers to the reserves of natural resources that benefit people (e.g. land, water, bio-diversity, environmental resources and especially common-pooled resources).
2.4.3 **Social and political capital** are the social resources with which people shape their lives and pursue objectives (e.g. networks, membership of groups, relationships based on trust and reciprocity, access to wider institutions of society).

2.4.4 **Physical capital** is the physical or manufactured resources of basic infrastructure (e.g. transport, housing, water, energy, and communications); and an endowment with means of production that enable people to shape their lives.

2.4.5 **Financial capital** is the financial resources available to people (including savings, credit, remittances and pensions) which provide them with livelihood options. Rakodi (2002:4) states that:

> households are considered poor when the resources they command are insufficient to enable them to consume sufficient goods and services to achieve a reasonable minimum level of welfare.

The concept of sustainable livelihoods has been developed and practiced in rural areas by Non Governmental Organisations (NGO) like CARE, Oxfam, CIDA, Sida, the World Bank, UNDP and DFID especially in rural areas (Rakodi 2002:xv). DFID published “urban livelihoods” (Rakodi 2002) which describes the application of the sustainable livelihoods perspective to the urban context.

The value of the sustainable livelihoods perspective is that it:

- Recognises the complexity and contextuality of poverty. It is holistic and process oriented.
- Focuses on people, recognises that their well-being should be understood from their point of view.
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- Forges a link between micro level and macro level.
- Is highly consistent with UNDP’s definition of poverty of human rights, human dignity and freedom.
- Defines and recognises the poor as active agents using various coping strategies to manage their complex assets (Davids et. al. 2005:40).

In certain respects the sustainable livelihoods perspective is also a human or people centred perspective but it has been recognised as a separate perspective. In the next section I discuss the contribution of Chambers (1983) who pioneered the livelihoods approach which contributed to a person and human perspective.

2.5 The human or people centred perspective on poverty

A human or people centred perspective of poverty has a human face. It emphasises a holistic understanding of poverty that reflects the collective and individual perceptions and experiences of the poor. It is comprehensive incorporating most of the key elements of the other perspectives but in a human-focussed manner (Davids et. al. 2005:40). It sees poverty as “all that holds people back” from a full human life, or the extent to which human needs to live a long and healthy life are unmet. It includes the absence or limitations of choice in meeting human needs, e.g. access to education, upholding of human rights and the security of political and social freedoms (Hope & Timmel 1995; Book 1:9; Burkey 1996:35; Davids et. al. 2005:40).

In the following sections the contributions of people like Chambers (1983), Freire (1972), and Max-Neef et al. (1989) which have been meaningful in my understanding of the human face of poverty are discussed. These contributions are not mutually exclusive but overlap and complement each other but have different emphases.
2.5.1 Robert Chambers: poverty as entrapment

Robert Chambers' views on poverty are rurally based, but are applicable to poverty in general and also apply to urban based day labourers, many of whom are from rural areas.

Chambers (1983) argued for pluralism in explanations of poverty because of "the interlocking nature of the disadvantages of poor people" (Shore 1999:1). The multiple causes, multiple objectives and multiple interventions must be recognized. On the other hand, to understand poverty better, outsiders of whatever persuasion need to see things from the inside because poor people are the greatest experts on poverty (Burkey 1996:11, Shore 1999:1).

Chambers (1983:103-139) uses the household as the point of departure to explain poverty elucidating that the poor are households of people trapped in "clusters of disadvantage," an interactive system of material poverty, physical weakness, isolation, vulnerability and powerlessness. These five clusters combine to form a deprivation trap for individuals and their families (Chambers in Sengendo 1996:63: Myers 1999:66). They are interconnected and reinforce one another. A disadvantage in one area affects and is affected by the other areas. For example, if the household experiences poverty this most likely includes lack of income and other material assets. Because of lack of food and malnutrition, poor people have weak small bodies, a low immune response to infections and are unable to afford or reach health services. Poverty leads to isolation, i.e. because of lack of money poor people may be unable to pay for schooling or transport to school or to look for work. The also cannot buy a radio or bicycle to have contact with the outside world or afford to live near the main road or village centre.
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Myers (1999:68) mentions that the elements of vulnerability and powerlessness need to be specially noted. Poverty and vulnerability are not the same thing. Poverty may increase vulnerability. Vulnerability means defencelessness, insecurity and exposure to risk, shock and stress. (Chambers in Sengendo 1996:63-64) says:

Vulnerability refers to exposure to contingencies and stress and difficulty in coping with them. Vulnerability has two sides: an external side of risks, shocks and stress to which an individual or household is subject: and an internal side which is defenseless, meaning lack of means to cope with damaging loss. Loss can take many forms: becoming or being physically weaker economically impoverished, socially dependent, humiliated, or psychologically harmed.

Vulnerability exposes people to exploitation which is related to powerlessness. Poverty also increases powerlessness because of lack of wealth that goes with a low status. Powerlessness is often overlooked by people who work with the poor. Powerlessness is an invitation to exploitation by the powerful. Chambers (Sengendo 1996:64) refers to three kinds of exploitation to which the poor are particularly vulnerable:

- By the local non-poor who stand between the poor and the outside world cutting off resources and benefits that were meant for the poor.

- Robbery e.g. through deception, bribery, violence e.g. by police, officials charging money for free services. They know the poor cannot make use of the judicial system. Day labourers report that if they have the money they can pay the police when they come to remove them from places where they sleep or wait.
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• Bargaining and its absence. Myers (1999:69) mentions what day labourers experience; they do not bargain for payment for their labour. They will take on a job without knowing what, how or when they will be paid and are then exploited.

Chambers, from the Institute of Development Studies of the University of Sussex, facilitated and coordinated the use and evolution of various participatory appraisal methods including the Participatory Poverty Appraisal (PPA) which was applied on macro scale in 1999, when the World Bank sponsored the study, Consultations with the Poor that informed the World Development Report 2000-2001 on Poverty and Development. The process involved a series of consultations with 23,000 poor people and 260 communities in 23 developing countries (Shore 1999:1).

Chambers has contributed to my understanding of poverty with the emphasis on the participation of the poor and participatory methods for facilitating change, the value of indigenous knowledge and poverty as a cluster of deprivation. An awareness of biases towards understanding poverty was also kindled.

2.5.2 Freire: poverty as oppression and culture of silence

Paolo Freire wrote very little specifically on poverty but by implication included poverty in his very broad concept of oppression. Burkey (1996:51) uses Freire's concept of oppression and explains that: “the poor if not oppressed by the more powerful are oppressed by their own limited knowledge and poverty.” Their lack of knowledge and information prevents them from competing successfully for the share of resources they to which they are entitled and it prevents them from effectively utilising the few
resources they have or control. They may be aware or unaware of their limitation but may also not know how to acquire the requisite knowledge or gain access to information.

Freire's uses the concept of "culture of silence" to explain the apathetic silence that sometimes characterises the poor. To understand "culture of silence " we need to understand that culture is the way people structure their experiences conceptually, so that they may be transmitted as knowledge from person to person and from one generation to another (Fuglesang in Burkey 1996:45). This knowledge is based on peoples' perceptions of the world around them and how they adapt to this world. Culture is formed over a long time through generations and the origins of the perceptions and practices are later sometimes unknown and irrelevant.

Freire (1972:133-134) explained that in any society there are two groups of people, the oppressors or invaders and those oppressed or invaded. Military invasion, domination and colonialisation reinforce these positions and promote the "cultural invasion" where the invaders penetrate the cultural context of another group. This invasion of the minds accompanies the development of the culture of silence (Freire & Macedo 1987:86).

Cultural colonialisation involves one culture invading the consciousness of another, eliminating that culture and imposing another language and world view in its place.

(McLaren & Lankshear 1994:155)

Cultural oppression and colonialisation take place gradually and directly and indirectly through explicit and implicit messages from the oppressors. It is a progressive cultural subjugation of the local population, where they accept the invaders view of reality, rejecting their own and in the process lose their humanity and voice (Behardien
1989:5). In different ways the invaders emphasise the difference in levels of development of the two groups and that the invaded are of an inferior social class and that their position is unchangeable.

Over time those invaded start thinking about themselves as unworthy and remain silent because they are not like the invaders. This is the crux of the culture of silence. Behardien (1989:10) explains:

Submerged in the culture of the oppressor the alienated person finally sacrifices his humanity and dehumanises himself because of his inability to see himself as a human being in his own right. For him to be human he comes to believe that he must be like his oppressor, have the same attitude and values, use the same language, live a similar life style and assume his values"... "This uncritical, unreflective acceptance of the dominant view of reality is one of the most striking features of the culture of silence.

If the invaded feel themselves inferior, they begin to believe that the invaders are superior and accept the values of the invaders. The subtle comparison between the two groups leads to the invaded being irresistibly attracted to the very visible culture, underlying value systems, perceptions, riches and sometimes, education of the invaders. The invaded come to accept the dominant political, social and economic institutions and values and traditions of the oppressor. As the invasion progresses those invaded are alienated from the spirit of their own culture and from themselves.

The invaders simultaneously have no regard or respect for the potentialities of the invaded and impose their own view of the world and reality. They inhibit the creativity of the invaded and curb their expression. The invaded are silenced by the disregard and disrespect of the invaders. Their silence is mistakenly interpreted as backwardness and as their so-called backwardness/silence becomes more apparent
they are excluded from participation in any decision making structures.

This process of invasion is often also reinforced by the technological, financial and scientific resources available to the invaders. Often, there are also measures to prevent those invaded from sharing in the wealth, education and resources available to the invaders. Separate (and often inferior) facilities are created for those invaded.

The culture of silence also encourages dependence. Because those who have been invaded do not understand the values they have adopted or how to live in the new way they look to the invaders to guide and lead them. They are always ‘behind’ the invader and can therefore never participate as equals. This becomes further proof to the invaders of the backwardness of those invaded. This dependence exposes them to exploitation. If carried too far this exploitation can lead to resistance, conflict, violence and revolt which has no advantages for the oppressors. For the oppressors passivity, apathy and silence of the oppressed are important and must be maintained (Sloop 1987:46).

This culture of silence does not have to remain; it can be broken through a process of conscientisation. The stimulation of self-reflected critical awareness on the part of the oppressed people of their social reality and of their ability to transform it by their conscious action can lead to the transformation (Rahman 1993:81).

Freire (1972:36 & 41) also made incisive comments on the non-poor who want to help the poor in their involvement in the struggle against poverty. He said:

[a]s they move to the side of the exploited they almost always bring with them the marks of their origin. Their prejudices include a lack of confidence in the people’s ability to think, to want, and to know. So they run the risk of falling into a type of generosity as
harmful as that of the oppressors though they truly desire to
transform the unjust order, they believe that they must be the
executors of the transformation.

They talk about people but they do not trust them; and trusting the
people is the indispensable precondition for evolutionary change.
A real humanist can be identified more by his trust in the people,
which engages them in their struggle, than by a thousand actions
in their favour, without that trust.

2.5.3 Max-Neef: poverty as unmet fundamental human needs

Max-Neef et. al. (1989:21) alludes to a systemic, holistic and comprehensive
view of poverty when they state that poverty is not a single economic condition that
refers the predicaments of people below a certain income threshold. They suggest that
we should speak of poverties that exist when any of the fundamental human need
(explained in chapter two section 5) are not adequately actualised.

Hope and Timmel (1985a 1:87) have organised these poverties in the following
wheel of fundamental human needs which can also be used as a wheel of poverty.
Poverty of subsistence is presented on the wheel in terms of its main components:
food, water fuel and shelter. The following interpretation of the poverties is limited and
biased towards day labourer’s circumstances.
• **Poverty of subsistence** is the most fundamental form of poverty where there is inadequate income (from work and employment), where there is not enough food, water, fuel and a family or individuals do not have access to decent and affordable housing, there is a degrading natural environment and lack of transport (Shiffman 1995:2). (See chapter 8 section 2 for the difference between work and employment).

• **Poverty of protection** exists due to having inadequate and unreliable protection systems against crime, labour practices, inadequate health care, inadequate social security, unjust limitations of freedom of movement, speech and association. Shiffman (1995:2) explains that lack of protection exists:
When poor sanitation and public health standards deteriorate to the point where disease is rampant, where access to health and medical services is limited, when violence and crime combine to imprison people in their own homes— that is if they have a home, or in any way limit their freedom.

- **Poverty of affection** exists due to lack of relationships, oppression, exploitation, and authoritarian relationships and living in fear of retribution. Shiffman (1995:2) also explains that people are poor when people are oppressed or fear retribution, when authoritarian governments ascend to power, when people are exploited by an unaccountable public or private sector.

- **Poverty of understanding** exists due to poor education, or lack of access to good education, lack of recognition of innate knowledge, skills, wisdom and resources. Poverty of understanding due to lack of education contributes to poverty of subsistence by not being able to obtain employment (Shiffman 1995:2).

- **Poverty of participation** exists due to social, economic (lack of work), political exclusion/isolation, marginalisation and discrimination. The poverty of participation manifests as exclusion and isolation (Shiffman 1995:3). Poverty of understanding can contribute to poverty of participation and social and economic exclusion.

- **Poverty of idleness/recreation** or enjoyment ensues from the necessity to work constantly to survive, little free time or relaxation that results in peace of mind. Such poverty includes the dismal and ongoing drudgery, hunger and struggle with no time for re-creational rest or activity.
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- **Poverty of creation** exists due to the lack of opportunity/choice to work, produce, design and invent. It is exacerbated when people help others without their participation. "Because man is a creator he does not want others to do things for him" (Rahman 1993:113).

- **Poverty of identity** exists due to imposition of alien values, loss of language, customs, lack of social rhythms, forced migrations, exile, lack of tolerance for diversity, non belonging. The colonial era left Africa with states with borders that divided ethnic groups, this division and artificial segregation being continued in different ways through apartheid policies that affected the identity of South Africans.

- **Poverty of freedom** exists due to lack of security/protection, income, rights, self-determination, legal protection, e.g., equal rights. The poverty of freedom exists when people do not experience equal rights including access to services.

- **Poverty of transcendence or spirituality** exists if the fact that people are spiritual beings is not recognized, their spirituality is not recognized or it is ridiculed and they are prevented from expressing and maintaining their forms of ritual and religious affiliations.

The above description is clearly not limited to objects, or satisfiers, e.g. water, food, shelter of which they are deprived but also refers to the process through which people meet their needs or are unable to meet their needs i.e. through being, having, doing and interacting (axiological needs). The inclusion of these axiological needs introduces the idea that poverty also has to do with the extent that people are able to and have the ability and freedom to be the protagonists of their own circumstances and future.
Another important feature of Max-Neef’s view of poverty is that any poverty if extended beyond a threshold could generate further **pathologies**. For example: extended unemployment may have the effect that a person may go through a progressive emotional experience of shock, optimism, pessimism and fatalism. Extended unemployment may totally upset a whole range of other needs. Due to the inability to meet subsistence needs a person may feel increasingly unprotected, crisis may develop in the family, guilt feelings may destroy affections, lack of participation may give way to feelings of isolation and marginalisation, and declining self esteem may generate an identity crisis. When large numbers of people in the community experience extended and extensive poverty over a long time it may lead to collective pathologies of frustration that can no longer be addressed economically only (Max-Neef et. al. 1989:22).

The above arguments point to how essential a holistic people centred approach to understanding and addressing poverty is, as it recognises the systemic nature of needs. The range of needs/poverties and satisfiers already allude to the multiple disciplines that should be involved when an expanded definition of needs/poverty is used for assisting the poor in their situation.

In this section a few of the prevailing approaches to poverty from a developmental viewpoint have been briefly outlined. These perspectives provide a backdrop for the definitions and measurements used to identify poverty.

3 **DEFINING POVERTY AND MEASUREMENT INSTRUMENTS FOR IDENTIFYING WHO IS POOR**

It seems important to define poverty in order to understand and address it (Wilson & Ramphele 1998:14; Serr in Sengendo 1996:62-63; Adcock in Becker
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1997:21). Adcock (as cite by Becker 1997:21) explains:

It is arguably the issue of definition which lies at the heart of the task of understanding poverty. We must first know what poverty is before we can identify where and when it is occurring or attempt to measure it, and before we can do anything to alleviate it.

Meth (2004:1) illustrates the need for clear definitions of poverty in a discussion of Millennium Development Goals to halve the incidence of income poverty by 2015. He does, however, not spell out whether the commitment is to halve the number of households or individuals living in poverty or whether the reference is to any one of the possible poverty lines.

In this section some of the meanings and measurements of poverty used are presented. These definitions and indicators reflect the perspectives on poverty that have been outlined. These terms will be used in the description of poverty in South Africa in section 4 of this chapter.

3.1 Poverty in terms of extent

Illife (1987:2) a much quoted author on African poverty mentions that two levels of want have existed in Africa for several centuries. Firstly, there is that of people struggling most of the time to preserve themselves and their dependants from physical want and secondly, a smaller number who permanently or temporarily fail and fall into physical want. These descriptive definitions refer to the extent of poverty and are also referred to as absolute and relative poverty.
3.1.1 Extreme and absolute poverty

The distinctions of extreme, absolute and relative are generally accepted distinctions of poverty, qualified differently by different authors. Some descriptions are used internationally, some regionally allowing for comparisons between countries, but others are only national (MacPherson & Silburn 1998).

Extreme poverty occurs in developing countries, mainly in the regions of East Asia, South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, with a low per capita income and a high incidence of poverty (MacPherson & Silburn 1998:1; Sachs 2005:21). It refers to extreme deprivation or minimal, physical survival where the basic needs for survival cannot be met by a household (Sachs 2005:20). These individuals, communities or nations are unable to feed, clothe and shelter themselves and consequently risk death (Burkey 1996: 3-4; MacPherson & Silburn 1998:1). People experience chronic hunger, lack rudimentary shelter and potable drinking water and sanitation, basic articles of climatically appropriate clothing, are unable to access health care, cannot afford education for some or all of their children (Serr 2004: 138; Sachs 2005:20) Burkey (1996:3-4) adds a further distinction identifying the “poorest of the poor” as people who, because of serious mental or physical handicaps, are incapable of meeting their basic needs by themselves.

Harrison (1993:416) explains that absolute poverty imposes real physical discomfort and suffering, like hunger and disease. “The most crunching symptom of absolute poverty is malnutrition” (Harrison 1993:458). Additionally poverty prevents children and adults from reaching their full physical and mental potential, denying victims even a minimal existence.
3.1.2 Relative poverty

In countries with higher general levels of living, with rapid economic growth and reduced incidence of poverty, poverty is increasingly defined in relative terms. Relative poverty refers to matters of appropriate distribution and opportunity. The emphasis is on social, not physical survival, and refers to the quality of life that even the poorest people in a community should be able to enjoy. Reference is made to notions of social participation, inclusion, exclusion, citizenship and empowerment. The idea of relative poverty is powerful and controversial with issues of social, political and ethical significance (MacPherson & Silburn 1998:2).

For Sachs (2005:20), relative poverty usually refers to a household income below a given proportion of average national income. The relatively poor exist in high income/industrialised countries such as the USA and Japan. They lack access to cultural goods, entertainment, recreation, quality health care, quality education and other requirements for upward social mobility.

The above are some references to two of levels of extent of poverty which are vivid and non specific in their descriptions and non definitive.

Besides the qualitative descriptions of extreme and relative poverty in the previous section, various indicators are used to point to the presence of poverty. These seem to range from monetary, quantitative terms to purerly qualitative terms.

3.2 Economic indicators for defining poverty

Monetary quantitative indicators include indices such as Gross Domestic Product
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(GDP) (Mohr 2004:1) and poverty lines (Davids et. al. 2005:37) such as the International poverty line or the poverty datum line (Kaul & Thomaselli-Mochovitism 1999:20; le Bruyns et. al. 2004:202; Sachs 2005:20), Minimum Living Level (MLL) and Supplementary Living Level (SLL), the household subsistence level (HSL) (Mohr 2004:161-2; Davids et. al. 2005:37-38), and the household effective level (HEL), the poverty gap (Kaul et. al. 1999:20; Zegeye & Maxted 2002:1) and Gini coefficient (Mohr 2004: 172).

The value of the quantitative ways of measurement and standardised measures are more objective, reductionist and expert centered are that they allow for the setting of international standards and comparison between situations, such as different countries. These indicators however are mostly singular and generalisations. They are inadequate to indicate the complexity of poverty. Sachs (2005:72-73) notes that there are many possibilities for the persistence of poverty in the midst of economic growth and that generalisations should be avoided and particular circumstances analysed for accurate understanding. Common reasons are that economic growth is seldom uniformly distributed across a country; growth is linked to good market opportunities from which the poor remain disconnected unless government makes the connection via good nutrition, health and adequate education, discrimination, e.g. against women.

3.3 Social indicators

Mohr (2004:202-205) notes that indicators like the above pertain to economics in the narrow sense of the word but that economics is actually also a social science and that particularly development economists are also interested the social aspects related to the economics. In recent past decades research on poverty has come to stress the importance of understanding well-being and its absence in terms beyond the monetary, especially income (Wilson & Ramphele 1989:16; Rakodi 2002:5; Zegeye & Maxted
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2002:5; Davids et. al. 2005:38). There has been a shift from a narrow economic concept of development to a broader recognition that development is concerned with people. This explains the development of social and human development indicators that are also statistically calculated. The United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) developed 19 core development indicators, some of which were implied in the questionnaire used in this study: nutrition, literacy, primary and secondary school enrolment, professional and technical employment, access to water supply and, wages. Some are economic indicators in the narrow sense. Social indicators listing social concerns have also been developed e.g. regular and adult education, unemployment, quality of working life (work hours, travel to work, leave earnings, injuries, environmental nuisances), free time and recreation, low income, indoor and outdoor space, proximity to services, air pollution and noise, injuries and fear for personal safety. Social Indices of poverty that are standardised measures and quantify non-monetary resources include the Human Development Index (HDI) and Human Poverty Index (HPI) (Riccio 2001:379-381; Zegeye & Maxted 2002:6-7; Mohr 2004:209).

The indicators of poverty that have been described so far have progressed from a conceptualisation of poverty in purely monetary and singular terms (poverty lines in terms of income or expenditure) to being about people and multidimensional and ascertained quantitatively by outside experts who:

[Each may have valuable information to contribute, but we need dialogue to draw in the insights of all who are concerned as we search for solutions.

(Hope & Timmel 1995a:17).

3.3.1 Participatory definitions and descriptions of poverty

Qualitative participatory descriptions of poverty have developed that include the
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voices of the other experts, "the poor," in defining poverty. These include Sustainable Livelihoods (SL) (Chambers & Conway 1991, Neubert 2000:13-14, Rakodi 2002; Davids et. al. 2005:40), Participatory Poverty Appraisals (PPA) (Booth et. al. 1999:49-59; Brock & McGee 2002:5; Serr 2004:10; Narayan et. al. 2000), Participatory Action Research (PAR), Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), Participatory Learning and Action (PLA), and poverty hearings. These are all participatory processes that create space for the voices of the experts, actually experiencing the hardship and deprivation, to share their experiences.

These are descriptions by people themselves, of how they live, their hardships, assets and coping strategies, their priorities and perceptions of what can help them. They appear to explain the situation better than poverty lines (determining income expenditure) and indices (access people have to basic needs etc) and provide more useful information for understanding poverty. These methods place people (the poor) in the centre of understanding the multi-dimensionality of deprivation and household strategies of coping. They provide a shared, participatory understanding of the nature and experience of poverty and deprivation, the assets of the poor and opportunities and assets accessible to them. They are also about the sources of their vulnerability, powerlessness and struggle for dignity (Rakodi 2002:275, Zegeye et. al. 2002:5).

The largest of these studies has been the World Bank's "Consultations with the poor" of 23 countries that informed the 2000/01 World Bank Development Report, "Voices of the poor: can anyone hear us?" (Brock & McGee 2002:5, Serr 2004:140). The key findings on poverty (Narayan et. al. 2000) were:

- Poverty is multidimensional: it is a gendered, dynamic, complex, institutionally embedded and location specific phenomenon.
- Households are crumbling under the stress of poverty. Many household disintegrate as men fail to earn adequate incomes and women become
breadwinners.

- The state has been largely ineffective in reaching the poor.
- The role of NGOs in the lives of the poor is limited and thus the poor depend primarily on their own informal networks... women particularly are found to invest heavily in social support networks....
- The social fabric, poor people’s only insurance, is unraveling.

Two participatory poverty assessments have been conducted in South Africa, namely, The Second Carnegie inquiry into poverty and development in Southern Africa of 1984 recorded in by Wilson and Ramphele in "Uprooting poverty: The South African challenge" and A South African Participatory Poverty Assessment, “They speak out on poverty hearings”, of 1998, when 600 people presented evidence over 35 days (Poverty hearings 1998:1). Details from both these assessments will be presented in the next section on poverty in South Africa.

The preceding discussion on different ways that poverty is distinguished are useful for understanding how meanings may differ when the same terms are used with reference to poverty. All these definitions and description can be located in the different perspectives on poverty that have been discussed.

4 POVERTY IN SOUTH AFRICA

4.1 Introduction

In South Africa:

Poverty ... shows itself in different ways.... It is not always easy to make a clear distinction between facts or symptoms of poverty and its origins. Not only are there several different dimensions of material and non-material poverty but there is also a complex interaction between cause and effect, which makes it difficult to describe a state of poverty without considering
those factors, themselves aspects of poverty, that cause further misery


In this section a cameo of poverty will be presented in terms of the definitions and measurement instruments presented in the previous section.

4.2 Theories on the causes of poverty in South Africa

Before presenting the statistics and descriptions on poverty it seems appropriate to consider the theories explaining poverty in South Africa. There are basically two sets of theories on the causes of poverty. The one set emphasises the personal responsibility of the poor and blames personal dysfunction, such as lack of motivation, laziness, inadequate and inappropriate education, family dysfunction and cultural values. The other theories blame society.

Davids et. al. (2005:41) favour a structural, cumulative explanation that poverty is caused by a many mutually interacting, context specific, socio-economic, political and environmental factors that pertain to the distribution of wealth, income and power in a society in terms of race, gender, age and locality and environmental factors relating to poor environmental conditions and access to available natural resources.

The structural, cumulative explanation implies that poverty has, in the first place, been caused by the well established structures put in place by the government. Previously poverty was maintained by structures created by the apartheid policy. Currently, globalisation and neo-liberal economic policy introducing structural and sectoral adjustment programmes are being held responsible. (Sewpaul & Hölscher 2004:41). Neo-liberal economic policy has progressively widened the gap between the
rich and poor, between and within countries (Sewpaul & Hölcher 2004:1). For the poor it has led to further poverty. Poverty has become a vicious self-perpetuating cycle from which it is difficult to escape. It tends to extend to incorporate the children of the current poor; the children ultimately become the next generation of poor (Davids et. al. 2005:41).

Bezuidenhout (2004:183) explains the structural theory as follows: society in its attempt to organise its social, environmental, economic and political spheres, creates poverty or makes certain people more vulnerable to it. From this point of view it would mean that certain groups in society, such as racial, ethnic and cultural minorities may become impoverished because they are deprived of equal opportunities for education, jobs and income. Such groups may be women, because they generally receive less pay and have fewer opportunities for advancement or individuals who cannot afford specialised training and therefore cannot advance in their jobs thereby acquiring better earnings and living standards.

4.3 Statistics on poverty in South Africa

The following statistics convey the incomprehensibly large number of experiences of poverty as contracted and understandable numerical symbols. Where possible I have used statistics that refer, more or less, to the period during which the research was conducted i.e. September 2004.

Statistics on poverty in South Africa need to be viewed in the light of the South African population. According to Statistics South Africa, the 2001 census estimates the population of South Africa to be 42,63 million people living in 11,19 million households (Statistics SA 2006).
4.3.1 UNDP definition of poverty

Statistics SA (2000:54) used the UNDP definition of poverty which is a broader perspective than merely of income or expenditure. The UNDP views poverty as:

The denial of opportunities and choices most basic to human development to lead a long, healthy, creative life and to enjoy a decent standard of living, freedom, dignity, self esteem and respect from others*.

To measure poverty the indicators used are household expenditure (rather than income), type of housing, access to clean water and sanitation, education and employment.

In South Africa 17% of households are regarded as very poor (spend less than R600 per month), 25% are poor (spend between R600 and R1000 per month). This is 32% of the population (Statistics South Africa 2000:54).

4.3.2 Human Poverty Index

South Africa's Human Poverty Index (HPI 2006) indicates that poverty affects at least 30, 9% of the population. The poorest households are African and rural (Statistics South Africa 2006). These households are also characterised by the highest average household size, proportion of children in the household under the age of five years and unemployment which in turn increases the likelihood of poverty of individuals (Le Bruyns & Pauw 2004:204-206; Bezuidenhout 2004:184-185).
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4.3.3 The Minimum Living Level (MLL)

The Bureau of Marketing Research (BMR) of UNISA set the Minimum Living Level (MLL) for South Africa at approximately R1900 per month for an average household of 4.7 persons at 2003 values. Using the 2000 census 20.5 million South Africans or 46% were living below the MLL (Le Bruyns & Pauw 2004:204).

4.3.4 The 40th percentile and 20th percentile

Various absolute and relative poverty lines are used in South Africa. The 40th percentile is popular. Van der Berg (Le Bruyns & Pauw 2004:204) using the 40% poverty line where the lowest 40% of the population are regarded as living in deep poverty and caught in a desperate struggle to survive, estimates that there are approximately 18 million poor in South Africa. Using a poverty line of R3000 per capita income (i.e. household income per year in 2000 currency value) he finds that the number of poor have remained more or less unchanged at 16 million, but given population growth, have proportionately decreased from 38% to 36% of the population.

If the 20th percentile is used 28.2% of the adult population is poor. It is slightly less in Gauteng at 25.2% and the lowest at 15.4% in Tshwane (Provide PBP2005:15).

4.3.5 The poverty gap

In South Africa the poverty gap was R28 million or 6.55% of GDP (May et. al. in Zegeye & Maxted 2002:11). Although only 45% of the population live in rural areas, rural households comprise 76% of the poverty gap.
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4.3.6 Gini coefficient

South Africa’s Gini co-efficient is around 0.6 (Barker 2007:240) which indicates a slight decrease since 2002 after a number of years of increase (Mohr 2004:173; Stats SA in van Heerden 2006:538), but it is still among the highest in the world. The increase was despite the increased economic growth but was attributed to the increase in unemployment. These figures do not show the significant reduction in interracial earnings that have taken place (Barker 2007:240).

The poverty gap and Gini coefficient have been the motivation for appeals to the government to institute a Basic Income Grant. In his Nelson Mandela lecture in November 2004 Tutu (Africa Focus bulletin, Nov 29, 2004) stated:

At the moment, many, too many, of our people live in grueling, demeaning, dehumanizing poverty....We should discuss as a nation whether a basic income grant is not really the way forward.

One of the arguments is that it would relieve the situation of the poorest with similar impact as old age grants that have provided widespread relief to poorest households.

Depending on the indicators and statistical models used, there seem to be between 32% and 46% of the South African people who can be regarded experiencing poverty, with an additional large number vulnerable to falling into poverty. This means that more than 50% of households are poor or are vulnerable to falling into poverty (Zegeye & Maxted 2002:11 & 20; May & Govender in Pieterse 2001:34).
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The statistical data and interpretations provided are useful in highlighting the extent of inequality (racially, geographically in terms of age and gender) but it is in the following more participatory and descriptive perspectives on poverty that richer understanding is possible. This is the backdrop to the situation of which the day labourers form part.

4.3.7 Voices of and for the poor on poverty in South Africa

In contrast to the statistics above that reduce many experiences to numbers, the "other/real experts," of whom there are about 20.5 million in South Africa, have been represented in the Second Carnegie Inquiry into poverty and Development in Southern Africa (Wilson & Ramphele 1989) and the World Bank Development Report 2000 after the “Consultations with the poor” (Narayan in Serr 2004:140).

4.4. Social characteristics of poverty in South Africa

In South Africa poverty is characterised by inequality, link to race, geographical location, gender, age, and unemployment. (Le Bruyns & Pauw 2004:204).

4.4.1 Inequality

From the statistics on poverty inequality seems to stand out most. South Africa is classified as an upper middle income country; the economy is growing and per capita income increasing. During 2004 the growth rate was 3.8% (African Economic Outlook 2004/2005). The economic growth in the years 2000-2005 is indicative of a macro economic policy that is partly effective but is widely recognised as not being wholly so (Willemse 2005:40). South Africa is presently a two world nation with alarming growing
income inequality. According to the Gini coefficient South Africa is now ranked above Brazil regarding unequal monetary income (Statistics South Africa 2000:83; African Economic Outlook 2004/2005). The growth thus masks the increasing, unequal income distribution, the destitution amidst plenty and plenty amidst poverty (World Bank Report 1993/4 in Zegeye & Maxted 2002:1). The following extract from a poem vividly portrays the inequality:

alexandra
my beloved home town

a splash
of mud

rust
wretchedness
and want
in the
milk-white teeth
of sandton

(Mogale in Zegeye & Maxted 2002:14)

The inequality is not only between the richest and the poorest. The inequality also extends to unequal benefits and opportunities for individuals and groups within a society (Zegeye & Maxted 2002:13; Le Bruyns & Pauw 2004:204). While income inequality has increased inequality in access to services and assets (housing, water, electricity) has also increased: from 1993 to 2004 the average household is less asset poor. Services have increased for the bottom and top clusters of the population, especially the top. Social Inequality increases the potential for social and political instability and threat to economic growth due to a lack of social cohesion (Zegeye & Maxted 2002:2). This emphasises the necessity for a change in economic policy where growth and production must be stimulated in such a way that unemployment and poverty are addressed
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(Willemse 2005:40). Poverty and equality are so deeply entrenched that they can be expected to continue for some time (Zegeye & Maxted 2002:13).

The distribution of inequality is also strongly related to ethnicity, locality, gender and social class as indicated in the following discussion.

4.4.2 Race and ethnicity

In South Africa the poverty is racially linked. In 2000 almost 95% of the poor were black. Of the population, 15 million (of which two thirds are black) make up the middle class and receive 90% of the total national income. The other 30 million (of whom two thirds, 20 million, are extremely poor) receive less than 4% of the national income and make up the lower class (Terblanche 2002:2).

During the past three decades the inequality gap between races has decreased. Blacks, Coloureds and Indians are earning an increasing share of the country’s income. The inequality of income, however, remains but the dividing line is shifting, becoming more class than race based. (Le Bruyns & Pauw 2004:205).

4.4.3 Geographic distribution

In South Africa where one lives, impacts significantly on one’s income and likelihood of poverty. According to the 2000 census data a third of the poor live in urban areas (including formal and informal settlements) with approximately 12 million (two thirds) living in rural areas. Of the poor 75% reside in rural areas, a larger proportion than of the total population. 66% live in former homeland areas in the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and the Limpopo province. In terms of the HDI, poverty varies greatly across the provinces. The Eastern Cape and Limpopo have the highest poverty rates
(70%). Up to 60% of the population who reside there are poor. In the Free State and KwaZulu-Natal just more than 45% of the population is poor. In these provinces the poverty gap is also deepest (Le Bruyns & Pauw 2004:205; Zegeye & Maxted 2002:11).

The inability of the population of rural areas to have sustainable livelihoods (much of which can be attributed to apartheid policies) and the lack of employment opportunities there have contributed to the migration to urban areas in search of jobs. Migrant labour has become a way of life where access to incomes and opportunities is sought while living conditions of rural life with continued access to natural basic resources of shelter, some food and water are retained. This increases the poverty of rural households and increases the prevalence of female headed household where further poverty can be expected (Le Bruyns & Pauw 2004:206).

It is also especially the rural poor who have been dispossessed of land, livestock and other possessions. In KwaZulu-Natal many people lost everything due to political violence over an extended period. Often those who do have access to land lack the resources to utilize it (Poverty hearings 1998:3).

4.4.4 Gender

Female headed households are generally poorer than male headed households. Of the poor almost 70% are members of female headed households (Zegeye & Maxted 2002:11, 13; Statistics SA 2000). 40% of male headed households fall below the poverty line whereas more than 60% of female headed household fall below the poverty line (Le Bruyns & Pauw 2004:205). Female headed households are one of the population groups particularly vulnerable to chronic poverty (Francis 2006:7) and transgenerational poverty. One of the causes of transgenerational poverty is HIV mother to child infection and children being maternally orphaned.
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4.4.5 Age

Statistically a smaller percentage of aged people fall below the poverty line than the rest of the population. The reality is different as many pensioners are the only people with incomes in many poor households. Before the institution of the Child Support Grant children below 15, were the poorest of all age groups. 70% of the children live in poverty which include many child headed households orphaned by AIDS (Zegeye & Maxted 2002:11, 13; Statistics SA 2000; le Bruyns & Pauw 2004: 205-206).

4.4.6 HIV/AIDS

Approximately 5.6 million people (11% of the population) in South Africa were infected by HIV in 2004 (UNAIDS 2004) (Francis 2006:7; Illbury and Sunter 2005:128). Migrants and youth who constitute the majority of the day labourers at informal hiring sites are among groups the most vulnerable to HIV infection (Patel 2005:177).

These statistics are significant in the light of Sach’s (2005:204) view that in Africa, more than any other factor, “Poor health causes poverty and poverty contributes to poor health.” He suspects that poverty in Africa is related to the prevalence of diseases like malaria and HIV/AIDS. This suspicion is confirmed by South Africa’s drop on the UN Human development index of 2003 primarily because of the decreased life expectancy due to death caused by Aids (Davids et. al. 2005:2).

4.4.7 Employment

According to 1995 data, on a poverty line of R3000 per capita income, according
to a narrow definition of unemployment just over 50% fall below it, whereas over 66% of the discouraged work seekers fall below. Discouraged work seekers are also typically, poorer than other unemployed persons. They are even poorer than female headed households and children below the age of 15. They become the poorest of the poor. They are therefore the most vulnerable group of unemployed (Le Bruyns & Pauw 2004:203, 206).

It seems as if day labour has managed to enter into the employment market in the space between affluence and poverty, created by the inequality of South Africa. It is in this space that mostly lowly skilled and often unemployed men, often from rural areas, take the gap and go to more affluent urban areas to try to make a living as day labourers by being occasionally employed by the increasing number of richer people.

5 CHAPTER REVIEW

Partly to clarify my own position in trying to understand what is referred to by the term poverty, different theoretical perspectives on and definitions of poverty were reviewed. An awareness of the main trends in thinking about poverty makes it possible to understand better the discourse on poverty, why it exists and suggested solutions. On the other hand, in trying to understand the experience of poverty I have become aware of its multi dimensionality and context and discovered the value of Max-Neef et. al's (1989) typology in thinking about poverty. In whatever manner poverty is viewed it is an interconnected web with no beginning and no end. At the most one can select a point to start tracing the dimensions which have more and more links or many, many faces.
Chapter 8. Understanding poverty to contextualize the situation of day labourers in Tshwane

Both urban and rural poverty, that have merely been touched on in this chapter, are of significance for understanding the rural urban migration of many who resort to day labour. These particular configurations of poverty will be described in more detail in chapters 9, 10 and 11.
CHAPTER 9

URBAN POVERTY AS EXPERIENCED BY DAY LABOURERS

1 INTRODUCTION

At the time of the research (2004) a large portion (89%) of the day labourers in Tshwane had migrated from countries, towns and rural areas in search of a better life but they often end up exchanging rural poverty for urban poverty. This chapter attempts to present the macro level process as well as the micro level experience of urban poverty with passing reference to rural poverty. The picture presented is a tentative sketch drawn with economic, sociological, political and experiential (personal and social) pencils using a livelihoods and fundamental human needs perspective.

The Poverty and Inequality Report (May1998) noted that while South Africa is an upper middle-income country in terms of per capita income, a large number of the country’s citizens live in poverty. Nationally, statistics reveal that about 73% of the rural population can be classified as poor, while 43% are ultra-poor. This compares with 40% of urban people and 20% of metropolitan people who are poor.

2 URBAN POVERTY

2.1 Introduction

Urban poverty in Africa is increasing at a phenomenal rate. According to UN Habitat in 2005 43% of the world’s population were already living in poverty in slums (Dodds 2005:3). Africa is urbanising faster than any other region with extensive social and economic implications. It is projected that by 2025 more than half of the African population will be living in urban areas (Biau 2005:2). Roughly a third of the poor in
South Africa already live in urban areas. (Le Bruyns & Pauw 2004:202).

Although there is a clear correlation between economic growth and urbanisation in large parts of the world, this is not so evident in Africa where urbanisation is taking place rapidly rate but without the accompanying economic growth to accommodate the urban immigrants productively.

Statistics on income in accordance with geographical areas, indicate that where one lives seems related to what one can earn. People move from areas with few employment opportunities to areas where opportunities are perceived to be better. Many rural poor migrating to urban areas do not end up being better off but become part of the urban poor (Le Bruyns & Pauw 2004:202).

Interest in African urban poverty is a relatively recent development. Nelson (1999:2-3) explains that poverty in Africa, and particularly urban poverty, has, until recently, received scant academic attention because of the myths that in Africa there was no economic differentiation, resources were freely available and more than adequate and the extended family took care of the less fortunate. Cities were regarded as places of better fortune and those migrating to the cities were defined as the more progressive and fortunate. Subsequently proponents of Modernization also assumed that urban areas where modernization was centred were seen as being able to absorb the migrating rural poor. “This rendered urban poverty relatively invisible,” (Nelson 1999:3). It was also widely accepted that Africa as a continent was immune to the catastrophic famines known to Asia. This situation is changing dramatically. The media keeps the world aware of poverty and other troubles of Africa. An example is the attention the media gave to the famine in Niger in August 2005 (Gibson 2005:6).
2.2 Similarities and differences between rural and urban poverty

Although rural and urban poverty differ in many respects, what is the same is that they are both about people with fundamental human needs that have to be actualised for survival. The means by which the needs may be satisfied (satisfiers) may be different and context specific. Satisfying these fundamental human needs requires access to productive resources such as land, knowledge and capital and from these an income to access need satisfiers like food, water, shelter, clothing, access to health facilities, education, and the ability to participate economically, socially, intellectually, politically and spiritually. Access to these satisfiers or requirements amounts to what can be regarded as a fundamentally secure livelihood (De Haan et al. 2002:3). Stated differently, a secure livelihood is one that provides economic security, personal safety and healthy living and working conditions (Rakodi 2002:289). For the day labourer as individual or member of a household the function of the city should be to provide its members with sociability, well-being, security and culture (Max-Neef 1992:134).

Both rural and urban contexts are dynamic and multifaceted, but the urban context is more complex. The complexity is due to the larger concentration of people who are usually more diverse than the rural population, especially in terms of language, culture and economic power. Other significant features of urban contexts are the greater number and variety of services.

The urban context is more monetised and poor people are more dependent on cash incomes for survival than in rural contexts where to a large extent people may be able to survive off the land and have access, albeit with much effort, to water, food, housing (Rakodi 2002:11). Day labourers may also need money for bribes and fines if
they happen to be immigrants or victims of unjustified police harassment (Satterwaite & Tacoli 2002:57-58). Even though more costly, the residential and working environments of cities are likely to be inferior to those of rural areas.

Satterthwaite and Tacoli (2002:56) raise the point that many sources on poverty and governments assume that similar income levels are needed to avoid poverty in rural and urban contexts, for example, social pensions and grants. At least until 2001 the World Development Report used a single income based or consumption poverty line for rural and urban households. However low income urban households pay proportionately more than rural households for non-food items, e.g. water from vendors, “pay as you use” sanitation facilities, healthcare, residence, schools and public transport.

Linked to the above is the greater extent and nature of the influence of good or bad governance on urban poverty. In urban areas there are more laws, norms, rules and regulations on land use, enterprises, buildings and products than in rural areas. In urban areas bureaucratic rules and regulations, and formal and informal institutional structures nearly always have more influence on access to employment, land and basic services (Satterthwaite & Tacoli 2002:59).

In the urban context people are also likely to have less social support from social networks than in rural areas. This is due to the mobility and heterogeneity of populations which creates a more diverse and fragmented social environment where social networks are usually less robust (Rakodi 2002:10).

Both urban and rural poverty are multi-faceted and complex, including the whole array of poverties according to the fundamental human needs perspective of Max-Neef et. al. (1989). Although urban areas generally share similar economic, environmental, social and political characteristics that are different from rural areas, urban areas and
experiences of poverty differ. Keeping in mind the range of poverties according to the different fundamental human needs, different people may experience more deprivation of one need than another. These differences must be recognised. As Jones (1999:13) emphasises the “Urban poor are not just a lumpen poor”. The poverty of day labourers has its own specific characteristics.

2.3 A livelihoods approach to understanding urban poverty

During their stay in urban areas many day labourers are not necessarily members of a fixed household. The following discussion on urban poverty has drawn heavily but not exclusively on Rakodi’s (2002) capital assets version of a livelihoods approach. A livelihoods approach moves away from a money-metric (Beall 2002:71) approach to poverty. It recognises the complexity of urban poverty with the focus on how local contexts and changes influence poverty, the assets and vulnerabilities of the context and the strategies people use to survive, to cope, to seek security or increase wealth (Satterthwaite & Tacoli 2002:53. Rakodi 2002:14, Beall 2002:73). These will subsequently be outlined.

According to the livelihoods approach, the economic, social, political and environmental contexts are important for understanding both urban and rural poverty. This division does not indicate separateness but is a distinction made to discuss the urban context.

2.3.1 The economic context

Poverty everywhere is inefficient, expensive and unequal in its impact on people, with the poor bearing the brunt of it. The importance of the economic context of urban life lies in how it impacts on the employment and occupations of the poor.
Chapter 9: Urban poverty as experienced by day labourers

The state of the urban economy determines the economic opportunities, including employment, available to its residents. Urban areas are regarded as locations of economic growth with many employment opportunities. Yet unemployment and underemployment in urban areas can be very high, because although the employment opportunities exist, people need skills to access opportunities that will actually result in improved lives. With the poor often lacking these skills the many opportunities eventually lead to the high income inequality, (high Gini coefficient) that is typical of urban areas (Rakodi 2002:30).

The highly monetised urban economy make the makes access to a monetary income essential for survival (Rakodi 2002:11). Urban livelihoods therefore depend directly on income-earning activities in either the formal or informal sectors, as wage employees, unpaid family workers or in self employment (Rutherford et al 2002:112). These informal activities are mostly only rewarded with low cash incomes and are accompanied by insecure conditions (Meikle 2002:387)

The urban economy is not isolated from national and international policies. These have a mixed effect. For example:

Globalisation, national economic trends, the inherited urban economic structure and the presence or absence of the economic conditions for economic growth- available land, infrastructure, appropriately skilled labour and a sensible regulatory framework- may all have an impact on the characteristics of and trends in the economy of an urban area.

(Rakodi 2002:289).

The liberalisation of the global economy has become the dominant force shaping urbanisation in developing countries. City governments have little choice but to operate
Chapter 9: Urban poverty as experienced by day labourers

along the lines laid down by the dominant rhythm of neo liberalism. Losses of jobs for whatever global or national reason e.g. decline in the construction industry results in huge losses of jobs thereby increasing the number of people in the part-time service or the informal sector (Meikle 2002:39).

The context of the urban economy is also directly shaped by the role and performance of municipal governments. Mattingly (1999:18) asserts that:

If the economies of scale for production which urban concentrations make possible are to be utilized, governments must properly organize the collective services that are necessary.

Urban governments' inputs regarding the provision of infrastructure and services for economic activities directly affects the employment opportunities and in the worst case scenario actively contributes to the creation of urban poverty. Good infrastructure and services encourage the establishment of industries and businesses which create jobs. Urban planning and land management are other important factors required to support economic activity and provide living conditions that ultimately contribute to higher productivity and income (Mattingly 1999:18). This includes the effective organisation of the collective actions associated with urban concentrations, e.g. water provision, waste disposal transportation, housing, urban planning and building construction regulation. If effective action is not taken by municipalities the action and costs are carried by the individual, creating a higher financial burden and depleting the limited economic capital of the poor. Governments thus so hamper or promote production of wealth or add or reduce costs with their regulations and licensing (Mattingly 1999:21).

A further factor that may affect wealth production is biased distribution of services favouring the more wealthy and powerful, biased regulations and licensing and biased distribution of public assets (Mattingly 1999:22-26). However there are also examples of
municipalities' efforts that have contributed to the reduction of the incidence of poverty. Mosha (1999:102-112) tells the story of the efforts of the Gabarone City Council which included the social welfare activities of distribution of food, clothing blankets, the exemption of destitute families from paying levies, the provision of housing for some destitute families, educational skills training programme for street children and provision of meals for needy persons on a regular basis. Other elements of the poverty alleviation program included initiatives to provide access to land by the poor, enabling land planning procedures and regulations, carrying out a low cost housing program, providing access to municipal infrastructure and social services, initiating the development of micro-enterprises and involving many NGOs, CBOs and grassroots people in the program.

2.3.2 The environmental context

"We shape our landscape and it in turn moulds our physiognomy" (Kapuscinski 2002:5).

The role of the natural environment regarding poverty is more direct and complex in urban than in rural areas. In the rural context it is directly and primarily important as the basis of economic activity and income; in the urban context land availability (space and location), water and air are important in determining the quality of life and expenditure.

- In the urban context, land and spatial planning is important in determining the living environment (location of abode, mobility social activity, recreation and relationship with nature). A consequence of rapid urbanization, industrialization, limited resources and lack of political will of national and local governments and individuals to invest in sufficient infrastructure is that the urban poor mostly live in a poorer physical environment than do the urban middle classes. The middle classes are also in a
better position and have more power than the poor to influence these decisions (Meikle 2002:40). The urban population reduces the land that the poor occupies disproportionately. In South Africa the legacy of a policy preventing black urbanisation through limited land allocation and limitation of the construction of low cost housing has contributed to a serious housing backlog (Zegeye and Maxted 2002:24; Wilson & Ramphele 1989:323). For example: From 1968 to 1984 no new houses or sites were allowed in the black townships of Pretoria (Tshwane). Influx of people was controlled, but the urban population grew. Overcrowding became a way of life and more and more people ended up living in shacks in backyards. Since 1989 freedom of movement has been made possible. Shelter the new influx of people to towns controlled squatting with limited or no services developed. These conditions are inhuman (Bruwer 1994:96).

Due to the location of land for urban housing and other land which is not legally available the poor are forced to make trade offs between the quality and location of where they live in order to have access to life-generating assets like job possibilities (Meikle 2002:40). Overcrowding in low cost housing and settlements is common in cities. This means that people such as day labourers may sleep in the open veld due to not having transport money to go home, whether this is in a formal township or an informal settlement. Some settle in shacks or a lean-to in the open as near as possible to hiring sites. These conditions are not only inadequate as shelter but also make them vulnerable to eviction, harassment and assault (Schenck & Louw 2005:90, Woithe 2005:8).

In the areas of overcrowded living conditions of the urban poor, Wilson and Ramphele (1989:133) state that:
There is nowhere to escape the privations of the overcrowded private dwellings, save the ... streets or windswept open spaces which are in reality, simply unsightly and dangerous dumping grounds for rubbish.

Relatively little land was and even now, has been, set aside for recreational facilities. Even though the situation is much improved the back log remains. There remains an inverse relationship between access to recreational facilities and the need. Poor and expensive transport hampers access to public spaces like parks, beaches, and the mountains.

- **Climate** is important to the urban poor in determining the appropriateness of shelter and clothing and the expenses in obtaining these. The moderate climate of Tshwane makes it possible for some day labourers to sleep in the open (Schenck and Louw 2005:90). Day labourers standing by the side of the road daily, waiting for work, are directly exposed to the extremes of heat, cold and rain. The heat increases the need for water which is usually not easily accessible at the site.

- Urban areas are vulnerable to intense environmental change through air pollution from fossil fuel combustion, the release of toxic chemicals into the air, water from factories and mines, urban garbage and the transmission of airborne diseases in crowded living conditions (Sachs 2005:255, Rakodi 2002:17). If not effectively managed this creates environmental hazards which usually affect the urban poor the worst (Harrison 1993:472). The poor are also those who are mostly employed in industries with a higher risk of exposure to toxic waste. Lack of or limited access to clean sources of energy also contribute to the poor being exposed to increased air pollution, the burning of toxic material and disproportionately high expenditure on energy. In the urban environment the quiet and darkness so characteristic of a rural environment do not exist (Wilson and Ramphele 1989:46,128).
Rahman (1993:172) refers to the intense change of the natural environment brought about by human actions. For the urban poor of rural origin it may be a violation of the sense of being an organic part of nature. Many of the poor in an urban area like Tshwane are of rural origins and cultures with value systems that see man as only a small part of a much greater natural order (Burkey 1996:32). Many of these cultures reveal this organic unity in their proverbs. They use observations and experiences of the natural environment as metaphors to convey messages for example:

Poo, ga di nne mo sakeng (Tswana). Two bulls cannot live in the same kraal. Used when a decision has to be made between two options.
(Stewart 2005:98)

Mukola kuzhia mambo a nsulo (Northern Sotho). A river runs deep because of its source. Parents and elders should be held in high regard because they are the source of one's life.
(Stewart 2005:147)

The importance of the environmental contexts of urban areas lies in how they impact on living conditions of the poor. The poor physical environment of the urban poor has a direct effect on their physical and mental health and social relations. They are often obliged to devote time, energy and other resources to acquiring need satisfiers for subsistence, necessitated by the natural context or its violation, instead of having energy and other resources to pursue other needs satisfiers such as social interaction, creativity and recreation.

2.3.3 The social context

In urban areas human interaction is shaped by a number of social themes that may be either barriers or opportunities to the formation of social capital in urban areas.
Within urban context unique social capital and survival strategies differing from those of rural contexts emerge (Meikle 2002:41).

- **Large numbers and close proximity.**

  A poor person from a rural context entering an urban environment would be confronted by large numbers of people who live in close proximity to one another. In comparable physical space many more people are encountered, but comparatively the urban person interacts with and knows proportionately less people with whom the space is shared (Philips 2002:137). More unknown people means less safety and a greater possibility of being a victim of crime because of not enough people with whom to relate with and trust.

  In contrast to the large size of the town or city the living space of individuals and households is small and cramped. Overcrowding in low cost housing and settlements is common and much living and interaction takes place in public, e.g. on the street. Living closer in smaller spaces, often sharing living space, means the absence of quiet and aloneness which may lead to stress and interpersonal tension.

  The people living in closest proximity are unlikely to be kith and kin who still have traditional ways of relating. Kith and kin may be less accessible which means traditional relationships of reciprocity and other traditions and practices are not maintained. On the other hand more people living in close proximity gives rise to many local informal organisations and governmental policies, laws and regulations, services (education and health) and NGOs. “Organisations in cities can provide greater potential benefits for the poor” (Philips 2002:136). Although the urban context has a greater availability of employment, health, education,
nutrition, housing and recreation, not everybody can access these resources. Many of the resources may be too costly and not necessarily situated near to where the poor are to be found. Simply by living in informal settlements, communities may be excluded from neighbourhood opportunities and access to the services they need. The urban social context may be such that some of the poor may experience exclusion and isolation amid plenty (Philips 2002:136).

- **Diversity**

  The population of an urban context is usually more diverse than the people of a particular rural area (Meikle 2002:41, Philips 2002:136). They are of diverse geographic origins, are culturally, socially and economically different and have different occupations. The diversity of the urban population has different effects. On the one hand the diversity is a barrier to the formation and maintenance of relationships prescribed by traditional culture, weakening social capital but on the other hand the diversity provides a richness of social contacts.

  Heterogeneity decreases social capital when community and inter-household mechanisms of trust and collaboration are weakened. (Meikle 2002:42). This is experienced, especially in rental housing and newly established settlements. The weaker social capital is often manifest in crime, violence, drug and alcohol abuse, threats to personal safety and increased isolation. The weaker social capital may increase exclusion and neglect of aged, and children (Philips 2002:137).

  Within the diversity social and cultural differences may be better tolerated in urban areas than in rural contexts where relations are generally rigidly defined and cultural traditions strong and relatively static (Burkey 45:1996). In a
heterogeneous population, relationships based on ethnicity and gender are transformed. Women and other groups may be less restricted by traditional values and experience greater inclusion. For others, such as ethnic and religious minorities, the urban setting may increase vulnerability and exclusion as the cities bring together opposing groups in close proximity with each other (Philips 2002:136).

- Mobility

At different levels mobility is characteristic of urban life and perhaps more so among the urban poor. With the high rate of rural-urban migration there is a constant inflow of new people. The shortage of low cost housing implies that newcomers may change abode for a long time before settling down more permanently. When arriving in urban areas newcomers often stay with relatives before moving on. To reduce costs a household may share their home with another family. Mobility may also include discontinuity of relationships and lack of social stability of family life and wider relationships.

Daily movement is also characteristic of urban life. The urban poor, especially in South Africa, tend to travel further distances to their places of employment having less time at home than the better off which increases the need for social capital and decreases the opportunity to invest in it.

- Social capital

Phillips (2002:133) describes social capital as “the relationships and networks developed and drawn upon by the urban poor to survive and improve their livelihoods.” It is a key asset that can be used in combination with other assets
especially by those without effective social security arrangements. In the absence of other assets poor people rely on their social capital for daily survival and in crises. Contributions towards daily survival includes sharing and reciprocating labour, cash, food, information, friendship and moral support.

Collier (in Rakodi 2002:10, 11) points out that not all social interaction can be termed social capital. To be termed capital, social interaction must usually be continuous and lead to trust and knowledge which can be drawn on even if the interaction itself is not permanent, for example, next of kin living in a different place. Reciprocity is not characteristic of all social capital. The poor may also develop social capital from dependency relationships with social/economic superiors, e.g. domestic workers and employers (Beall 2002:79).

The main levels of human relations from which social capital is developed are:

- local informal relationships with family and extended households and urban-rural kinship linkages,
- communal relationships (including membership of groups and organisations),
- wider relations between poor and non-poor, systems of patronage,
- linkages with wider institutions of society (between the state and the citizen) (Rakodi 2002:11; Meikle 2002:41; Bhalla & Lapeyre 2004:35, 37, 38).

Philips (2002:135) distinguishes between temporary and long-term social capital. Temporary social capital exists where relationships form around short term reciprocity, centred mainly around money and responding to crises like illness and death, for example when collections of money are made. Longer term
reciprocity usually develops in the neighbourhood or family with respect to food, water, space and child care. Meikle (2002:41) mentions that these relationships are individual, group and location specific. The distinction between levels of human relations from which social capital is developed is not always very clear. Typical social networks in urban areas are neighbourhood groupings, gender and age based networks and associations, kinship based associations including rural-urban linkages, networks based on common area of origin (home boy groups mentioned under migration), political based networks, religious and ethnic linkages and associations, savings and credit groups (stokvels and burial societies), employment based networks and associations (trade unions, informal associations, trading networks) linkages with NGOs and other external civil society organisations (Philips 2002:135, Beall 2002:79).

Social networks are a reciprocal social support mechanism that may exist between individuals, within and between households and within communities, on which people can call on to provide them with access to subsistence needs. A key aspect of social networks is access to information about opportunities and solutions to problems, specifically information about casual labour markets (Meikle 2002:47). This mostly happens by word of mouth so who you know and trust is critical (Brown & Lloyd-Jones 2002:190).

Networks also have a shadow side. Not all people are equally networked and not all networks are equally effective (Philips 2002:137). Networks are not always benign, e.g. drug networks, informants (Rakodi 2002:41). Poor communities may be well networked internally and have solidarity but perhaps excluded from wider networks. By living in informal settlements a community may be excluded from neighbourhood opportunities and access to services (Meikle 2002:42). Sometimes, in the case of very poor individuals, households
and communities the reciprocity may not be sustainable. Beall (2002:80) writes that:

For social networks to constitute viable and sustainable survival strategies, people require at least a minimum degree of economic stability, social respect and organisational capacity.

Participating in a network is a process of gains and pains for all participants. Phillips (2002:135) cautions that in any network participation is not always harmonious. The poor engage in networks that may exploit them but are nevertheless essential to their survival in providing land, housing, credit, jobs transport and water. Some may be detrimental, e.g. gangs.

Networks may also break down due to physical insecurity caused by crime and violence (higher in urban areas) which make it too dangerous to assist others. Repeated trauma may break down networks, for example, the continuing onslaught of the Aids epidemic has broken down the kinship network to such an extent that there often are no next of kin available to care for Aids orphans or patients.

Nevertheless, networks are valuable and critical resources which contribute to the well being of the poor. Meikle (2002:41) writes that although it is difficult to identify the general characteristics of social capital in urban areas, the poor who have been able to improve their livelihoods trace it to individual, household, social and community networks of mutual support. The urban social linkages are a form of social capital discussed in detail under migration in chapter eleven.
Although employment, health, education, nutrition, housing and recreation is more available poor communities may be excluded from these. This exclusion relates to the absence of access or lack of relationships between the state and the citizen. As Bhalla and Lapeyre (2005:163) mention, the social capital of governmental and non governmental institutions are important but:

[i]t is not so much the institutions per se as their members and the effectiveness with which they exchange information and build trust and mutual goodwill that explains their contribution.

Rakodi (2002: 41) mentions that there is a debate as to whether the urban poor can rely on strong networks between individuals and groups as in rural communities. According to Meikle (2002:41) the urban social context with its weaker interpersonal and inter-household mechanisms of trust, collaboration and reciprocity may reduce peoples’ ability to support one another. Bhalla & Lapeyre (2004:162) are of the opinion that Meikle’s statement may rather apply to the more affluent urban population but not generally the urban poor:

[It]he poorer the household with very low incomes, the greater the need for social ties to provide income and social security”.

Beall’s (2002:78) research on urban dwellers in Mexico City found that reciprocal support systems are strong in the urban context because:

[I]t is precisely because of poverty that individuals’ survival is not possible and people need to rely on others in their household and their social networks to make ends meet.
Chapter 9: Urban poverty as experienced by day labourers

With regard to the South African situation Kotze (1993:2,7) explains that a collective consciousness has developed out of poverty and the experience of deprivation and has become culture and not the other way round. It weakens with the experience of affluence and the development of individualistic consciousness. Collective consciousness is an effective and functional adaptation to the experience of deprivation that prevails not only in homogenous rural villages but also amongst the more diverse urban population. It is a survival strategy that has evolved out of experiences of general or total deprivation that encompasses material, social, physical and intellectual insecurity including:

- Low income, unemployment, lack of social stability (particularly within family life and in terms of marital instability), lack of residential stability due to disrupted family life (as well as migrant labour and insecure employment), employment instability, malnutrition and poor health, lack of education and therefore a general lack of security.

(Kotze1993:3).

In this scenario of poverty, security is obtained in the social patterns forged from the material limitations of people's existence. These patterns form integrated systems evolved over many years, and paid for with hard experience. These systems are built on social universes spanning households (which are more than conventional extended families) communities, urban-rural distances including the urban centres of employment. Collective consciousness makes survival possible under circumstances in which survival should not be possible (Kotze 1993:65 104).

2.3.4 The political context

Urban poverty is much influenced by the impact of micro (city municipal governments) meso- and macro-level policies and especially by what municipal
governments do or do not do and also by what they can and cannot do. (IIED in Meikle 2002: 42). The urban poor are not isolated from political governance and structures. These structures and policies impact on their lives determining their inclusion or exclusion on many levels. All levels of structures and policies can contribute positively or negatively to urban economic, environmental social and political contexts.

Mattingly (1999:19) points out that the performance of government to deliver or not deliver housing, the basic services of water, sanitation, electricity health and education services can actually increase or decrease urban people's poverty. He refers to numerous authors who agree that, on the other hand: "it is suggested that without adequate public agencies a population cannot rise above poverty". It must also be noted that the existence of services does not mean that the poor necessarily have access to them because of particular policies they poor are too poor to have access. An example is the present crisis of failure of the local governments in South Africa to deliver basic services effectively. A specific example was an outbreak of typhoid in Delmas a rural town in Gauteng, South Africa, due to the inadequate control of groundwater usage by the local municipality (Interface 24-9-2005).

Local governments may also contribute to poverty through active or passive exclusion and discrimination against the urban poor, for instance, an unequal allocation of resources which increases the disparity between rich and poor (Meikle 2002:43). Lotter (2002:352) writing about the urban management of Pretoria prior to 1991, states that decisions by local councilors on manufacturing developments were biased towards preventing employment of blacks in white urban areas and that an incentives in the form of cheaper land was given to manufacturing firms which employed white workers.

The failure of governments to provide adequate services as well as increased democracy and citizen participation has made the role of NGOs and CBOs important in filling in the gap. (Meikle 2002:43):“Such civil society organisations can have a critical role
in urban areas in strengthening democracy, helping to secure inclusive development strategies and directly reducing poverty." While this is so, the government in South Africa with its inadequate Financing policy for welfare has made it very difficult for NGOs to play this role effectively. Whether the poor are or can be actively involved in systems of city governance depends on their legal status. Migrant workers who make up a considerable number of day labourers generally lack the formal rights of urban citizens and so may be excluded from many services to which registered citizens have access (Meikle 2002:43).

In the short to medium term, through their planning and regulatory processes municipalities can hinder or facilitate access to land and services and exacerbate or mitigate urban poverty and deprivation (Amis 2002:109). The following example of how municipal regulations in South Africa have created conditions for relieving poverty by facilitating employment is mentioned by Amis (2002:101).

In the early 1980s, there were estimated to be only 300 hawkers functioning in Johannesburg’s inner core. After 1990 restrictive regulations on hawkers were abandoned and the estimate for the mid-1990s was 4000 hawkers in the inner core and 15,000 in Greater Johannesburg.

In partnership with local citizen organisations local governments can embark on projects that address poverty. National policies on local governance e.g. the White Paper on Local Government, direct local governments on their role regarding different issues regarding poverty. The Indigency program is an effort to provide basic services free of charge to the those registered as being indigent. National economic policies, for example, RDP of (Reconstruction and Development Program) and GEAR of (Growth, Employment And Redistribution) determine priorities in local government decisions influencing urban poverty. Yet with the emphasis on economic growth, instead of creating employment GEAR has resulted in destroying 1 million jobs from 1996 to 2001 (Terblanche 2002, Sewpaul & Hölscher 2004:71). This has swelled the numbers of the urban poor. The
employment policy of national government has led to the decrease in number of labourers employed on farms which directly contributes to the increase of day labourers in rural towns but also in cities like Tshwane (De Lange 2007:12).

The performance of local governance itself, in terms of lack of capacity and corruption directly increases urban poverty. Service delivery influences employment through the presence or absence of infrastructure created for economic development and therefore employment (Interface 25-9-2005; Mattingly 1999:26; Sachs 2005:188).

In South Africa international policies of structural adjustment, neo-liberal economics and globalization have contributed to increased unemployment increasing the number and concentration of poor urban people (Sewpaul & Hölscher 2204:71).

The political context of urban areas which incorporates the structures (organisation and all layers of government etc.) and processes (policies, laws etc.) define the available assets and vulnerabilities. The discussion of the economic, natural, social and political contexts demonstrates the hypothetical situation with which a day labourer has to contend to survive, maintain or improve his quality of life. In the next section possible accessible assets he may be able to use are suggested and the seeds of vulnerabilities present in the urban context are introduced (Meikle 2002:37-38).

2.4 Assets in the context of urban poverty

The urban context provides assets which individuals and households may manage and transform into need satisfiers such as income, food, shelter and other necessities to secure a livelihood. Whether and how this happens depends on their accessibility and the availability of ability and capital (human, social, political, physical, financial and natural). In the urban setting financial capital is of higher significance than access to natural capital assets.
Chapter 9: Urban poverty as experienced by day labourers

Meikle (2002:46) developed an outline of the assets commonly used by the urban poor. The following is an extract which contributes to the understanding of the situation of day labourers. The capital available to a day labourer or the household of which he is part will determine the assets used.

**TABLE 17: ASSETS USED BY THE URBAN POOR, INCLUDING DAY LABOURERS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Savings</td>
<td>Income developed from the sale of labour supplies cash flow. Other sources are pensions of other household members. If there is a surplus this could be saved as financial capital or converted into some other asset to help deal with stresses and trauma.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to credit</td>
<td>Affordable credit for enterprise development, for moving out of the day labour market, purchasing shelter or establishing other forms of infrastructure and assisting in day-to-day financial management. Examples are community stokvels, revolving loans, micro-financing institutions, bank loans for low cost housing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Human</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>The capacity to work is the main human capital of the urban poor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>Health is vital in determining the quality of labour and ability to work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education and skills</td>
<td>Education and training contributes to the access to work and quality of work and income. Access to education and training provides men and women the opportunity to improve the value of human capital and determine the human capital of the next generation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural</td>
<td>Natural capital is less significant in cities except for urban agriculture of household gardens. Rivers and streams are sources of water for</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
washing for poorer households without access to the formal infrastructure. For the homeless bushes are a place of shelter. For day labourers at hiring sites the shade of trees are a welcome shelter from the hot sun. Smaller rocks are a place under which of possessions are placed for safekeeping during the day (Schenck & Louw 2005). Although relatively less important, the environment has an impact on human capital. Clean safe local environments may therefore be considered an asset.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>Housing is one of the most important assets for urban poor, in a addition to offering shelter it is used for generating income, e.g. renting rooms, or using it as a workshop or shebeen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livestock</td>
<td>Livestock is generally not important.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic and social infrastructure</td>
<td>Access to education and health facilities offers the opportunity to improve human capital and is often the justification for rural-urban migration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production equipment</td>
<td>Equipment, for example, machinery and, in the case of day labourers tools for building, painting or gardening is vitally important. For household enterprises utensils for preparing cooked food for sale, machinery and motorised and non-motorised vehicles are vital.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social support mechanisms</td>
<td>The network of support and reciprocity that may exist between individual household and communities and on which people can call may provide access to loans, food, accommodation, protection and care in time of illness, personal support and company (waiting at hiring sites). The network includes reciprocal urban-rural links (Jones</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 9: Urban poverty as experienced by day labourers

| Information | 1999:14). A key aspect of social networks is access to information about opportunities and solutions to problems. An important area is information about hiring sites job opportunities. |

Many of the assets listed above are not owned by the people who use them as livelihood assets. This highlights the importance of access to these assets which all the poor do not automatically have.

2.5 Vulnerabilities in context of urban poverty

The context of the urban poor also exposes them to specific vulnerabilities which affect the measure to which they may be able to access and utilize the above-mentioned assets. Jones (1999:13) mentions that the most vulnerable groups amongst the urban poor are generally street children, widows, permanently disabled heads of households, female headed households and unemployed youths. The following review of vulnerabilities most likely to be encountered among day labourers, as I see it, relies heavily on Meikle’s (2002:48-49) outline of vulnerabilities common among the urban poor.

2.5.1 Legal status

Day labourers and others in informal or casual employment generally lack labour rights. They are subject to sudden unemployment and unprotected working conditions, long hours, poor, under and non-payment and unsanitary and unsafe working conditions.

Day labourers are sometimes homeless, living in the open or living with friends or relatives on illegally occupied land or in informal low cost rental housing lacking tenure rights. They experience poor housing quality and face the threat of eviction or harassment, abuse and being jailed.
As do other informal residents some day labourers may lack legal registration and be disenfranchised and excluded from the political decision making process. Aliens, especially, may suffer from police harassment and extensive bureaucratic bullying.

2.5.2 Services and infra-structure

Lack of legal status may limit the access of most day labourers and other informal residents to basic social services housing, water, power and health care.

Not having proof of a permanent address in the past means that financial services like bank loans and other banking facilities are not accessible. Because they may have only illegal connections to infrastructure such as water and electricity, they are vulnerable to the sudden suspension of such services due e.g. to leaking water pipes pipes and water from garages. They may be fined, punished or harassed or abused for the use of these services.

2.5.3 Local environment

The poor or unprotected physical environment to which they are exposed often endangers day labourers their lives and health. This creates further vulnerability, as ill health and inadequately cared for injuries undermine one of their chief assets—their labour.

The social context of urban existence which is characterised by high incidence of crime, fragmentation and other social problems which increases related health problems like TB and HIV/AIDS reduces the ability of households to support one another. Many day labourers are not part of urban households and live in groups. They only have their own small support group and are afraid of other groups.

Immigrants doing day labour have to contend with the animosity of other local day labourers due to the fierce competition for limited jobs.
2.5.4 Dependence on the cash economy

In cities most needs for basic living have to be paid for in cash. This makes the urban poor particularly vulnerable to any market changes. They are particularly vulnerable to debt and borrowing at very high rates making them prone to indebtedness. The day labourers, especially migrants, who are not part of households or reciprocally supportive networks often go hungry because of lack of cash.

3 CHAPTER REVIEW

Urban poverty in Africa is a recent field of interest due to Africa’s rapid urbanisation. The specific features of urban poverty become clearer if compared with rural poverty. The livelihoods approach provides a useful framework for the discussion and contextual understanding of urban poverty. Urban areas as locations of economic growth provide more employment opportunities than rural areas and attract rural poor people to them. They often remain poor but in a different way. The environmental context has a more indirect effect on urban than on rural life but urban areas are extremely vulnerable to intense environmental change. The created social context of networks of relationships is often the most important asset of the urban poor. Urban poverty is very much influenced by the enabling or limiting political context of structures and policies of the local government.
UNEMPLOYMENT AND JOB-SEARCH AS FACETS OF THE DAY LABOURER PHENOMENON

1 INTRODUCTION

In the USA day labourers are part of a contingent labour force with a long history. Many of these day labourers are immigrants without documents, in a leading and large economy with a low unemployment rate and surrounded by countries with struggling economies and relative poverty (Valenzuela 2003:307; 310-131). In South Africa the situation seems different at the time of the study. Day labourers, in Tshwane, were found to be mostly South Africans, many being rural-urban migrants. They are part of the unemployed or at best underemployed population in a growing, relatively small economy, with a very high income inequality, very high unemployment rate and some absolute poverty, surrounded by countries with struggling economies (with the exception of Botswana).

In a further attempt to gain understanding of the day labourer situation in Tshwane the intention of this chapter is to explore unemployment as the experience of the unemployed not primarily its economic meaning. Due to being unfamiliar with economics, knowledge that has been helpful in assisting with understanding the complexity of the day labour phenomenon is included. This includes a description of the labour market, the employment-unemployment spectrum, the economic and social dimensions of unemployment relevant to day labourers. An economic perspective on unemployment includes looking at economic definitions and the meaning of economic terminology and statistics and economic causes, and effects and solutions. For the purposes of this study a social perspective on unemployment includes views from the social sciences, e.g. sociology, psychology, development studies, anthropology and the social service disciplines. These distinctions are to a large extent merely academic as unemployment is not the exclusive domain of any
single academic discipline. There is also a danger in an academic treatment of the subject which easily masks the suffering experienced by being unemployed. Gonzo and Plattner (2003:1) point out that unemployment has become such a common phenomenon that there is an inclination to deal with unemployment as a numbers game, a statistical exercise with political overtones that is dehumanising. This is at the expense of the individual’s awareness of experience and the impact of unemployment on ordinary lives.

2 THE LABOUR MARKET

The labour market is “an imaginary market place, where labour is bought and sold” (Barker 2003:2). However, personal observation and research presently underway shows that the day labour market is not only an imaginary market place. It is ubiquitous and very visible in the form of the informal hiring sites by the side of the road in cities and towns throughout South Africa. Day labourers constitute an integral part of the labour force whose labour is traded on the open labour market. The labour market, like other markets, allocates resources and distributes income but the market also differs from commodity markets. The labour force of a country is the economically active population (EAP), the total number of people who are willing and able to work, whether working or currently unemployed. The EAP consists of workers in formal employment, a-typical employment, self-employment, underemployment and unemployment in the formal and informal sectors of the economy (Barker 2003: xviii, xx, 42).

2.1 Labour market theories

Two theories pertaining to the labour market which attempt to explain its functioning also explain the presence and plight of day labourers are those of supply and demand, and the segmented labour market. Valenzuela has also used the supply and demand theory to explain the presence of day labourers in the USA and alluded to the segmented market theory (see chapter 5 section 4.1) which seems relevant in explaining the labour market in South Africa.
2.1.1 Supply and demand theory

Supply and demand theory states that supply and demand and the interaction between them contribute to the economic performance and the functioning of the labour market. This means that labour markets supply and allocate human resources, if there is a demand and also distribute incomes, wages or salaries as incentives and as rewards to workers. Hence the supply and demand of labour affects the wages. The supply of labour tends to grow as wages increase. The market demand for labour depends on the demand for the product or service produced by that labour. The demand for labour will decline as wages increase and the decline will be larger over the long term. External factors, e.g. immigration may supply more workers which influences this interaction. Immigration will lead to an oversupply of workers and lower wages.

Other conditions as well as supply and demand which influence the labour market are:

- market regulation by government and labour legislation determining minimum wages,

- different educational and skills levels of workers,

- employment protection measures limiting the dismissal of workers,

- the influence of unions leading to wage levels which are not market related.

Social or non-economic factors which may influence the size of the supply of labour are the total population and its growth, trends in fertility and mortality, various forms of labour migration i.e. immigration, emigration illegal immigration and HIV/AIDS. All these factors are applicable in explaining the presence and plight of day labourers in South Africa.

The demand for labour is also indirectly affected by global economic conditions, expansionary or restrictive fiscal and monetary policies; domestic and
foreign competitive conditions impacting on demand for goods and services. Locally the demand for labour is directly influenced by the cost and productivity of labour (Barker 2003:77).

Valenzuela et. al. (2005:2) mention that in the USA, a supply and demand theory only partly explains the existence of day labourers at hiring sites. It does not adequately explain the growth of the day labour market in the USA and why Latino workers dominate it or why day labourers continue to exist and search for work during robust and recessionary economic times. The segmented market theory may be more appropriate.

2.2 Segmented labour market theory

A second theory which attempts to explain the functioning of the labour market and that also explains the presence and plight of day labourers is the segmented labour market theory (Barker 2007:61). The labour market is assumed to be divided into groups or segments. Each segment has its own characteristics and modes of operation and there is little mobility between them. According to this theory, the market forces of supply and demand are not regarded as the most important determinants of price and allocation. It is rather the role that institutional forces such as collective bargaining, play that determine price and allocation. Collective bargaining includes the introduction of forces like employment security and seniority rules.

The better-off segments in the market control mobility between the segments, thus restricting entry. Entry is only possible at the bottom level. Dual market theory, which is one type of segmented market theory, contends that the labour market consists of two segments. In the primary segment the earnings are high, working conditions good and employment stable. In the secondary segment jobs are low-paying and employment is unstable. It is very difficult for a person from the secondary segment to gain entry to the primary segment (Barker 2003:22-25; Barker
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2007:62-63). The exception would probably be if entry is gained by political means in times of political change.

Bhalla and Lapeyre (2004:68) point out that in a segmented market some groups are trapped in segments where jobs are insecure, ill paid and low skilled. Employment is short-term and the risk of job loss high. This leads to the inability to plan for the future.

3 THE SOUTH AFRICAN LABOUR MARKET

The EAP (economically active population) in South Africa was 18 million in 2001 with an annual increase of 2.7% (450000 persons) of which more than 70% were African and 50% women. Young people under the age of 25 constituted more than 50% of the South African population but they only constituted 20% of the EAP, and less than the 20% were actually employed. This means that they depend on people in other age groups for a living.

According to Statistics South Africa the labour force can be divided into 11 occupation categories namely: (1) legislators, senior officials and managers; (2) professionals; (3) technical and associate professionals; (4) clerks; (5) service workers and shop and market sales workers; (6) skilled agricultural and fishery workers; (7) craft and related trades workers; (8) plant and machine operators and assemblers; (9) elementary occupations; (10) domestic workers; (11) not adequately or elsewhere defined, unspecified (PROVIDE 2005:1). The last presumably includes day labourers.

According to the International Labour Organization, in 1996 the dominant labour market problems in South Africa were: poverty, income equality, unemployment, high labour costs and low productivity, to which Barker (2003:3) adds the high proportion of people in the informal sector.
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As an introduction to the discussion on unemployment the different characteristics of unemployment in South Africa will be mentioned.

3.1 Structural nature of unemployment

Barker (2007:176-177) distinguishes four types of unemployment related to possible reasons for unemployment, namely, frictional unemployment, referring to unemployment due to movement between jobs; cyclical unemployment relating to changes in demand; seasonal unemployment, due to expected annual changes in economic activity and structural unemployment which typifies most of South African unemployment.

Structural unemployment generally refers to the inability of the economy to provide employment for the total labour force even in times of high economic growth (Barker 2007:177). The following are factors that have been mentioned as contributing to structural unemployment in South Africa. (These factors influence the supply and demand of labour in South Africa and contribute to maintaining the two economies and dual labour market):

3.1.1 Consequences of globalisation

South Africa's entry into the global economy has slowed economic growth and increased unemployment in a number of ways. The demand for raw materials has decreased and the mining sector as employer has shrunk; South African agricultural and manufactured products are too expensive to be competitive due to high production costs. This has also created a higher demand for better skills resulting in fewer available employment opportunities for less skilled, first time and retrenched job seekers. Globalisation has also transformed the agricultural industry decreasing jobs and requiring better skills. Rather than being job creators the public sector and big business have become to job destroyers. The global trend of casualisation of employment has also decreased jobs in the formal sector (Illbury & Sunter 2001:66-67; Barker 2007:177; Streak & van der Westhuizen 2004:2).
3.1.2 Unemployment versus economic growth

Since the political transformation of the country in 1994 and especially since 2001, the South African economy has grown, but not sufficiently to lower the rate of unemployment. Job opportunities have not increased fast enough to absorb those already unemployed and those entering the labour market (Barker 2007:177). There has actually been a steady decline of employment of more than 1% per annum with the greatest decline in the mining and agricultural sectors; only the government sector has shown an increase. The growth of employment has been mostly in the manufacturing, tourism, information and communication technology sectors. Increased demands for efficiency and productivity have led to a decrease of employment opportunities for unskilled and semiskilled labour (Streak & van der Westhuizen 2004:2). There has been an increase in salaries which means that while there is increased unemployment, those who are employed are earning more.

3.1.3 Economic policy versus unemployment

The fiscally conservative and pragmatic economic policy which has been followed has focused on targeting inflation and liberalizing trade as a means of increasing jobs and household income has not been successful in decreasing unemployment (CIA World fact book 2006:7; Willemse 2005:40; Barker 2003:3; Streak and van der Westhuizen 2004:1; Watkinson; Orr & Naledi 2003:1; Kingdon & Knight 2005a:1).

3.1.4 Trade liberalisation

Trade liberalisation and increased foreign imports have led to local de-industrialisation and job losses increasing unemployment and inequality and pushing even more people into unemployment (Sewpaul & Hölscher 2004:71, Barker 2003:4).
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3.1.5 Black economic empowerment

Efforts like Black economic empowerment (BEE) to grow the black business sector and small business development initiatives have benefited a small number but have not significantly reduced unemployment (Barker 2007:252-253).

3.1.6 Labour institutions

A further important characteristic of the South African labour market is various institutions that exist to facilitate consultations between parties regarding labour of which the following are of particular importance regarding unemployment: Nedlac (National Economic Council) and the MLC (Millennium Labour Council) which is a structure to develop a shared analysis of the crisis of unemployment and poverty and seek solutions with the government (Barker 2007:260-262). Trade unions’ resistance to privatisation as well as other demands have a two-sided effect: on the one hand job losses are stemmed yet on the other hand the demand for labour is discouraged (Mitchell 2004:200).

3.1.7 Neglect of human development

The supply of labour has also been affected by previous neglect of the development of human resources through discrimination in education and insufficient skills training which has resulted in shortages of skilled labour affecting economic growth (Barker 2003: 5-8). Africans are under represented in artisan, supervisory and managerial positions. There is before-the-market discrimination and within-the-market discrimination, e.g. job reservation for whites has been an important reason for the underutilization of skills and resources. Even though most discriminatory measures were abolished in the 1980’s they still have an effect on the present labour market.
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3.1.8 Inequalities in the labour market

Inequalities prevail in the South African labour market. Africans generally have a lower education than whites and unemployment is higher among Africans than among other population groups. There are also wage and income inequalities; there are often different wages for the same job. Whites dominate the higher skilled jobs. Although past discrimination does contribute to these inequalities, it is not the only reason. Other contributing factors are gender, the rural-urban divide, household demographics and employment status (Barker 2003:8-9, 274; Barker 200:177).

3.1.9 Disparity between supply and demand of labour

A significant characteristic of the labour market seems to be the mismatch between supply and demand of labour. There is an over-supply of less skilled labour and a large demand for skilled labour. There are thus too few opportunities for first-time job seekers and many of those who have lost jobs are now day labourers in South Africa (Barker 2007:177).

3.2 Other factors

Other factors that add to the low labour intensity absorption capacity of the formal economy, causing rising unemployment, are high wages that have outstripped productivity, other labour cost increases, insufficient increase in productivity and HIV/Aids (Barker 2003:4; Meintjes 1998:1-14). In South Africa the minimum wages and conditions of employment, although improving the position of those in employment, have contributed to increased unemployment as jobs have been lost due to employers’ inability or unwillingness to abide by the legislation, for example, in the agricultural sector (Meintjes 1998:6-7; Macroeconomics Wikibooks 2006, Unemployment Wikipedia 2006:4; Barker 2007: 74-80, De Lange 2007:12).
4 WORK AND EMPLOYMENT

Work and employment are not the same.

4.1 Work

Work is an application of mental and or physical effort to a purpose which may or may not have an economic return (Oxford Dictionary 1990 sv "work"). Frankl (1968:120) explained that it is precisely in the absence of work that the value of work is realised. He said that “the existential importance of work is most clearly seen where work is entirely eliminated from a person’s life” as in unemployment. Socially, work usually represents the area in which the individual’s uniqueness stands in relation to society and thus acquires meaning and value. Work contributes to a person’s sense of identity and self worth. However, this meaning and value, says Frankl (1968:118), is “attached to the person’s work as a contribution to society, and not to the actual occupation as such.” Frankl explains further that: “The work in itself does not make the person indispensable and irreplaceable; it only gives him a chance to be so”.

4.2 Employment

Employment is being in a position of receiving a wage or other compensation for work (Oxford Dictionary 1990 sv “employment”). Employment refers to wage employment, which is the act of using the services of a person in return for payment or of providing services to a person in return for payment. These services for payment can be divided into formal and informal employment in the formal or recorded sector and the informal sector also called the unrecorded, shadow, underground, subterranean or hidden economy (Mohr 2004:84). Employment is a phenomenon which is simultaneously economic, political, technological, social and personal.
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With the above-mentioned in mind and for the purpose of this study employment will now be discussed as it features in four different descriptions, namely, formal, a-typical, informal and under-employment.

4.2.1 Formal employment

Formal employment refers to the recorded sector of the economy (Mohr 2004:84), which includes regular, full time employment where employees are part of the corporate family who receive fringe benefits. They have a long-standing relationship with their employers which is also determined by labour related legislation, for example, minimum wages, conditions of employment, labour relations (Barker 2003:32).

4.2.2 A-typical employment

A-typical employment occurs in both the formal and informal sectors of the economy. In the formal sector it includes temporary or casual employment, part-time employment, various forms of contract labour, outsourcing and home workers or outworkers (Barker 2003:84). Bhalla and Lapeyre (2004:68) note that a-typical employment is precarious and workers are vulnerable and insecure in their jobs.

4.2.3 Informal employment

The informal economic sector is referred to as the shadow, parallel, underground, subterranean or hidden economy (Schneider & Enste 2002:2). The informal sector often consists of economic activities that are unorganised, mostly legal, but unregistered and thus unregulated. They are small, individually or family owned, make use of simple, labour intensive technology and are usually run from homes, street pavements or other informal venues (Barker 2003:98). At a certain level they comprise economic activities that would be taxable if they were reported to tax authorities.
With the decline of formal employment in the 1980s and 1990s in South Africa, the informal sector increased in importance and numbers, even though it is still relatively small in comparison with other African and other developing and middle income countries (Mohr 2004:84; Barker 2003:85; Rutherford et. al. 2002:129; Kingdon and Knight 2001:1). In South Africa between two and three million people of the workforce of 18.5 million are employed in the informal sector (Barker 2003:85). This was 11% of its GDP in 1999 (Schneider and Enste 2002:1).

People engage in the informal sector because, like the day labourers, they cannot find employment in the formal sector (Mohr 2004:84) and are actually strictly speaking underemployed (Barker 2003:3). The informal sector, while offering a solution for unemployment, is actually one of the causes of poverty because these jobs provide a very low income and low living standards. Employment is usually very uncertain, the jobs are often not sustainable and the conditions of employment do not meet basic labour standards (Barker 2003:85, 98). Yet in the absence of a comprehensive social security system where people cannot afford to remain unemployed the informal sector is an important source of income and offers a means of survival as it provides some kind of income (Bhalla & Lapeyre 2004:67). In some cases informal sector employment serves as a stepping-stone for future “formal” sector entrepreneurs. Kelvin and Jarret (1985:26) point out that the unemployed person who partakes in the informal economy is psychologically neither defeated nor apathetic.

4.2.4 Underemployment

Underemployment is a further distinction, which is particularly important for understanding the position of the day labourers. Underemployment describes the position of the person who is neither unemployed nor fully employed. Such a person’s employment entails less than normal hours of work. There are two types of underemployment namely visible and invisible underemployment (Barker 2003:2 08; Mohr 2004:93).
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The visibly underemployed are people who involuntarily work less than full time. These include part-time workers, casual workers and seasonal workers who would prefer to be in full-time employment. This description fits the day labourers who sometimes get a temporary job but would prefer to work full time.

Mohr (2004:93) explains that underemployment can also be related to the effect of casualisation of the work force. Casualisation refers to employers who try to avoid labour legislation or trade union influence by employing large numbers of part-time workers or casual workers instead of a smaller full-time work force. Casual workers are, on the whole, cheaper to employ than other workers. This is an example of unrecorded employment of individuals which does not appear in statistics (Grow 2003). Clandestine employment is also related to casualisation and refers to undeclared employment, for example, the employment of illegal immigrants (Mohr 2004:93).

Invisible underemployment refers to the misallocation of labour resources where there is an under-utilisation of skills or low productivity, for example a qualified doctor working as a shop assistant (Mohr 2004:93). With the low demand for labour some men with higher skills resort to day labour in desperation. At the docks, in Durban, I met a man who had completed the first year of a degree in computer science and who had previously been employed in a Information Technology job but became redundant due to restructuring of the firm and was soliciting for a job to clean ships.

5 UNEMPLOYMENT

5.1 Introduction

The word 'unemployment' was initially used and became common in English from about 1895. It became the focus of the economic theory of Keynes after the World War I when unemployment had reached one million in Britain (Boorstin 1983:665). A preliminary description of unemployment that will be further unpacked
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is that it refers to “a state of people not having paid employment; being out of work” (Oxford Dictionary 1990).

The statement by Barker (2003:200) that unemployment is probably the most severe problem South African society is experiencing and is conceived as the root cause of many other problems is concurred with by many. “These worlds are not separate they interact and penetrate each other, each aspect affecting every other aspect. The social runs through them all” (Kaplan 2002: xi).

Thomas Carlyle (as quoted by Barker 2003:200) stated that “A man willing to work, and unable to find work, is perhaps the saddest sight that Fortune’s inequality exhibits under the sun”. Keynes’ (Boorstin 1983:665), the farther of modern economics, referred to unemployment as a spectacle of wasting and despairing human beings. This is reiterated closer to home in Gonzo and Plattner’s (2003:5) who quote a Namibian day labourer as saying: “I tell you if you don’t have a job then you have a problem.” and “Now I am not working it is just like these hands of mine have been cut off and I am useless. I don’t know what I shall do” (Wilson & Ramphele 1989:84).

Mohr (2004:8), an economist, warns that any economic data on employment and unemployment have to be handled with care and understanding. It is important to understand how unemployment is defined and data is collected and calculated.

5.2 Definitions of unemployment

Unemployment is defined according to strict or narrow and expanded definitions. These definitions are not fixed and have changed from time to time to exclude or include categories of people. From 1994-1998 the expanded definition was used officially by Statistics South Africa (SSA) to estimate unemployment in South Africa. From 1998 SSA reverted to using the strict definition (Mohr 2004:88).
Although definitions of unemployment may be confusing, it is easier to define than to measure (Mohr 2004: 87). It is important to know that data published on unemployment are not comparable from one country to another since they are drawn from different sources (registration, survey) or based on different definitions (Mohr 2004:94). Makgetla & van Meelis (2003:93) warn that preoccupation with definitional problems can lead to “the de-linking of data collection from the underlying social problem”. They also point out that “unemployment is important, not as an abstract number but because it means individuals earn no, or very low incomes and are dependent on other means of economic transfers from family members and the community.

5.2.1 The strict definition of unemployment

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) has developed two definitions of unemployment, a strict definition and an expanded definition.

According to the strict or narrow definition, unemployed persons are those persons of 15 years and older who are not in paid employment or self employed during the seven days prior to the interview and had taken specific steps during the four weeks preceding the interview to find paid employment or self employment (Mohr 2004:88). This means they are actively seeking jobs, willing and able to work, but cannot find employment (Le Bruyns & Pauw 2004:203).

5.2.2 The broad or expanded definition of unemployment

This strict or narrow definition of unemployment is not suitable in the South African situation because it disregards and excludes discouraged work seekers, some of whom may be too poor to seek a job. In South Africa and other developing countries, it is more meaningful to use a broad or expanded definition of unemployment which includes the discouraged unemployed. “They are people who would like to work and are either actively seeking work or too discouraged to
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continue looking.’ This definition also includes people involved in micro-enterprise or survivalist economic activities (Pieterse 2001:41).

The difference in the strict and expanded definitions lies in that according to the strict definition the person has to have taken steps to find a job while in the expanded definition the person is only required to have a desire to find employment (Mohr 2004:88). The criterion of having to take steps to look for work is not always realistic. If very little work is available, unemployed persons might lose hope of finding a job and therefore may not take active steps to look for employment even though they are desperately in need of work. Such unemployed persons are regarded as discouraged job seekers. They also usually feel more deprived than those who are seeking unemployed. The search is hampered by poverty, cost of job seeking and local high unemployment, not preference (Kingdon & Knight 2000:16, 17; Barker 2003:208).

5.3 Data sources

It is important to ascertain who produced figures on unemployment (a government agency, private researcher or research company) and how data was obtained. Possible sources of unemployment data are census data, voluntary registration of unemployed persons, sample survey data and data on the economically active population which are all obtained by different means and produce different results which are not comparable (Mohr 2004:88-89). Further complications are that even figures from the same source may not be comparable, e.g. population census data provided by SSA are not comparable because regional boundaries have changed. Thus until 1970 the independent territories were included, but they were excluded between 1980-1991. A further factor making comparison difficult is that not all census data has been adjusted for undercount, e.g. the 1985 census data. Another fact is that the names and nature of surveys have changed over the years. Before 1977 only data generated by private researchers on black unemployment was available. From 1977 Current Population Surveys were introduced but discontinued in 1990 to be followed by the October
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Household Survey (OHS) in 1993 (which excluded the former independent national states) that provided a comprehensive overview of unemployment. In 2000 the OHS was replaced by the Labour Force Survey and since February 2002 Statistics South Africa has conducted the Labour Force Survey twice in the year to determine the levels of employment and unemployment in the formal and informal economic sectors (Barker 2003: 207). Other sources of data that are referred to in the literature on unemployment in South Africa are the Bureau for Economic Research, University of Stellenbosch, the Bureau of Market Research, UNISA, and the South African Labour Research Unit (SALDRU) at the University of Cape Town (Kingdon & Knight 2001:3,2005b:1).

In whatever way employment data is gathered or employment data defined, unemployment in South Africa is extensive in numbers and effect. Unemployment is a phenomenon which is simultaneously economic, political, technological and social.

5.4 Features of unemployment in South Africa

Many features have been identified as characteristic of unemployment in South Africa. The following seem most related to the phenomenon of day labourers.

5.4.1 Unemployment is extensive

During 2004 when the current research took place, the actual figures showed that the total adult population was approximately 29 million and potential work force was 18.5 million. The unemployment rate was estimated to be 41.2% using the expanded definition unemployment and 27.8% using the strict definition (Streak & van der Westhuisen 2004:1). These figures place South Africa among the countries with the highest unemployment in the world. Some authors fear that unemployment will increase. (Simkins 2004:257, 264; Streak & van der Westhuizen 2004:1; Marais 2005:1; Mohr 2004:80, 87).
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During 2004 the economy was growing, creating approximately 168,000 jobs per year and 14,000 jobs per month. There were 350,000 new entrants into the job market, a growth of 2%. At the same time that jobs were being created, especially for the more skilled, employment opportunities were decreasing for those already poor and marginally poor. Translating these percentages to rounded numbers of people, of the adult population of 29 million people, 16 million, were economically active. 12 million were employed, about 4 million people were employed irregularly in the informal sector. Using the strict definition 4.6 million were unemployed but seeking work, with another nearly 4 million discouraged unemployed who had given up seeking jobs. Using the expanded definition, a total of 8.4 million were unemployed. As many as 60% of unemployed people may never have worked in the formal sector and could be said to be searching for their first job. (Simkins 2004:257, & 264, Streak and van der Westhuizen 2004:1, Mohr 2004:80 & 87, Marais 2005:1).

Unemployment was also high in other developing countries during the 1990s, e.g. Reunion, Macedonia, Spain and in Algeria (30%) and Botswana (22%) (Loots 1997:2). The actual extent in many African countries is not known, but it is accepted that unemployment is one of the most serious problems in Africa.

The extent of unemployment influences how the unemployed are viewed by society, how unemployed people perceive themselves and their situation, their response to it and it determines who remain unemployed. In a situation of low unemployment, people in general are less aware of unemployment and unemployed people are negatively regarded. In a situation of high unemployment people’s perceptions of unemployment are more accepting believing “it could happen to any one.”

High unemployment also influences wage levels. Because employers are aware of the existence of a large pool of inactive unemployed they pay lower wages (Kingdon and Knight 2000:16).
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Wittenberg (1999:45) found that extensive unemployment also influences job search. Certain categories of people who have lower chances of finding jobs cease to search, e.g. rural people for whom search costs may be too high to continue search. The long term unemployed tend to drop out from job seeking after about the age of forty. It is also significant that only post-matriculation qualifications seem to make a difference to enhance the chances of unemployed people finding employment. Mass unemployment has entrenched recruitment practices based in informal networks. Household and communities become the intermediaries between their members and the labour market. Households with better access to the market are the main beneficiaries. Female-headed households are less integrated into the labour market and have fewer links through which employees can be recruited.

There are three further distinctions which emerge from the discussion of extensive unemployment particularly applicable to the day labour phenomenon namely, long-term unemployment, youth employment and job search.

5.4.2 Youthfulness of the unemployed

Generally, the youth as well as women, aged workers and the unskilled and under-qualified tend to be the population groups most threatened by unemployment (Bhalla & Lapeyre 2004:64, 66). In Africa youth and women constitute the bulk of the unemployed (Alli 1995:1).

In South Africa unemployment is concentrated among the youth (Marais 2005:1; Streak & van der Westhuizen 2004:1). More than 50% of the population is under the age of 25 years; however, persons under 25 from only 20% of the economically active population and even less are actually working. Barker (2003:212) defines youth as those under the age of 35 and states that they comprise 70% of the unemployed. Of these, 70% have never worked in the formal sector, do not have access to unemployment benefits, are dependent on the support of families and others or may resort to crime or begging (Barker 2003:212).
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There are approximately half a million new entrants to the labour market each year (Zegeye & Maxted 2002:12). However entry into the job market is minimal. Wittenberg (1999:13-17) mentions that the entrance of the African population into the workforce is slower than is the case with other race groups. Less than 50% are in the workforce by the age of 25. After the age of 30, only 70% of all African men have found employment.

A number of particular features are typical of youth unemployment.

- **Periods of employment**

  Youth seem more likely to have frequent but shorter periods of unemployment (Kelvin & Jarrett 1985:39). Proportionately more youth leave their jobs of their own accord. The youthful worker is more vulnerable to losing his job than the older worker who has much greater difficulty finding a job.

- **Training**

  Lack of proper vocational training, unsatisfactory levels of education and qualification contribute to long term youth unemployment and keep them in the position of job seekers (Beleva 1997:7; Alli1995:1) delaying the development of occupational identity (Kelvin & Jarrett 1985:37).

- **Loss of experience, training and fulfilment**

  Youth unemployment means a loss of opportunity to gain experience and improve skills and education job satisfaction and fulfilment (Beleva 1997:6).

- **High probability of remaining unemployed**

  Youth unemployment increases the probability of remaining unemployed. If a person has not found employment by the age of 30 the chances of finding
employment thereafter are less than if the person has not found employment by 20 (Wittenberg 1999:13-17).

- Marginalisation

The consequences of unemployment socially marginalise young people. Without work and earnings their status and living standards drop. They remain or again become dependent on their parents, may delay marriage and childbearing (Beleva 1997:7).

Long term youth employment also has implications for society as the problems of long term youth unemployment tend to be “transferred directly or indirectly from the individual to the state and to the entire society” (Beleva 1997:8). Sewpaul and Hölscher (2004:71) express a similar sentiment in commenting that youth unemployment in South Africa has created another lost generation of people with few links to the economic and social participation offered by the world of work.

5.4.3 Long term unemployment

Long-term unemployment (LTU) or extended unemployment refers to a situation of being unemployed for more than a year. It is a key consequence of general unemployment.

Making projections about long-term unemployment in South Africa Wittenberg (1999:18) sketches a dismal picture stating that at the age of 30 nearly 80% of unemployed people had been unemployed for at least a year and half of them had been unemployed for as long as three years. He estimated that 10% of those unemployed were unlikely to ever be employed permanently in the formal market and that they would probably cease searching for a job after the age of 40.

Barker (2007:183) mentions that 65% of unemployed people have never held a proper job, implying that they may have worked and earned in the informal economy. They could also be regarded as being unemployed long-term. Gonzo and
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Plattner (2003) also mention that 39% of the "street unemployed, i.e. day labourers standing at informal hiring sites had never been fully employed, placing them in the category of the long-term unemployed".

Continuous long-term unemployment means a loss of economic and social gains for society. Society loses on previous investments made in training and experience as to reintegrate unemployed people after along absence requires new investments. Long-term unemployment also necessitates society investing in unemployment benefits and social support benefits (Beleva 1997:3, 5).

Long term unemployment further contributes to social polarization with rising income gaps between the top and bottom segments of the social ladder. It deepens the stratification in society, dividing it into the poor and a few rich people. A new social structure emerges. The moral values of social groups undergo change. The impoverished part of society becomes more and more isolated and demoralised. (Beleva1997:4, 5). Bhalla and Lapeyre (2004:43) explain that inequality fosters conflicts based on the lack of trust and reciprocity.

Long term unemployment has enormous costs of depreciation of human and social capital, loss of human dignity, increased violence, crime and job precariousness. This awareness of the harmful effects of long-term unemployment should encourage society including governments in their economic policy to take measures to prevent long term unemployment. Social support programs for long term unemployment are challenging. To be effective their design and implementation have to correspond with the complexity of the problem and involve all relevant institutions, structures of the central and local governments, organisations and associations (Beleva 1997:11).

5.4.4 Job search

Job seeking is a characteristic of unemployment. Day labourers waiting for work are not typically unemployed. As they stand at informal hiring sites day in and
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day out they are in the first place job seekers, who are employed irregularly, although according to the strict definition of unemployment they are unemployed. They meet the criteria of the narrow definition in that most of them have been actively looking for work in the past four weeks. Most of them have actually been looking for work for longer periods. For some it has become a way of life but they want to work and are immediately available to work (Barker 2007:174). Whereas job search typically belongs to the initial stage of unemployment when the person is confident of finding work and before becoming to being unemployed (Kelvin & Jarrett 1985:27), many day labourers continue day labour daily for extended periods.

Literature on job search offers the following explanations for the strategies that shape job search and seem relevant in understanding day labourers.

- **The extent of unemployment.**

Mass unemployment discourages job seeking. Many people are discouraged even before they start searching for a job (Wittenberg 1999:20, 44).

- **Previous formal sector employment**

People who have previously been employed in the formal sector tend to take a long time to find another job. A Labour Force Survey (LFS) (2002) found that 41% had been unemployed for 3 years, 64% for 1 year and 75% for 6 months. The age groups most affected by unemployment if they have been employed previously were the 25-29 and 30-34 age groups. This was even more so for rural and less educated men (Simkins 2004:262).

- **Geographic location.**

Urban based people seem to search more intensely than rural people. For rural people there are less job opportunities and therefore lower possibilities of finding a job. The job search costs (travel costs) are high (Wittenberg 1999:37).
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- **Secondary level schooling**

People with secondary level schooling tend to have a higher level of search energy than people without any formal education (Wittenberg 1999:39).

- **Dependents**

The number of children a person has seems motivate job search. The more children a person has the more important it becomes to find work (Kelvin and Jarrett 1985 (27, 28).

- **The effect of the material consequences of being unemployed**

People are less inclined to job search if their clothes look worn. This seems to be even more so for the qualified and skilled people (Kelvin and Jarrett 1985:37).

- **Household and neighbourhood characteristics**

People from households that are well integrated into the labour market, i.e. the more people there are that are working the greater the job search activity (Wittenberg 1999:41). Household income may also affect the decision to search (Kingdon & Knight 2000:15).

- **Information about job opportunities**

The more access people have to information about jobs the more intense the job search.

- **Skills and qualifications**

Skilled and qualified men tend to look for work with precision and economy, aware of what they have to offer. This is in contrast to long hours of random trudging of the unskilled and unqualified (Kelvin and Jarrett 1985:28-29).
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- **Informal sources of personal contact**

The informal sources of personal contact are very important for all kinds of jobseekers but particularly so for the unskilled and unqualified. There are two types of personal contacts that are used in job search. There is the direct approach to a potential employer and the indirect contact of an intermediary between the job seeker and the employer (Kelvin and Jarrett 1985:29). The direct approach seems most effective among the skilled and semiskilled but the least successful for the unskilled. Among the unskilled, personal contacts seem to be the most successful. Wittenberg (1999:41) states that in South Africa recruitment into jobs happens largely via informal networks. The unskilled youth with an unemployed father lacks the most important informal network. For older workers, like a father nearing retirement, a working son or daughter are very helpful in obtaining employment for him (Kelvin and Jarrett 1985:29).

- **Mobility and networks**

Kelvin and Jarrett (1985:30) found that with high mobility informal networks cannot be maintained, because they depend on people’s roots in a locality and these are only established with time. When a person relocates, networks are lost or loosened. Skilled and professional people are more likely to have loose networks. Their qualifications, which enable them to find employment when they are in demand, become a limiting factor when they are unemployed. Because of their specialization they may have to move greater distances than the unskilled to acquire work. They may often be too transient to establish strong networks in any one locality.

- **Job centres**

Job centres are most effective for assisting unskilled workers in finding employment, but less useful for better skilled and qualified people for whom formal means are more effective, except for older executives and professionals who are more effectively served by informal networks (Kelvin and Jarret 1985:31).
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- **Identifiability criteria**

  It seems as if job search is influenced people's identifiability. The skilled person having to be identifiable in terms of his role and an unskilled has to be credible as a person (Kelvin and Jarrett 1985:33).

- **Unemployment programmes**

  There is evidence that unemployment programmes which include training are effective in helping place trainees. For people who have been unemployed for an extended period training serves to change their status to that of a recently unemployed person. (Kelvin and Jarrett 1985:33).

  It becomes apparent that these factors, which influence job search, assist in understanding why some people seem to be more inclined to continue searching for jobs against the odds and why many like day labourers resort to a job of searching combined with a situation of underemployment.

  When considered closely it becomes apparent that it is simplistic to think of people as either employed or unemployed. There are actually many positions on a spectrum ranging from employment to unemployment with different interrelated and overlapping nuances including long term unemployment, youth unemployment and job searching.

5.5 **The effects of unemployment**

  To the unemployed, unemployment is not just an external economic situation or an academic subject; it has general economic, personal, relational and societal effects.
5.5.1 General economic effects of unemployment

- Loss of income

Unemployment mostly removes the main source of household income (Kelvin & Jarrett 1985:4) leading to financial hardship (Broman, Hamilton & Hoffman 2001:213), especially where social security measures are inadequate (Bezuidenhout 2004:7,181,188). Wilson and Ramphele (1989:234) succinctly state that unemployment "brings three difficulties: sickness, starvation and staying without clothes."

Alli (1995:2) explains that the loss of income results in a situation where households try to cope by switching to poorer quality foods, which are high in bulk and low in energy content which leads to chronic nutrition deprivation and ill health. Individuals and groups have developed survival strategies which include various feeding patterns. In Nigeria survival formulas such as “0-1-0” and “0-0-1” have emerged. The first involves skipping breakfast, having lunch and no dinner; the second is only eating an evening meal. A malnourished person is prone to various infections and diseases which may lead to lethargy, lack of drive and possible death. Unemployed persons consult physicians five times more than the employed.

Yet, unemployment does not affect all persons equally. Unemployment and poverty are more directly related in developing countries and societies or sections of society experiencing social, economic and political change (Bhalla & Lapayre 2004:179). Low income employees are usually more affected by unemployment because they would have been unable to accumulate savings while employed (Kingdon & Knight 2000:15).

In a study on the unemployed, when General Motors closed their plant in the USA, Broman et. al. (2001:213) found that financial hardship had a number of subsequent effects. It often led to family conflict and loss of mastery which led to loss self worth and self esteem (Barker 2003:200, Goudzwaard & De Lange
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1991:35, Kingdon & Knight 2000:1) These experiences all contributed to experiences of distress and in many cases to clinical depression.

However all unemployed people do not necessarily experience poverty. In countries with adequate social security or other forms of financial security, unemployment need not mean total lack of regular income but a decrease in income and standard of living, not poverty. Unemployment leads to adjustments to reduced or termination of fixed income and lack of means. Families and individuals have to make adjustments to new socio-economic conditions, such as moving to a smaller residence in a less expensive residential area. Where one person of a couple earns well, there need not be poverty. On the other hand, employment of the breadwinner(s), or low earnings by more than one family member may not be enough to escape poverty and sustain an equitable healthy life style (Bezuidenhout 2004:7,181,188).

- Loss of skills

When people remained unemployed for a long period they experience loss of skill. There is evidence of critical periods for the skilled or professional worker after becoming unemployed (Kelvin and Jarrett 1985:2)

- Dependence

The majority of the unemployed, between 60% and 80%, received remittances from employed family members or friends who received a pension. (Erasmus in Barker 2003:210).

5.5.2 Unique individual experiences

Unemployment is subjectively experienced and uniquely so by each individual. In this section different views and experiences will be presented.
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- **Perceptions of the unemployed**

  In an extensive literature study on unemployment Kelvin and Jarrett (1985) concluded that a person's unemployment affects how he sees himself, how he perceives others, how he perceives himself to be seen by others and how others actually perceive the unemployed.

  Kelvin and Jarrett (1985:2) explain that a pattern of response to being unemployed could be:

  [a] sense of not doing anything worth while, and disliking oneself because of this: dislike of oneself makes one uneasy, depressed, or perhaps aggressive; and this sours relationships with others. Equally important...[is] the concept which one has of oneself, [which] is profoundly affected by how one is treated by others, or at least by how one thinks one is being treated by them...the socially constructed sense of identity.

- **Emotional effects of unemployment**

  A multitude of emotions accompanies the experience of unemployment. Efforts have been made to identify the emotional stages of unemployment but they appear to be an oversimplification of the experiences of unemployment. Alli (1995:3) explains that the loss of employment can be experienced akin to bereavement. There is an initial reaction of shock. This is followed by a denial or optimism. However as the period of unemployment continues anxiety and distress may set in. "You feel really sick when you haven't got a job. It is there in the bottom of your stomach. You think that something is eating you" (Wilson & Ramphele 1989:96). This anxiety and stress may manifest in frantic job hunting, with repeated failure which is followed by resignation. There is also evidence of a final stage of fatalism and apathy although its onset varies (Kelvin & Jarrett 1985:26). About the final stage Frankl (1968:121) said: "The unemployed become increasingly indifferent and their initiative more and more trickles away. This apathy makes such people incapable of grasping the helping hand which may be extended to them."
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Max-Neef et. al. (1989:22) explain that a person exposed to extended unemployment goes through a “roller-coaster experience” which involves at least four phases of shock, optimism, pessimism and fatalism. "The last stage represents the transition from frustration to stagnation, to a state of apathy in which they reach their lowest level of self esteem."

- **Perception of Time**

As a consequence of the loss of a fixed time structure many unemployed people stop planning their time and drift out of an orderly into an undisciplined and empty existence not undertaking anything new. Time seems to melt away and future orientation diminishes (Gonzo and Plattner (2003:25). This is illustrated by “I cannot say anything about my future now because my heart is now “dead” since I am not working” (Wilson & Ramphele 1989:85).

- **Loss of meaning**

The following quote by Frankl (1968:122) summarises the loss of meaning experienced by unemployed people:

> The jobless man experiences the emptiness of his time as inner emptiness, as an emptiness of his consciousness. He feels useless because he is unoccupied; having no work, he thinks life has no meaning.

- **Loss of sense of responsibility**

Unemployed people feel expendable and also think nothing ought to be demanded of them. They also demand nothing of themselves. The misfortune of being unemployed seems to them to wipe out all responsibility to others and to themselves as well, to cancel their responsibility to life. This misfortune is blamed for failures on all planes of existence (Frankl 1968:126).
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- **Self-blame**

Workers may start off by not blaming themselves for being unemployed. But self-blame grows over time if they fail to exert control over circumstances by not being able to find or keep a new job (Broman et. al. 2001:214).

Gonzo and Plattner (2003:93-99) mention that in Namibia the unemployed experience poverty, dependency, stress, destruction of the family, overstrained support systems, loss of control over the employment situation, helplessness, low self-esteem, proneness to depression, yet remaining hopeful.

5.5.3 **The relational effects of unemployment**

Unemployment affects a person in his relationships in various ways.

- **Family life**

Unemployment may contribute to deterioration in family life (Barker 2003:200, Gonzo & Plattner 2003:9). As families have to make adjustments to an unknown social environment it may contribute to degrees of family disorganization. Conflict may arise not only about the decreased income but also regarding the breadwinner's inability to secure reliable and permanent employment. The adjustments made may affect the role performance of the adults and the disorganization of the family when the needs of the family are not met (Alli 1995:4, Wong & Chui 1999:2, Bezuidenhout 2004).

- **Loss of social ties and social exclusion**

"Unemployment has brought me loneliness and frustration" (Wilson & Ramphele 1989:96).

Work provides the opportunity to be part of a social network and a means to feel socially useful (Arcoverde 2001:6). Unemployed workers suffer from a loss of
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the social ties developed through contact at a workplace (Goudzwaard & De Lange 1991:35). This seems especially acute in cases of sudden job loss of middle-aged workers for whom it means a severance from social support networks, numerous social processes, connections and opportunities. (Yueng-Tsang & Ho 2004:33).

Arcoverde (2001:5) explains that a certain level of resources, obtained through work, has a strong influence on the social situation or condition of a person and his social in- or exclusion. Unemployment has an additional effect on social ties as it affects the means that ensures a quality life. Participation in collective life and maintaining personal, social and community ties and citizenship become more difficult and eventually decrease.

Yueng-Tsang and Ho (2004: 34) mention that social exclusion of the unemployed does not only exist as an objective reality but it is also subjectively constructed. They explain that the sense of social exclusion may be related to perceptions created by fears that they would be looked down upon by others. Social exclusion may also be partly self-induced, because of a sense of inferiority and self consciousness. Unemployed people may detach themselves from friends and neighbours and avoid community level interactions because of reluctance to reveal their hardships. With decreased financial means which contribute to the development and maintenance of relationships, social contact decreases (Yueng-Tsang & Ho 2004:33).

Social insertion after exclusion does not immediately affect a person's state of exclusion. For a while things remain very much the same until being employed again has any effect on the worker's life (Arcoverde 2001:2).

- **Collapse of support systems**

Because most of the network members of the low-skilled unemployed are likely to come from similar social economic backgrounds they would be unlikely to support them for extended periods. This may prevent unemployed workers from
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seeking external financial support and create a tendency to exclude themselves from the outside community and not reveal their true situation easily (Yueng –Tsang & Ho 2004:32).

Gonzo and Plattner (2003:94) also found that the traditional support system of the extended family of the unemployed in Namibia was wearing thin. Friends and relatives were willing to provide accommodation but not food and money. The impression was that this was due to the economic strain they were experiencing.

Somehow in spite of all the negative effects of unemployment there are individuals who have some hope and find ways of coping with some of the consequences of unemployment.

5.6 Coping strategies

Strategies for coping with unemployment and poverty do not seem to be clearly distinguishable. The following have been specifically mentioned in the context of unemployment but many are also applicable as strategies of coping with poverty.

Bhalla and Lapayre (2004:179) state that where there is no government support, people who are unemployed resort to all kinds of social and economic activities in the informal sector and survivalist measures like begging, subsistence farming, casual labour and hawking. These forms of self-employment are merely survivalist and do not yield enough to support families. To the list can be added crime. Barker (2007:172) states that "for many 'robbing the rich' has become the only means of survival."

Erasmus (as quoted by Barker 2003:210) identified the following economic coping strategies among the unemployed in South Africa:

- The majority of the unemployed, between 60% and 80%, received remittances from employed family members or friends or who received a social pension, the most important being state old age pensions, disability
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grants, child support grants and foster care grants. Patel (2005) refers to the findings of research that "social pensions contribute significantly to supporting poverty stricken households."

- Up to about half of the total unemployed persons were involved in some form of income generation from which they were making some sort of living, but they consider themselves unemployed.

- A small number of unemployed people were benefiting from the government's special job creation and training programmes, employment services and SMME support and development services.

- Social security benefits were received by 5% of the unemployed. The rest, comprising of 20% of the unemployed, were not reached by any of the above mentioned services, did not have a supportive network and did not earn a living in the informal sector.

The following example by Broman (2001: ix 201-205) illustrates two very different collective ways that people experiencing unemployment in an individualistic society found useful. A study of 29,000 people who had been unemployed when General Motors closed their plant in the USA showed that the collective ways employed were more effective than individualistic ways. These collective ways were offered by the bonds of the religious community, religion, loved ones and friends and labour organizations: Religion provided a community with differing degrees of emotional and instrumental support and also aided development of a world-view that was less likely to increase self-blame. Union membership helped members obtain unemployment benefits, gave the workers a way of looking at their lives and what had gone wrong, offered them a reason to believe in themselves by giving them a world view that told them that what had happened was not their fault. They were assisted to understand why plants close and who is to blame. Union members were found to be less self-blaming.
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6 ADDRESSING UNEMPLOYMENT

Unemployment is regarded as one of South Africa's severest problems and a causal factor of many of the other challenges South Africa faces. The most important elements of an employment strategy to create jobs as outlined by Barker (2007:184-203), as well as other possibilities will be mentioned.

Wilson and Ramphele (1989:317-319) provide a historical precedent for the government to play an active role in addressing unemployment. In the early decades of the previous century the government implemented an extensive employment creation programme to address white poverty. It has been mentioned that the building of the pyramids in Egypt is an example from antiquity of job creation.

In spite of strategies for job creation by the government in South Africa as outlined in the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) (1994), Growth Employment And Redistribution policy (GEAR) (1996), the policy document submitted to the Job Summit (1998) and the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative (ASGISA) announced in 2005 the number of day labourers seems to be increasing.

Barker (2007:194) mentions the following possible measures that could be considered to maintain employment and income maintenance of the unemployed:

- **Public works and special employment programmes**

- **Wage subsidies** to assist employers employing people that are difficult to employ.

- **The Social plan**: a set of policies to deal with and assist employees who become redundant, with the negative social implications of large scale job losses. This includes training, retraining, job searches and counselling, securing alternative employment, supporting small enterprise development and developing security nets.
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- **Unemployment insurance**

  In South Africa the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF) provides short-term relief to contributors when they become unemployed or are unable to work. This excludes many unemployed, especially those who have never been employed in the formal sector. Barker (2007:201) suggests that the fund be restructured to benefit active job seekers, subsidise recipients in new jobs and finance retraining programmes.

- **Basic Income Grant (BIG)**

  The BIG is a grant paid to all individuals irrespective of employment status and is not subject to a means test. It would provide all households with a minimum level of income that would enable the poorest households to meet their basic needs more adequately even if limited. Barker (2007:201) mentions that as it is 22 million in South Africa survive on less than R144 per month. A grant of R150 would double the income of this part of the population considerably alleviating absolute levels of poverty, respond to the burden created by the HIV/AIDS pandemic and serve as a stimulus to increased consumer spending, job creation, investment and economic growth. On the other hand the cost of the BIG is high and creates possibilities for corruption (Barker 2007:201-203; Triegaardt & Patel 2005:141-144).

  Of the above only the Social Plan and the BIG would directly benefit day labourers at all.

  In Bulgaria programmes to aid the unemployed combine pro-active and passive services. Passive services are for immediate assistance to alleviate problems e.g. the dole which amounts to 60% of the minimum wage. The emphasis is, however, on active measures for creating conditions for employment and self employment such as:
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- **Promotion of entrepreneurship** of young people which includes the establishment of business incubators and business consulting centres to support entrepreneurs (Beleva 1997:12).

- **Job clubs** serve to support jobseekers in job-brokering and contacts that inform about possibilities for entrepreneurship, legal provision for self-employment (Beleva 1997:12).

7 SOCIAL WORK AND UNEMPLOYMENT

It is in becoming aware of the effects of unemployment on individuals and relations and especially the ensuing exclusion and marginalisation that the opportunities for social work to make a contribution emerge. However the temptation is to make simplistic interventions. Yuen-Tsang & Ho (2004:36) agree that "social work is well positioned to offer services, if one is aware of the individual and social impact of unemployment." Writing in a situation where the accepted kind of services for the recently unemployed were mainly job creation projects and financial assistance they recommend that the services must go beyond these and take note of the exclusionary and isolating effects of unemployment and specifically address these at a personal and social level. The rage, disgruntledness and dissatisfaction of unemployed people should be heard. It is important that in developing services the social work profession must not work in isolation but collaborate with government ministries, labour organisations and NGOs at community level to develop services that address the adverse impact of unemployment on individuals and families. To be effective social work interventions should match the complexity of unemployment and be characterised by intersectoral collaboration, multilevel intervention and a creative integration of social and economic development at family, community regional and national levels. (Yuen-Tsang & Ho 2004:36).

Sewpaul and Hölscher (2004:89) maintain that poverty relief is understood too narrowly by the Department of Social Development as it seems to refer mainly to
job creation projects. Job creation as such should not be the task of social workers but of such departments as Labour and Public Works.

In their recommendations Gonzo and Plattner (2003:102) also outline possible services that could be rendered to the street unemployed or day labourers. These services could as well be rendered by social workers and be inclusive of, not in the place of, poverty alleviation through income generating projects. These services include counselling or training programs to build self esteem, skills in job seeking, support groups, assistance in accessing training for self employment, entrepreneurship and marketing.

The above seem to be very applicable guidelines for contemplating social work services for day labourers who are unemployed, but not yet discouraged young people, searching for jobs from informal hiring sites in Tshwane and not primarily surviving off crime.

8 CHAPTER REVIEW

This chapter was included to enrich knowledge about the complexity of unemployment and job search behaviour of day labourers standing at informal hiring sites. Supply and demand theory and the segmented labour market theory explain the functioning of the labour market. Unemployment is defined in different ways, the strict and expanded definitions producing different statistics. The different sources of statistics and data collection methods must be known before attempts are made at drawing comparisons. Some statistics relevant at the time this research was conducted were mentioned. The spectrum of employment-unemployment was introduced, with a discussion of the difference between work and employment, before discussing the different types of employment. Unemployment in South African is extensive, pervasive amongst the youth and predominantly long term. Day labourers are mainly youth. Job search is particular feature of unemployment and also relevant to explaining why day labourers stand at informal hiring sites. The most common economic effects of unemployment are loss of income, skills and
dependency. Unemployment affects people economically, personally, relationally and socially. The effects on society were highlighted, an array of coping strategies of the unemployed described, some employment and income maintenance strategies mentioned and guidelines for social work mentioned.
LABOUR MIGRATION

"Man does not stay at holes that are waterless."
Ovambo, Namibia (Stewart 2005:157).

1 INTRODUCTION

Day labourers present themselves for employment in all South African cities and many towns in rural areas. Where they are seen may be not their place of origin (Schenck 2005; Maisel 2005). A large proportion (89%) of the day labourers in Tshwane have migrated from countries, towns and rural areas. In an attempt to understand something of their current experience labour migration will be described.

Research on day labourers in the USA and Tokyo as well as on day labourers in Elardus Park showed that what they had in common was that most of them were labour migrants. In the USA they are mostly undocumented Latino immigrants, mainly from Mexico. In Tokyo (2001) and in Tshwane (2004) at the time of the research the day labourers were mostly in-migrants, many being rural-urban in-migrants. Since then with Zimbabwean crisis the legal and illegal immigrants from Zimbabwe have changed the situation. The immigrant status of day labourers in the USA is one of three major issues. The others two are legal issues of regulations which prohibit or restrict employment solicitation in public areas and employment protection for day labourers including the creation of informal and formal hiring sites. (Valenzuela et. al. 2006:17; Schenck & Louw 2005:88; Valenzuela 2003:317; Valenzuela, Kawachi & Marr 2002; 198). Valenzuela (2003:323) has mentioned that the immigration aspect of day labour was still largely unresearched.
Chapter 11. Labour migration

2

INTRODUCTORY EXPLANATIONS

2.1. Migration and labour migration

Migration simply means moving from one place of abode to another. Labour migration seems to be a term mostly used to refer to the movement particularly of workers doing manual work performed with effort (Oxford Dictionary 1990 sv "migration"). However in the literature consulted it seems that when the term migration is used it most likely refers to labour migration, for example, Mitchell's (in Zegeye & Ishemo 1989:28) use of the term migration to refer to labour migration as:

[the circulation of workers between their traditional rural areas and the commercial and industrial enterprises is a world wide phenomenon wherever Western civilization has come into contact with traditional societies.]

Harrison (1993:149) explains that migration happens because development is unevenly spread. It is political action, a form of voting with your feet, a protest against inequality, demanding a seat at the table where the feasting is taking place.

Distinctions are made between migration as "the permanent relocation of individuals from one place of residence to another and temporary emigration which largely consists of contract labour migrants" (Gomel in Solomon 2003:6). Barker (2007:27) explains that temporary migrants are workers from rural areas and neighbouring countries who come to work in urban areas temporarily and return to the rural areas after their service contract has expired or on a regular or annual basis for a period of leave. There is, however, another variation of temporary migrants which refers to people who commute to urban areas but return home daily or weekly.
The description of migration as a circulation of workers seems more suited to this study as migration mostly commences with the intention of being a circulatory movement. In a study on African migrants and immigrants in post-apartheid South Africa, McDonald, Mashike and Golden (1999:1) found that:

Most migrants from Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries have visited South Africa before this current visit and are at least the third generation of their family to have done so...... [and].. Few migrants have the desire to settle permanently in South Africa

However, there are also many instances where the completion of the circle gradually decreases, as will be indicated in the following portrayal of migration.

3 PREVALENCE OF MIGRATION AND LABOUR MIGRATION

3.1 International

International migration in the post—Second World War period temporary south-north labour migration in the USA and Europe was regarded as a possible path to development for the sending country, with migrants returning with skills and capital that would stimulate development. Yet in most cases it did not lead to development in the home countries because of the absence of the more highly skilled and remittances being used mainly for day to day expenditure. Workers from Latino countries in the agricultural sector of the USA and "gastarbeiers" from Turkey and the Balkans in Germany are examples of migrant labour (Ellerman 2005:617). Since the 1970s there has also been a world wide increase in international migration (Barker 2007:23).
3.2 Third world

Considerable migration for work goes on in the third world. Whenever a poor country, which does not have enough work to go round, is situated next to a richer country in need of manpower, human traffic goes on as naturally as heat flowing from a warm room to a cooler one (Harrison 1993:142). In the third world, urban incomes are on average two and a half times higher than rural incomes. The greater the income difference, the greater the lure of people to the cities. There are also other differences especially in government services that draw people to the cities (Harrison 1993:146).

3.3 Africa

Africa has a disproportionately high incidence of international migrants. It is estimated that 50% of all the world’s international migrants are to be found in sub Saharan Africa which has less than 10% of the world’s population (Solomon 2003:5). As Okkelo-Wengi 2003:62) states “As elsewhere in the Third World, refugee flows have been significant components of the total African population movement.”

Mitchell (1989:29) explains that migration in Africa is distinguished by its recurrent nature: “men leave their tribal area for a while, then return to it and possibly go out and return again.” They do not simply move from an area with fewer or no labour opportunities to another area with more labour opportunities. What is significant is that they actually return to their place of origin. This recurring pattern will be explained in this chapter.
3.4 Southern Africa

Due to policy changes implemented since 2003, data on migration to and from South Africa is not readily available so the overall situation is not known, other than that there has been a considerable emigration 'brain drain' of especially professional, semi professional, technical and managerial workers to the United Kingdom, the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand (Barker 2007:24).

As will be explained in the next section the system of migrant workers from neighbouring countries and internal rural areas who come to cities and towns temporarily to work has been is and still is an important characteristic of the South African labour market (Barker 2007:27). However since 1970 the number of migrants, especially from Mozambique and Malawi, decreased considerably due to developments in the mining industry and political hostility towards South Africa. Lesotho's economy, however, is still particularly dependent on migrant labour to South Africa. As much as 50% of Lesotho's GNP is from South Africa. (Barker 2007:27-28).

4 The history of labour migration in South Africa

The history of migration in South Africa is important and unique in some ways. Wilson and Ramphele (1989:197) state that: "nowhere else in the world has an industrial economy employed for so long such a high proportion of oscillating migrants (coming from both inside and outside the country) in its labour force."

What is also significant and different about the migrant system in South Africa is that in other societies e.g. Western Europe and the USA it was easier for people who started as migrant workers, or their children, to move permanently to the cities taking
their families with them. This was impossible in South Africa due to the urbanisation policy, influx control and pass laws that regulated the migration situation for more than a hundred years (Wilson and Ramphela 1989:200).

In South Africa the origins and pattern of the migrant labour system lie in the history of the abolition of slavery (1828), European expansion, land occupation and the industrialisation that followed the discovery of diamonds and gold in the second half of the nineteenth century (Zegeye and Maxted 2002:20). The pass laws controlling the movement of slaves was gradually replaced with a new set of pass and vagrancy laws controlling the movement into and within the conquered territories of Nguni and Sotho speaking South Africans. With colonialisation came taxation and with the institution of the Natives Land Act of 1913 Africans were left with only 13% of the territory. This increased pressure on resources resulting in land alienation and an increase of migrant labour. (Wilson and Ramphela 1989:192)

The discovery of diamonds around Kimberley and the discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand drew migrant workers from surrounding and distant place to the mines. By the second half of the nineteenth century rural black men were selling their labour to earn cash to pay bride wealth (lobola) expand homesteads or relieve famine (Illiffe 1987:124-5).

With the expansion of mining on the Witwatersrand after 1886, in order to obtain a sufficient labour supply, male contract labour migrant workers were recruited from rural areas and from beyond the borders of what later became the Union of South Africa. To ensure that they did not settle there, pass laws were tightened to better control the movement of men from rural areas to the mines and back again (Wilson and
Ramphela 1989:197). Permission to reside in an urban area was strictly controlled. At one time non-residents were only allowed in the white areas on a temporary permit for 72 hours, during which time they had to procure a employment or return home to obtain another permit. This was enforced ruthlessly. A black person could be stopped on the street at any time of day or night and asked the police to produce their documents legalizing their presence in a particular place (Illiffe 1987:124-5; Zegeye & Maxted 2002:24; Clegg 2005:1-2). This explains why the phenomenon of day labourers at informal hiring sites is a recent one. Historically, although there were job seekers, they would not have been seen at informal hiring sites in predominantly white areas. This only became possible after the scrapping of laws limiting freedom of movement from 1994. (Bill of Rights, Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996).

The following statistics illustrate a little of the extent of migrant labour:

- In 1933 one third of all rural households in South Africa had members who were migrant workers. The poorest rural households were those lacking migrants (Zegeye & Maxted 2002:15).

- In Pondoland (Eastern Cape) and Lesotho at times the proportion of able bodied men away as migrant labourer on the mines and as farm and labourers was close to 50% (Illiffe 1987:270).

- In 1982 two thirds of the Transkei’s male workers were absent at a time (Illiffe 1987:271).

- In 1999, 35% of rural African households, i.e. 1.8 million households in South Africa had at least one migrant worker. In that same year as many as 20% of rural male adults were migrant workers (Barker 2007:28).

Donald Woods [s.a.], who grew up on a trading station in Pondoland, referred to migrant labour as an integral part of life in a newspaper cutting, (of unknown origin,
probably from the Daily Dispatch, East London of which Woods was editor until he went into exile).

Trading itself is a complex business, for a trader is not only a buyer and seller of goods and produce. He is also a farmer, a recruiter, a moneylender and a business consultant.... When young men want money to buy wives, it is to the trader that they go for the best financial rewards open to any African in Africa-via recruitment for the mines of the Witwatersrand. And while they are at the mines, the trader is their liaison between them and their families and affairs at the kraals...”

The present situation is different in a number of ways. If it is borne in mind that until as recently as the 1980’s a large proportion of male black South Africans were prevented from settling with wives and children near their places of employment and that their families remained behind in rural areas, it is likely that a little of the culture of migration still prevails amongst those men who are seeking employment as day labourers in Tshwane (Illiffe 1987: 271).

5 The dynamics of labour migration in Southern Africa

In the study on day labourers in Elardus Park, the origins of the day labourers indicated that the Southern African states are all feeder countries for day labourers at informal hiring sites (Schenck & Louw 2005:88). This illustrates Solomon’s (2003:55),

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1 Like Woods I grew up on a trading station in the Transkei on the slopes below the Namaranjana looking on the Insekeni, and into the Malenge valley, in the Umzimkulu district. I had a partial rural perspective of the migrant labour system of many female headed households, of men leaving and returning, of registered letters with remittances that arrived at the postal agency where I often assisted. Some arrived regularly and their effect was visible. These families were the visible better off. Others families were poor and sometimes waited for months without any letter. In desperation my parents would be requested to write and send a telegram requesting money because of some crisis that had developed at home.
statement that the dynamics in Southern African countries, the demographic and economic settings, socio-cultural context, the political system and environmental conditions all contribute directly to emigration.

In Southern Africa there is a flow of migrants from the poorer countries like Mozambique, Lesotho, Zimbabwe and Angola to the relatively more prosperous countries such as South Africa, Botswana and Namibia. In South Africa the relative size and growth of the population to economic growth, although there is increasing unemployment, has been more favourable than in most Southern African countries. This situation is due to push factors that direct population flows to South Africa (Solomon 2003:55). The uneven economic development, skewed growth patterns and economic disparities do not in themselves necessarily induce population movements. These factors must be generally known to generate a process of migration. It is the communication of information regarding more prosperous and safer conditions that results in the movement of people (Solomon 2003:61). In Southern Africa this knowledge has been promoted by the contract labour system. Solomon (2003:62) mentions that it is interesting to hear that in the rural villages of Mozambique and Lesotho people sing songs about the wealth of South Africa. The South African soap opera, Egoli, viewed in Zimbabwe, spreads the knowledge of jobs in Egoli (Johannesburg). With the decline of the mining industry there has been a decrease in foreign contract labourers in mining and agriculture. The decrease in the numbers of contract labour migration has not, however decreased total migration significantly because illegal immigration has increased (Solomon 2003:59-63).

The socio-cultural context of Southern Africa has another unique factor that influences migration. Borders of countries and geographical distribution of kin, clans and tribes do not necessarily correspond. This is due to a history of diaspora precipitated by
the Mfecane of Shaka’s wars and the way in which European expansionism took place and borders were demarcated (Solomon 2003:63). This dissimilarity between borders and distribution of groups of people encourages the movement of people and does not deter illegal migration. There are numerous examples of political instability contributing to population movement. Political rivalry, ethnic strife, socio economic inequalities or regional imbalances give rise to a south-south migration between the developing countries (Solomon 2003:67). Political leadership with ethnocentric nationalism, of which examples exist in Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, Namibia, Zambia and Malawi are other “push” factors that direct population flow, especially if these (pushed) people have ethnic ties with sections of the South African population. These ties assist prospective migrants in their decisions to migrate. A further interesting socio-cultural factor influencing migration is contract work on the mines. Although migration initially took place because of the economic necessity to work on the mines, over generations migration developed into a cultural ‘rite of passage’ into manhood in many Southern African communities. Now that the mines absorb fewer foreigners as contract workers, the young men from neighbouring countries resort to illegal migration (Solomon 2003:63-67).

Much movement of people in Southern Africa has also been induced by environmental conditions caused by overpopulation, degradation of the environment, natural disasters like drought, rural underdevelopment and politics (Solomon 2003:78). The land reform process in Zimbabwe and subsequent threatened food security over the last few years and the ‘Urban clean-up’ in 2005 have led to more Zimbabweans migrating to South Africa.

In addition to economic, socio cultural, political and environmental conditions, geographic proximity, the precedent of existing migration, the global political economy
and regional economic co-operation all increase migration in Southern Africa. Knowledge of these factors enriches the understanding of the presence of foreign day labourers standing at informal hiring sites in cities such as Tshwane.

6 SPECTRUM OF LABOUR MIGRANTS

The different kinds of migrants are:

6.1 Across border migrants

Driven by economic internal and external economic pressures, migrants from across the borders have entered South Africa for more than a century. “National boundaries are no deterrent to the determined migrant” (Harrison 1993:141). More recently political conflicts and wars have resulted in the migration of many foreigners to South Africa. These migrants can be divided into three categories, namely legal immigrants, contract workers and illegal immigrants (Ryklied 2003:2).

6.1.2 Legal migrants

McDonald et. al. (1999:5-6) found that the majority of migrants of African origin, at that stage, were in the country legally and that more than 75% were economically active. A few years later Ryklied (2003:2-3) maintained that 50% of the migrants of African origin were from neighbouring countries and about one quarter were economically active.

Solomon (2003:6) mentions two important categories of legal migrants pertaining to South Africa since 1994:
Chapter 11. Labour migration

- Professionals and business people

The first category of legal migrants is known as the “brain drain” of South African professionals and business people to Europe, North America, Australia, Canada and New Zealand. Professionals and business people also represent the people in the economy whose jobs create further jobs. With their departure many employment opportunities for day labourers may also have been affected. They were people who were in a financial position to hire day labourers from time to time, or they may have employed full time labourers who have lost their job and became day labourers. A man from the Newlands group (2005) mentioned that he worked for a man who recently left South Africa. Apparently the house had not yet been sold and he (the day labourer) was still sleeping there.

Secondly, there has been a brain drain of African professionals and business people from the rest of Africa to South Africa, though this has decreased considerably. Their contribution to employment opportunities for day labourers is unknown.

- Contract labour migrants

Solomon (2003:5) explains that contract labour migrants are similar to Germany’s "gastarbeiter". A contract is drawn up between an employer and a prospective foreign worker. These contracts stipulate that contract labourers undertake to work for employers for a fixed period, usually 12-18 months, after which they are supposed to return to their country of origin. Those who fail to return home or who return to South Africa later, may end up as day labourers and become either legal or illegal immigrants.
However, this category is historically significant for the understanding of day labourers and especially policies and attitudes towards foreign day labourers and their experiences. Since the discovery of diamonds in the late 19th century, hundreds of thousands of black non-South Africans were brought from Lesotho, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Malawi on contract to work in the mines. Besides the mines, contract migrant labour was also employed by the agricultural sector (Ryklief 2003:3). They were recruited through offices established in the countries mentioned above. The system of migrant labour and the policies and practices regulating the influx and exit of migrant workers were formulated by mining houses. These later formed the cornerstone of apartheid policies (Ryklief 2003:3).

Both the mining industry and agriculture have experienced contraction leading to many lost jobs. This has increased the competition for jobs in South Africa. The continued employment of foreigners whilst South Africans are unemployed has caused a growing dissatisfaction and negative attitude towards foreigners (Ryklief 2003:3).

### 6.1.3 Illegal immigrants

Ryklief (2003:3) is of the opinion that illegal immigrants are mostly unskilled labour involved in the lower end of formal and the informal economy. They are extremely vulnerable and unpopular. There are allegations that they drive down wages and undermine labour standards. Their influx puts further strain on housing, water and electricity supply and other social services in overpopulated, under-resourced informal settlements and townships (Ryklief 2003:3).

Much corruption occurs in the practices of the police towards illegal immigrants who are vulnerable to being arrested and jailed and repatriated. Often those that can
pay bribes remain at the cost of their silence (Ryklief 2003:6; Rossouw 2005: 19, Special Assignment, 7 September 2005).

7 PROFILE OF ACROSS BORDER MIGRANTS IN SOUTH AFRICA

In a broad but relatively small study Mc Donald et. al. (1999:1-2) compiled the following general profile of the African migrant population within South Africa at that time:

- For most migrants from the SADC countries the current stay is not the first visit to South Africa; some are at least the third generation of their family to have done so. Migrants from other parts of Africa are generally visiting South Africa for the first time.

- Few migrants except the Basotho want to settle permanently in South Africa.

- Economic opportunities are an important, but not exclusive, motivation to come to South Africa.

- Over half the migrants are under 30.

- Migrants are motivated, educated, skilled and enterprising, often actually creating economic opportunities.

- Migrants seem to find work easily, but earn low wages, nearly half earning less than R1000 per month.

- Migrants have substantial responsibilities in their home countries, which often include the maintenance of a house and family.
Although economic opportunities and some social services are regarded as better in South Africa than in their home countries, most migrants would prefer to raise a family in their home countries and still regard the overall quality of life to be better at home.

- They are disproportionately victims of crime and xenophobia, made worse by inadequate legal and police protection, rather than perpetrators of crime.

- Migrants feel that they should be offered the same economic rights as South African citizens but not necessarily be allowed to vote in South African elections

- Migrants take borders seriously and support fair and humanely applied immigration policy.

- Most migrants feel that South Africa is obliged to embrace and welcome foreign migrants African countries that took up positions against apartheid.

Although only a small proportion (12%) of the day labourers in Tshwane who were included in the sample of this study were across border migrants, this profile is useful for understanding them.

8 INTERNAL MIGRATION (IN-MIGRATION)

Internal migration has many variations- rural to urban, urban to rural, urban to urban and rural to rural (Jones & Nelson 1999:164 Harrison 1993145). Rural to urban migration is particularly relevant for understanding day labourers in Tshwane and only it will be discussed.
8.1 Rural to urban migration

One of the main explanations for rural to urban migration is the income gap between the two areas and the actual and perceived economic opportunities of urban areas. The following maps (Harmse et al. 2007) illustrate this clearly. Figure 21 depicts the spatial pattern of unemployment per municipality in South Africa, 2001. Figure 22 depicts the municipalities with the highest development and possible employment opportunities in South Africa in 2001 and figure 23 shows the distribution of day labourers in South Africa in 2004.

![Map of South Africa](image)

Figure 20: Unemployment rate per local municipality
Chapter 11. Labour migration

Figure 21: Development regions per local municipality

Figure 22: Day labourers per local municipality
Rural to urban internal migration is often a temporary or seasonal movement of the poorest of the rural population for contract labour on the mines in mineral rich Southern African countries including South Africa (Jones & Nelson 1999:165; Rodgers 2006:136).

Rural to urban migration is a strategy used more often by young people than older people and more by men than women. Some nuclear families or couples may migrate, leaving some of the children to be cared for by grandparents or other family members (Jones & Nelson 1999:166).

School dropouts drift to towns where they hope to get good jobs in offices. Once in a while, they reassure worried parents that all is well: they are staying with relatives or friends and will soon be employed or have found jobs. Common rural origins and school background are easily translated into friendships which are indispensable for obtaining accommodation and jobs. When they find jobs, the salaries are usually not adequate for urban survival so they seek accommodation on the floors of the already cramped rooms of former schoolmates, village mates, friends or even acquaintances of parents and newly met friends. (Obbo 1999:155).

Although one of the main explanations for rural to urban migration is the income gap between the two areas and the actual and perceived economic opportunities of urban areas, there are examples where the influx of migrants has continued even after economic stagnation and the expected advantages were non-existent, e.g. Newcastle in KwaZulu-Natal (Jones & Nelson 1999:164-5).
8.2 Consequences of labour migration

Migration has mixed consequences for all concerned, the migrant, the rural community and the family left behind as well as the city destination.

8.2.1 The migrant

The consequences of migration for the migrant have largely been covered in previous chapters on urban poverty and unemployment and are not repeated but summarized in the following quote:

'It is not easy to migrate. It means going into exile, leaving your home village, leaving the supportive network of the extended family, leaving the complex culture status and ceremony in which you hoped one day to play your part. It is the last resort, when all else has failed.'

(Harrison 1993:140).

8.2.2 The rural community

The consequences for the home community may also be mixed. They may have a dramatic effect on the local economy. Barker (2007:28) maintains that labour migration has negative economic effects on the production potential of rural areas. The three main reasons for negative effects are that the community lose the better educated, more energetic and younger workers (Meikle 2002:38). Those remaining are less productive and cannot maintain agricultural production. Agricultural development needs economic investment but the remittances received from the migrant worker are too small to provide the required capital. Rural communities have become accustomed to and have learnt to accept migrant labour as a way of life. This attitude means that men are not prepared to
become actively involved in local productive activity. Their minds are set on when and how to become part of the way of life of the migrant labourer. This is a threat to the economic viability of communities. The indigenous economic production is disrupted. Wilson and Ramphele (1989:200) noted that after a hundred years of migrant labour, many rural areas were less able to generate a means of livelihood for their inhabitants than when gold was discovered. For the family remaining behind migration means that while there is a lower consumption of resources there is physical insecurity (Illiffe1987:124-5, Zegeye & Ishimo1989: 2; Zegeye & Maxted 2002:24).

- **Rural households and family life**

  Migration affects social values and family life in various ways.

  Migration invariably changes family life and new family structures may emerge (Illiffe 1987:270-1). When a man leaves a peasant household division of labour is of necessity restructured and women take on responsibilities which previously were men's and this may affect gender relations when men return (Zegeye & Ishimo1989:2). Childbearing may also become separated from formal marriage. Married men away from home and, less frequently, women at home, may have children born out of wedlock while married. Men who are away accumulating resources to put up a homestead, may also have obligations to aging parents. In this sense the migrant father remains a member of his parents' household and his future wife, the young mother and children remaining with her parents while the man is accumulating resources. This three generation household is an adaptation to the labour migrant economy (Illiffe 1987:270-271).

  Migration can have other negative implications for relations. There may be increased domestic tension (Jones and Nelson 1999:168). Young wives and children in
rural households are vulnerable to abandonment and/or neglect when husbands establish new relations in the cities (Sutterthwaite & Tacoli 2002:55). When during his long absences from the rural area a migrant man is, or becomes involved in a system of social relationships in towns, a negation of social obligations in the rural area evolves. When this takes place the oscillation of labour migration between rural areas and urban areas tends to cease. (Zegeye & Ishemo 1989:6, Mitchell 1989:50).

- Remittances

Migratory and urban-rural interactions have a large impact on rural households as many rural households are very dependent on remittances for their livelihoods (Zegeye & Maxted 2002:12). It also makes them very vulnerable if remittances are irregular. Migrant workers may also invest in housing, land or cattle of which the relatives and kin take care in the migrants absence.

On your first trip to the place of the whites you support those who brought you up. On your second trip, you take out money that counts as cattle for marrying a wife. On your third trip, you look after everything in your own homestead“


Strong two-way linkages may be maintained by sending remittances from urban to rural areas. Illiffe (1987:271) mentions that studies around 1980 found that migrants sent 20-25% of their earnings to immediate families, but also distributed sums to other kinsman. Another instance of linkage is that sometimes food is sent from rural to urban areas. Rural-based relatives may bring up the children of urban dwellers. Urban relatives often provide critical support to new migrants. Migrants often stay with relatives before establishing their own household, should they decide to do so.
Linkages may not always be strong and may not be well-maintained through regular and substantial remittances. Factors that affect the remittances include job insecurity, including retrenchments, and the high costs of transport to visit rural areas regularly to maintain relationships.

8.2.3 Cities

Rural to urban migration contributes to the uncontrolled growth and related management problems of the cities of the African continent. This has frequently led to the institution of policies to control or discourage migration, like the pass laws of the apartheid era in South Africa (Jones & Nelson 1999:164). Social services are strained, unemployment and competition for work increases with the vast available source of low and unskilled labour. This in turn increases xenophobia, crime increases urban poverty (Solomon 2003:23).

9 Reasons for labour migration

From a number of studies analysed by Mitchell (1985) the main explanations given for migration could be summarised as exogenous, economic and personal factors:

- Exogenous factors include the introduction of taxation by colonial powers and the internalisation of migration as a cultural phenomenon that have been discussed.

- Economic factors are the push of lack of opportunity to meet these needs locally and the pull of opportunities elsewhere.

- Personal factors may include the personalities of individuals, e.g. men who are young and adventurous. Individuals may also rationally decide to migrate
because they are attracted to the cities (Jones and Nelson 1999:164). Other personal reasons could be to escape conflicts, witchcraft and arduous duties (Mitchell 1989:40). Harrison (1993:149) refers to surveys showing that the typical migrant is relatively young and adventurous. Migrants appear to be more intelligent, adaptable, diligent and independent than the non-migrants (Harrison 1993:150).

10 CHAPTER REVIEW

Most day labourers are labour migrants therefore making a study of existing literature on labour migration is very relevant for understanding more about day labourers. World wide migration has increased remarkably and especially so in the third world. Although sub-Saharan Africa has only 10% of the world’s population, 50% of international immigrants are found in sub-Saharan Africa. South Africa also has many migrants from all over Southern Africa. Labour migration is a characteristic of the South African labour market and has a long history dating from colonial rule. Presently South Africa is experiencing a flow of migrants from poorer and politically less stable countries. There is a spectrum of migrants in South Africa, including across border immigrants who may be legal immigrants or contract workers and illegal immigrants. Cross border immigrants mostly want to return home, come to work and send money home. Internal migration is mostly rural to urban. Labour migration has a mixed impact on the migrant (life is tougher and less profitable than was anticipated expected and the migrant develops a range of coping strategies). Migration affects family life, often changing social structures and relationships. Remittances are an important feature of labour migration providing a large proportion of households’ income. Rural communities profit and lose from labour migration. Migration is explained as the consequence of exogenous, economic and personal factors.
SECTION E

REFLECTION

Everywhere in my life.

Nathaniel’s wife is months pregnant. He is a young man working as a gardener in the northern suburbs of Johannesburg. She is somewhere in the deep dark depths of Mutare, Zimbabwe.

He cannot go home. The last time he went home in December last year, it took him two months to get back into South Africa. He crossed the Limpopo river, like so many thousands of his compatriots every day, on foot. He was arrested and sent back home. Failure is not an option for people like Nathaniel. If he does not get to South Africa, his wife and child will die of hunger. So he made the perilous trip again, carrying only a 500ml bottle of water. This time he had a 500ml bottle of water. This time he succeeded, arriving in Johannesburg bedraggled, gaunt and thirsty.

He lives in a room in a flat in Hillbrow. He is regularly arrested because he has no official papers and has to bribe the police with amounts as small as R10 to be let off into the seething suburb. He knows one thing: he travels with at least R20 in his pocket just in case he is stopped. He knows it is usually enough to get him out.

In three years, instead of things getting better, his problem just gets more intractable. He cannot buy fake South African documents — an identity document and passport, primarily — because the police ignore these anyway. They have managed to work out the accents, he says.

Without these documents he cannot get a formal job, he cannot engage in any commerce, he cannot put his numerous talents out into the marketplace. He quests, and yet he is condemned to a dark underground, desperate life. He is perpetually playing hide-and-seek with the law; gambling with his life as he attempts to get home through parks and a crocodile-infested river.

(Malala, J. Mail & Guardian, 13-17 March, 2007:5)
CHAPTER 12

REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1 INTRODUCTION

This concluding chapter will provide an overview of this study and review the research process and research results in the context of the literature. A number of areas deserving further research and guidelines and areas for action regarding the phenomenon of day labourers in South Africa will be identified.

In chapter one the purpose of the research was formulated as follows:
- To increase knowledge and understanding of the social and economic situation of day labourers at informal hiring sites in Tshwane.
- To contribute to change by making the knowledge available for use in developing policies and services that could contribute towards the transformation of aspects of the situation of day labourers.

In order to meet the stated purpose of the research a literature study was undertaken and a survey conducted using a sample of 242 day labourers standing at hiring sites in Tshwane.

2 REVIEW OF THE RESEARCH

2.1 Research question

The research question was formulated as follows:

What are the social and economic conditions and experiences of day labourers at informal hiring sites in Tshwane?
The above question was expanded into the following questions which were included in the questionnaire.

- Who are the day labourers?
- Where and how do they live?
- What is their experience of work and their economic situation?
- What are their non-work activities, experiences, conditions?
- What is their social interaction, with whom do they have relationships and who are dependent on them?

2.2 Research process

The background to the survey, and the place of the survey in the larger research project on day labourers in Tshwane was described in chapter one. The planning and execution of the research was discussed in chapter three.

To meet the stated purpose and answer the research question a literature study on day labourers was undertaken and the research planned. During that time a visit was made to Prof Valenzuela from the Centre for the Study of Urban Poverty at the University of California, Los Angeles who was about to undertake a national survey on day labourers in the USA. The two week training for fieldworkers who were to conduct the survey was attended. Permission was granted to use their research design and adapt the questionnaires to fit the Tshwane context. A survey was conducted in September 2004 with a 10% sample of 2400 day labourers standing at 89 hiring sites in
Tshwane previously identified in order to get the first factual baseline data on day labourers in South Africa. A small number of individual and group interviews were conducted by the researcher to get a clearer idea of their personal experiences.

In chapter one mention was made of the use (action) to which the research results have contributed to Men at the Side of the Road (MSR), the publications that have and are emanating from the research and the national survey on day labourers in South Africa currently (2007) taking place.

2.3 Reflection on the research process

This research is a first look at a highly visible, though relatively unknown (confirmed by Nel’s (2007) research) phenomenon of day labourers who are becoming visible in the urban area as a result of political change, scrapping of influx control and measures restricting people’s movement.

On looking back and then forward it seems as if this survey is part of a process of cycles of action, reflection and research that as in action research, are loosely connected, but not as directly so as in purposefully planned action research. The cycles started with action with the intention of rendering assistance to day labourers in Elardus Park; this led to the reflection that nothing was known about the people targeted for assistance. This was followed a period of (research) action, spending time on the streets attempting to get to know the day labourers. On reflection it became clear that those of us involved would not succeed due to language and cultural constraints. This was followed by action involving African students in research in Elardus Park. Reflection on this process stimulated the further action of a literature study. This led to an awareness of day labourers in the USA and the day labour research at the Center for the Study of Urban Poverty at UCLA. Further reflection was stimulated leading to the
(action) planning of research on the day labourers in Tshwane and a visit to UCLA, and implementation of the larger research project in Tshwane. Reflection (also by means of the publication and presentation of different aspects at conferences) has led to the action of the continuation of the cycle by national identification and counting of hiring sites and day labourers and the national survey being undertaken.

2.4 Execution of the research

As indicated in chapter one and explained in chapter three the research design was mostly an adapted version of the design used by Valenzuela for the National Day Labour Survey (NDLS) in the USA. The budget available for the research was however sufficient to access resources to conduct the research as effectively as hoped. This resulted in constraints, some which could have affected the results and others that were inconvenient and even unethical.

The questionnaires were available only in English. It was not possible to have them translated into all the languages spoken by day labourers and have all translations available for every field worker. All the field workers claimed to be able to translate the questions into the required languages. Possible different translations were examined during the training of fieldworkers. However, the completed questionnaires contained answers that seemed to indicate that the field workers had either not really understood the questions, had translated them incorrectly or had interpreted and translated respondents’ answers incorrectly; meaning had been lost in translation. In the execution of the survey, field workers had to translate and interpret the questions to the day labourers and then interpret their answers. This was a process of co-construction of meanings. Meaning may have evolved alternative to the intention of the questions and actual answers of the day labourers.
During the trial run the original questionnaire took too long to complete. Some day labourers lost interest and walked away. A number of questions were subsequently removed to shorten the questionnaire including some questions on social aspects. In hindsight time may have been lost due to the fact that fieldworkers had to translate questions on the spot. There were also too many unusable answers from which it became clear that the fieldworkers should have had more practice in translating questions and possible answers and writing the answers during the training.

The available funds were insufficient to pay respondents for time spent participating in the research as had been done in the NDLS in the USA. They may have lost money by participating in the survey. It would have been ethical to pay them. However this would also have entailed a risk. In the South African context, with its high crime rate, field workers may have been at risk if they had had cash on hand.

Much time was lost when field workers had difficulty locating sites. Maps for all the field workers as well as visits to the site beforehand would have been a great help.

2.5 Summary of the research results

Detailed results of the research were presented in chapter 6. The aggregated profile obtained from the survey results were complemented by a qualitative subtext consisting of references to the individual and group interviews. The following is a summary of the research results.

2.5.1 In addition to the hiring sites surveyed, additional hiring sites were identified resulting in an estimate of a minimum of 3030 day labourers standing at 97 hiring sites in Tshwane.
2.5.2 Day labourers are mainly (90%) South African in-migrants from rural areas to Tshwane and Gauteng. They speak at least 12 languages. They are almost exclusively male, the majority are young and single (56%) and 66% having children to support.

2.5.3 Very few (5%) day labourers have no formal education, although their educational level is low. Educational attainment ranges from nothing to grade 12. More than 50% have completed primary school and a quarter has completed grade nine or its equivalent. Very few have had any form of formal skills training.

2.5.4 Day labour is low paid, often physically strenuous work. Home owners and subcontractors seem to be the primary employers of day labourers, mainly for gardening, building construction and related jobs. The most frequently paid amount is R50 irrespective of the job. The overwhelming majority earn less than R800 per month. On average day labourers support 4 people (including themselves). Remittances home are small and irregular.

2.5.5 Day labour is a full time occupation for many. The majority stand at hiring sites waiting for jobs 5 - 7 days per week, with most working only 2 to 3 days a week and at least 20% not working at all. Day labour may be a temporary form of employment which men engage in between more fixed employment, or it may be the means to a more permanent job or withdrawal from the labour market. Most would prefer a permanent job.

2.5.6 Day labourers live and work under harsh conditions. Less than a quarter of the day labourers sleep at home with their families. A quarter sleep in backyards and even fewer sleep in shacks in informal settlements. 12% sleep in hostels or shelters for the homeless 7.5% sleep rough in the open veld and 4% sleep on construction sites, probably with a relative or friend. More than half do not live at home and a large number
can be regarded as homeless. In spite of these very vulnerable conditions, less than 20% have ever been insulted, harassed, threatened or robbed at night.

2.5.7 Day labourers are exposed to different forms of abuse, most being non- or underpayment. About half of the men have experienced at least one instance of non-payment of wages. Many report underpayment, working longer hours than agreed upon, not receiving promised food, breaks or water and receiving insults.

2.5.8 Day labourers are socially marginalised. For most their main socialisation is with other day labourers. Contact with family is minimal and relationships are under strain. Poverty and lack of time, other than job searching and working, excludes day labourers from organised sport, other recreational activities and social organisations.

2.5.9 Day labourers would welcome assistance, firstly, to get employment and secondly to obtain assistance associated with their conditions at informal hiring sites and thirdly, with assistance for their families.

This research shows that day labour in South Africa is experienced as irregular employment which affects the actualisation of a whole range of other fundamental human needs. Due to inability to meet subsistence needs the person experiences increasing lack of protection, as economic and other crises are experienced in the family and destruction of affection in relationships. Lack of money and his absence lead to lack of participation which may give way to feelings of isolation and marginalisation, while declining self esteem may generate an identity crisis.

The above research results have provided a quantitative-descriptive outline of who the day labourers are, how they live, their experience of work and economic situation. Their non–work activities are tentatively described and somewhat implied and
their social interaction and relationships are alluded to and specifically described.

It can therefore be concluded that the research results do answer the research question in a quantitative—descriptive manner and provide broad brush strokes of the social and economic conditions and experiences of day labourers at informal hiring sites in Tshwane.

3 REVIEW OF THE RESEARCH RESULTS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE LITERATURE STUDY

3.1 Introduction

The literature study covered previous research on day labourers conducted mainly by Valenzuela and collaborators from the Centre for Urban Poverty at the University of California Los Angeles in the USA amongst mainly Latino immigrants who are mostly undocumented workers. They are consequently unprotected by law and are often exploited and abused. Although mentioned in the media from time to time, no previous research had been undertaken on day labourers searching for jobs from informal hiring sites in South Africa. In discussions on poverty or unemployment some mention is occasionally made of day labourers. After the survey a further literature study on topics with a bearing on understanding day labourers in Tshwane was included i.e. on poverty, specifically urban poverty, unemployment, labour migration and Tshwane.

Particulars of the literature study will be referred to and used to explain and elaborate on the findings in the following review of the research results in Section 4. The findings from chapter six will be written in italics.
3.2 Number and presence of day labourers

There is an estimated minimum of 3030 day labourers standing at 97 hiring sites in Tshwane (2004).

The original interest culminating in the research commenced in approximately 2001 when it was noticed by white residents, including the researcher, in Elardus Park, a residential area in Tshwane, that the numbers of African men congregating at street corners in Tshwane especially in residential areas of mainly white residents were growing and crime was also on the increase. Direct contact with the men revealed that they were searching for jobs. A literature search provided the term "day labourers" with which to refer to them.

From the literature study of unemployment (chapter 10), labour migration (chapter 11) and Tshwane (chapter 7) it became clear that the timing of the appearance of day labourers at hiring sites was indicative of political changes in South Africa. Although African unemployment in South Africa has a long political history it has not been very visible to the white population. Before 1994 many political measures were enforced that kept Africans out of white urban areas and prevented unemployed African people from coming to so-called white areas. Other factors that contributed to their appearance were the rising rate of unemployment, labour legislation leading to eviction of farm workers from farms, the increasing population, very high income inequality, increase in the number of people living in poverty and influx of lesser skilled legal and illegal immigrants from African countries which faced political and economic upheaval.

The increase in numbers of day labourers from the initial count until the survey was undertaken confirmed the continued existence of labourers at hiring sites. Even if the
goal of halving unemployment by 2015 is reached the phenomenon will still exist as low and unskilled workers will not benefit much from the measures taken. If unemployment decreases and more unemployed find work the numbers of day labourers at hiring sites could actually increase if some of the discouraged unemployed were to engage in job seeking.

3.3 Comparison between USA and Tshwane

The research results provide a profile of day labourers at informal hiring sites in Tshwane. A literature study on day labourers, mainly in the USA (especially California) (chapters 4 and 5) provide a profile which, when compared with the research results on day labourers in Tshwane, show many similarities but also differences which will be highlighted. Most day labourers in Tshwane are South African citizens: in the USA most are immigrants from Latino countries; Tshwane day labourers do not speak a common language (Spanish in the USA), they speak many languages representing a wide cultural diversity; Tshwane day labourers seemed to be slightly younger and get jobs less frequently than their American counterparts. In the USA concern seems mostly about the day labourers’ position and vulnerability as immigrants, the unprotected nature of day labour and day labourers’ vulnerability to exploitation and abuse i.e. labour related issues. In South Africa the first concern is the lack of employment opportunities, followed by extremely harsh living conditions. The lack of legal protection and employment vulnerability is also of concern but is a lower priority.

Compared to the USA, in South Africa day labour is to a lesser extent related to immigration and the violation of human rights manifest in an unregulated industry. Although illegal immigration has clearly become a serious issue, day labour in South Africa is primarily a manifestation of the violation of the human right to employment. In South Africa for mainstream labour the legal measures created to protect workers
against economic exploitation and removals serve the function of protection but for some such as farm workers these measures now seem to have been pseudo, inhibiting and singular satisfiers as they are not implemented in a sufficiently comprehensive manner.

The explanation for many of the differences is not in the factual data about the day labourers themselves but in the different contexts of the two areas. South Africa has a very high unemployment rate whereas the USA has a low unemployment rate. In South Africa the demand for less skilled labour is low due to an oversupply of workers; in the USA there is a relatively high demand for workers to perform high risk jobs that the general American public is not willing to do.

3.4 Tshwane as specific urban context

Tshwane's position in Gauteng is significant in explaining day labourers' presence and anticipating their experiences. Gauteng is the richest province with lower than national unemployment and poverty rates. Historically Gauteng is the destination of most migrant labour. Knowledge of its fame and wealth is spread through songs sung in the rural areas of the bordering countries of Mozambique and Lesotho. The South African soap opera "Egoli" (Place of gold) an isiZulu name for Johannesburg (65 km from Tshwane) is viewed in Zimbabwe where most of immigrant day labourers originate.

Tshwane is the metropolitan council into which Pretoria, the former administrative capital of South Africa, has been incorporated. Most hiring sites in Tshwane are located in the former Pretoria. As the country's administrative capital, Pretoria was regarded as the epitome of the former Apartheid ideology. In many ways Pretoria still retains its former character though muted.
The city was macro fragmented with the goal of keeping the African and white populations separate and promoting the modernisation of the white areas while limiting the non-white population. This was done through the Group Areas Act (Act No 51 of 1950) that determined where different population groups could live, influx control laws which controlled the movement of 'non-whites' and limiting the supply of houses in non-white areas. From 1968-1984 no new sites or houses were allowed in the 'black townships' of Pretoria. Overcrowding ensued as the population grew. This was exacerbated as uncontrolled squatting mushroomed when Apartheid crumbled and thousands of African rural people flocked to the areas surrounding the old city. From these developments day labourers emerged and started appearing on the streets.

3.5 The Poverties of day labourers

The research results on the income of day labourers (See section 2.5.4-6) are indicative of the poverty experienced by day labourers. This stimulated a literature study on poverty (chapter 8) that included a number of perspectives on poverty showing its complexity and the dangers of a simplistic perception. Max-Neef et. al.'s perspective on poverty, namely that it is far more than lack of sufficient income, but includes any inadequately or unmet fundamental need, is comprehensive and includes the whole range of deprivations that day labourers experience. Knowledge of basic economic concepts makes it possible to explain the poverty of day labourers and their families' in terms of the international poverty line (moderate and extreme). They have an income under the minimum living level and fall below the 25% poverty line. The poverty of day labourers has been determined largely in terms of economic indicators, although the social indicators of education, access to food, water and shelter were also included in the research. Qualitative exploration of the poverty of day labourers was only alluded to
in the individual and group interviews, but their voices were not heard as would be the case if a Sustainable Livelihoods approach or Participatory Poverty Appraisal had been used.

Day labourers at hiring sites are a manifestation of poverty in South Africa and Southern Africa. They are part of the approximately 32% of the South African population of nearly 43 million (Stats SA 2006) classified as poor according to the UNDP definition. They are also representative of the characteristics of poverty in South Africa namely the inequality of the distribution of income suffered mostly by the Africans, who usually originate from rural areas, are young, most vulnerable to HIV/AIDS and unemployed.

3.6 Urban poverty as experienced by day labourers

The research results revealing the poverty (See section 2.5.4-6) encouraged a literature study on urban poverty (chapter 9) as the experience of day labourers.

The literature study on urban poverty offers some explanation for the presence and experience of day labourers in a metropolitan area such as Tshwane. In urban areas poverty is lower than in rural areas. Although more extreme, rural poverty is regarded as being less complex than urban poverty. The following are some of the complexities of urban poverty which day labourers may experience especially during the initial period of their sojourn in Tshwane. There is a larger concentration of people who are usually more diverse than the rural population, in terms of language, culture and economic power. The urban context is more monetised and poor people more dependent on cash incomes to meet not only subsistence needs, but also to pay bribes and fines, especially if are illegal immigrants or victims of police harassment. In urban areas there
are more bureaucratic laws and regulations as well as formal and informal structures with which a person has to contend. In the urban context there are likely to be fewer support systems and social networks than in the rural context.

3.7 Day labourers as manifestation of various forms of unemployment

The following research results (See section 2.5.4-5) warranted a literature study on the labour market and the employment-unemployment spectrum (chapter 8).

Day labourers standing at informal hiring sites are representative of a highly visible labour market, in contrast to the description of the labour market being imaginary where labour is bought and sold (Barker 2003:2). The research results on the employment of day labourers can be partly explained by the theories of supply and demand and the segmented labour market. The South African labour market presently has a high demand for highly skilled labour for which there is an under-supply and low demand for the very high supply of low and unskilled labour.

Day labourers are a manifestation of the South African labour market with its problems which include a high unemployment rate. On the employment-unemployment spectrum day labourers are simultaneously representative of informal employment, underemployment, youth unemployment, long term unemployment and job seeking behaviour. Day labourers at informal hiring sites represent the long term un- and underemployed youth who have not yet given up on acquiring employment in spite of the unemployment rate in South Africa. For them day labour is a means to personal survival, an attempt to enter the regular job market, and to contribute to the life of the family who live elsewhere.
3.8 Day labourers and labour migration

The research results (see section 2.5.2) confirmed that, like the day labourers in the USA, the day labourers in Tshwane in most instances were labour migrants. The original place of abode of Tshwane day labourers was outside Tshwane, mostly outside Gauteng province. As is typical of labour migrants, they return home on a regular or annual basis for a period of leave and remit part of their income to their families. Labour migration from neighbouring countries and internal rural areas (in-migration) is a historical and current characteristic of the South African labour market. For more than a hundred years before 1994 labour migration was strictly controlled by the urbanisation policy, influx control and pass laws. The urbanisation policy was to prevent African urbanisation of ‘white’ urban areas and only Africans with legal contracts were allowed to work in ‘white areas’. Families were not allowed to accompany or follow them to the cities. Since about 1970 due to political antagonism towards South Africa, there was a decreased demand for labour in the mining industry so migrants on contract from neighbouring countries decreased and were replaced by in-migrants.

The current voluntary rural-urban labour migration which has continued even after the contract labour system was abolished is only partly explained by economic need in rural areas, the contrasting opportunities of urban areas and personal factors. The possibility exists that labour migration, which was introduced by oppressive colonial powers, has, over time, become an internalised cultural phenomenon and rural areas have become labour exporting societies. Labour migration may have become the ‘done thing’ like an initiating ritual that marks the attainment of adulthood.

The mixed consequences of labour migration, discovered through the literature study have direct bearing on day labourers and add to an empathic understanding of their experiences. Only aspects not already mentioned under urban poverty will be
mentioned here.

- Migration is like going into exile, leaving the home village, the support network of extended family, the cultural status and ceremony and losing your place in it.
- Income in the urban area may be greater than back home, but it is often only a subsistence living in subhuman conditions of overcrowding and insanitation.
- Migration includes exposure to new systems of thinking, value systems, cultures and world views which create internal and relational conflict.
- Economically the rural community is affected negatively as it loses its most educated, energetic and able bodied young men. Production potential drops and physical insecurity increases.
- Migration changes family life, leading to the formation of new structures. Gender relations and division of labour change. Childbearing becomes separated from marriage/ cohabitation. Each parent remains part of their parents’ households. Mothers and children are vulnerable to neglect and abandonment as the migrant develops a new system of relationships.
- Remittances maintain relationships and provide much needed income to rural households. Irregular remittances, however, make rural household very vulnerable.
- Rural to urban migration adds to uncontrolled urban growth and related management problems, straining infrastructure and services. It increases the supply of unskilled labour beyond demand, which in turn increases xenophobia and crime.

4 THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE RESEARCH

The contribution of this research will be discussed in terms of ideas for research based on O’Leary’s (2005:11) definition of real world problems mentioned in chapter 2.2.
4.1 Establishing that day labourers is a real world problem

The research has established that the situation of the day labourers in Tshwane is a "real world problem" (O'Leary 2005:3) affecting at least 3030 men directly and another 12,000 people (dependents) indirectly. This warrants social action that will lead to change. The research and the literature study on unemployment, confirms the likelihood of continued existence of day labourers at informal hiring sites in Tshwane. This, as well as the day labourers' response that they would welcome assistance, supports a motivation for the development of programs and the influencing of policy to assist day labourers.

4.1.1 Providing data on the situation of day labourers

The research results provided data on a situation surrounding day labourers which meets the criteria of being 'real world one (that) is not easy to live in: it is rough and slippery' O’Leary (2005:11). The situation of day labourers at hiring sites is ‘complex with multiple facets or dimensions that include economic, bio-physical cultural, social, political and personal elements.’ When relevant literature on day labourers was explored, numerous paths were found that led from on topic to another, namely, from day labourers to poverty, to urban poverty, the labour market and unemployment, labour, migration and to a study on Tshwane as ‘place’. This indicates an environment which was not controlled; it was complex and messy.

4.1.2 Providing data for motivation of intervention

The research has provided an initial answer as to why the phenomenon of the day labourers at hiring sites is a social situation that warrants attention (social problem). This was done by obtaining information on the where and when of the
existences of day labourers, how they exist and some of the consequences for them and their social relations, all of which indicate different experiences of poverty.

4.1.3 Providing data for understanding the situation

The research results have provided an understanding of the situation in terms of providing data on the prevalence of day labourers at hiring sites in Tshwane and determining some of its effects and causes. The accompanying literature study of related topics provided much complementary information which can be used to argue for action and specific improvements to their situation. It is obvious that day labourers are a vulnerable segment of the Tshwane population, who suffer the social injustices of poverty, unemployment, differing degrees of homelessness, hunger and measures of abuse. (Compare Gil's description of social injustice chapter 2.2).

4.2 Realisation of the potential of studying a "real world problem"

Studying day labourers at informal hiring sites in Tshwane has realised the potential of researching a real world problem (O'Leary's 2005:6-10). Researching real-world problems makes contributions and opens possibilities for change at four different levels, namely at the levels of professional development, modification of practice (of the practitioner-researcher), programme development and increased knowledge which can lead to policy recommendations to help alleviate problems and problem situations. At the first level is the learning or professional development of the researcher; at the next level research influences practice. Research "can provide data that will allow individuals, organisations or communities to reflect on and refine what it is that they do". Moving up another level is programme development. The emphasis here is on a more systemic attempt to change [and also develop] the projects, procedures, plans and strategies used within organizations and communities. Finally, embracing programmes is policy.
Here the research goal is to make a contribution to broader guiding principles which can help determine new directions. O'Leary continues that if research is used as a tool for professional development and can improve practice programmes and policy, it is likely to influence the culture of an organisation or community. It seems logical that research at the programme level can be used to develop projects, procedures plans and strategies within organisations and communities.

4.2.1 Personal development

In terms of O'Leary's (2005:6-10) suggestions of the potential of researching real-world problem the research on day labourers at hiring sites in Tshwane has made the following contributions:

As regards learning or professional development (O'Leary 2005:7-8) the following apply. Personally, the research has offered me the following:

- the opportunity to learn about the day labourers in Tshwane in the study and through the literature and to visit the Centre for the Study of Urban Poverty, at UCLA.
- stimulation to explore related topics e.g. poverty and unemployment in the field of economics.
- development of my research skills and increase of research experience
- the opportunity to produce knowledge that will possibly contribute to the development of assistance to day labourers standing at hiring sites in Tshwane
- the opportunity to engage in research with a multidisciplinary team which contributed to a more comprehensive and holistic approach
- A pathway to gaining an academic qualification.
The research has also contributed to the personal development of all the team members, as well as developing the research and communication skills of the students who participated in the research as field workers.

4.2.2 Contributions to practice

At practice level the research results will possibly contribute towards encouraging more comprehensive and holistic assistance to day labourers rather than responses that are only singular satisfiers, such as the distribution of food and clothes. In the following section on recommendations some examples of comprehensive forms of assistance will be described.

4.2.3 Programme and policy contributions

At program and policy levels the research has already made some contributions.

- The research has increased awareness and knowledge on day labourers at informal hiring sites and the problems which they experience. In this sense it has been a needs identification which has determined the need for (multi) professional and multi-sectoral engagement and services (practices) (O’Leary 2005:8). The areas of need that should be considered include basics such as to food, overnight shelter, shelter and access to basic amenities at hiring points, education and training, access to income security, legal protection as workers and physical protection. However the consequences of interventions in these areas have to be carefully considered.

- The research has been instrumental in motivating for the extension of the services of MSR to Tshwane by providing data on the extent of the need to do
so. MSR have also subsequently used the research results to market their services elsewhere.

- The sharing of the research results with the Department of Integrated Development (DID) in the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality (CTMM) contributed to the CTMM housing section providing MSR with a venue for a workshop where their operations in Tshwane were initially accommodated. The DID have also been instrumental in facilitating a process of communication between stakeholders with different concerns about day labourers and hiring sites.

- The research has created awareness of existing guidelines for assistance and existing services elsewhere or in related fields that could be considered to make informed decisions in the planning of services in Tshwane. These will be described under the recommendations.

- The research has contributed to extending awareness about day labourers and it is hoped that the dissemination of the research results will increase this awareness.

4.3 Stimulus for further research

This study research has been a foundation and stimulus for the development of further research based on the experience gained. A national identification of hiring sites and counting of day labourers was completed in 2006 and currently a national survey of day labourers similar to the survey in Tshwane is being conducted.
Chapter 12. Review and recommendations

4.4 Publications

An article by Blaauw et. al. 2006, “The employment history of day labourers in South Africa and the income they earn- a case study of day labourers in Pretoria”, has been published, and a further article (Blaauw et. al. 2006b) has been submitted and accepted for publication.

5 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations emanating from this research include both recommendations for further research and for action.

5.1 Further research

Many possibilities for further academic research were identified to increase knowledge on day labourers in Tshwane, e.g.

- A follow up survey to become aware of changes regarding day labourers at informal hiring sites in Tshwane,
- Establishing how local unemployed men who do not use informal hiring sites seek employment,
- Comparing day labour situation of different cities in South Africa as was done by Valenzuela, Kawachi and Marr (2003).
- A longitudinal case study on day labourers and hiring sites as was done by Turnovsky (2004).
- A study of survival and coping strategies of day labourers, using an appreciative stance which might provide new knowledge and information for supportive interventions (Reed 2007: x).
Chapter 12. Review and recommendations

- A study of the livelihoods of day labourers and/or day labourer households (Rakodi and Lloyd-Jones 2002).

It would not be difficult to extend the above list, but this would not necessarily contribute to alleviating the situation of day labourers. However, in view of the second purpose of the study namely, that the findings should lead to action aimed at transforming the situation of day labourers, the establishment of the existence of a real life problem and its extent research such as the following is preferred.

- Identify the organisations and individuals in Tshwane that can or are rendering any type of assistance to day labourers and establish the nature of their involvement and willingness to participate in networking about the issue in order to establish needs to improve and or expand services.

- To identify and explore the best practice amongst existing services

- To develop and improve services through action research in terms of the following definition: "Action research is social research carried out by a team that encompasses a professional action researcher and members of an organisation, community or network ("stakeholders") who are seeking to improve participants' situation" (Greenwood & Levin 2007:3). This would mean considering the involvement of participants from policy-making structures as well as representatives of the day labourers in the research process.

5.2 Action

From the suggestions made by day labourers to improve their situation (chapter 6 section 9), Nel (2007:56, 66 & 73) and Schenck and Louw (2005: 93-94) it seems that
many of the suggestions could be met through the development of worker centres as have been developed in the USA. (These will be described in section 5.2.2.1.1). Special emphasis needs to be placed on improving accessibility to employment, through the dissemination of information, placement and training. Additionally the following aspects need could be considered in Tshwane: improving hiring sites with basic facilities; night shelter, subsistence support e.g. food parcels to day labourers and their families. On a broader level there seem to be needs for organisation e.g. as a labour group, representing day labourers, social security in the form of a Basic Income Grant and food security assistance.

Although the temptation and expectation may be to conclude with clear and definitive statements about the way forward, I choose to take a tentative stance and present theoretical outlines as well as stories of past and existing practices that could be considered or linked with when planning action to improve the situation of day labourers. This will be followed by a few specific recommendations for action in Tshwane.

5.2.1 Suggested framework for action

Korten (1990:14) stresses that it is essential to have a theoretical framework on intervention strategies with which to assess possible interventions. Max-Neef et. al.’s (1998:32) categories of satisfiers of fundamental human needs addressing the different poverties and Korten’s (1990:114-128) framework of four generations of voluntary development action will be outlined. (See chapters 2 and 6).

5.2.1.1 Max-Neef’s views on satisfiers of fundamental human needs

With their different categories of satisfiers Max-Neef et. al. (1989:32) imply guidelines for interventions to address a situation such as that of day labourers standing
at hiring sites. Interventions imply creating satisfiers to actualise unmet fundamental human needs. However, some satisfiers may not prove useful in the long run. Efforts that seem to provide opportunities to actualise needs may actually aggravate the situation and create other poverties of fundamental human needs. Max-Neef et. al. (1989:32) identified these ineffective satisfiers as violators or destroyers, pseudo satisfiers, inhibiting satisfiers and singular satisfiers, in contrast to synergic satisfiers which contribute to actualising unmet needs.

**Violators or destroyers** are satisfiers that address one need but end up destroying it and others as well, or may meet the need of some at the expense of others, e.g. the raids by metro-police to clear an area of day labourers at the request of local residents (Schenck & Louw 2005:84) will temporarily actualise the security (protection) need of residents, but often day labourers human rights are violated in the process. On the other hand the day labourers standing at informal hiring sites (where the environment is littered, unsanitary conditions prevail and residents intimidated) is a satisfier for day labourers' subsistence need at the expense of residents' need for a clean environment and safety.

**Pseudo-satisfiers** are appealing, they promise to fulfil needs but do not actually do so. They are generally induced through propaganda, advertising or other means of persuasion to address a complex situation. In South Africa the introduction of minimum wages meant to protect workers has increased the incomes of the upper levels of the low income population but also negatively affected the lower levels, e.g. the number of domestic workers decreased by 10% since the introduction of the legislation (Barker 2007:110). A more recent study showed that every time the government introduces legislation intended to protect farm workers the numbers of workers leaving the farms increased markedly (De Lange Beeld 2007-03-19:12). Other examples of pseudo satisfiers could be the migration of many men from rural to urban areas to work as day
labourers to provide for their families, but who end up earning too little money to send adequate remittances for improvement of the quality of life of their families. The collection and burning of day labourers' few possessions (Louw: personal communication) and removal of day labourers from open spaces (Schenck & Louw 2005:84) may satisfy the security need of residents, but worsens the plight of day labourers.

Inhibiting satisfiers generally over-satisfy a given need but seriously curtail the possibility of satisfying others. They often originate in deep rooted cultural beliefs and practices. Korten (1990:5) warns that development institutions meant to address poverty may actually also enhance it or other poverties. Legislation in South Africa like the Employment Equity Act (1998) and the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (1997), which attempts to address poverty by reducing disproportionate income differentials, has been a disincentive for job creation, decreasing employment opportunities and increasing unemployment (Barker 2007:77, 245). During the research in Elardus Park, Schenck and Louw (2005:91) became aware that some of the day labourers were offended by residents giving them meals which they threw away instead of eating. For some of them it was customary not to accept food if they had not seen how it was prepared. It was a cautionary measure against poisoning and illustrates deep rooted distrust and fear. This custom of the rejecting of so called “open or broken food” could deprive them of good meals.

Singular satisfiers satisfy one particular need but are neutral to the satisfaction of other needs. Singular satisfiers are often reactive and characteristic of aid/relief programmes of assistance. Distribution of food to day labourers and isolated skills training are examples of satisfiers that only address singular aspects of the day labour situation. Although in the USA day labour is a manifestation of a "satisfier"to deal with the unemployability of undocumented immigrants in formal employment (subsistence need)
where basic employment rights are upheld, it makes them vulnerable to exploitation and other violations of their and human rights.

**Synergic satisfiers** on the other hand, satisfy a particular need while simultaneously stimulating and contributing to the fulfilment of other needs. A classic example is breastfeeding, which while providing nutrition, satisfies affection and protection. Interventions which are synergic satisfiers are comprehensive, integrated, multi-sectoral and multidisciplinary approaches. An example is comprehensive services offered at well-run hiring sites, with shelter, formalisation of placement of workers for employment, social organisation of the day labourers, education and training, legal assistance and recreation. In its original conceptualisation the MSR project, (see 3.2) was a synergic satisfier. MSR currently mainly serves job placement and training whereas it was hoped that services in Tshwane will be more comprehensive. A project developed by stakeholders in Tshwane would probably be more synergic than if MSR merely extended its operations from Cape Town to Tshwane (Swart 2002:13).

Violators, inhibiting, pseudo and singular satisfiers are usually exogenous to civil society as they are usually imposed, induced, ritualised or institutionalised. Endogenous satisfiers are developed from person centred processes which are the outcome of participatory decisions, including those of the ultimate beneficiaries of the strategies, e.g., a locally developed project with day labourers and other stakeholders in Tshwane. The Human Scale Development Approach provides a guideline for the creation of synergic satisfiers through an integrated approach that will address the situation of day labourers in a comprehensive way (Max-Neef et. al.1989:35-37; Peet & Peet 2000:3).
5.2.1.2 Korten’s strategies for voluntary interventions

Korten (1990:4, 5 & 114) a proponent of People Centred Development maintains that there are various types of interventions and it is important to be aware of and understand their different strategic orientations. Each is approached differently according to the contribution they make. Many activities at different levels are to as developmental activities but are often projects that are merely packages of short-term bursts of the dispensing of money which fit into donor’s budgeting cycle and auditing requirements. We need to move from these to people centered development, guided by the principles of justice, sustainability and inclusiveness to address poverty. To do so we need to be aware of our orientation in our efforts at alleviating poverty. Without a theoretical orientation:

- the underlying assumptions of an intervention may never be made explicit and therefore cannot be tested against experience;

- often the interventions may remain limited to responding to immediate visible needs and not be developmental i.e. working towards removing the conditions that prevent individuals meeting their needs through their own efforts.

Korten (1990:114-128) sees the activities the voluntary organisations, including NGOs, which are referred to development as four strategies that describing different patterns of action. These are four strategies of voluntary action each work from a set of assumptions about the nature of the problem (what is wrong) and the type of solution (how it can be addressed). These strategies are summarised in the following table followed by a brief discussion.
Table 18: STRATEGIES OF VOLUNTARY DEVELOPMENT ACTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRATEGY</th>
<th>Relief and Welfare</th>
<th>Community Development</th>
<th>Sustainable Systems Development</th>
<th>People’s Movements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Problem Definition</td>
<td>Shortage</td>
<td>Local inertia</td>
<td>Institutional and policy constraints</td>
<td>Inadequate mobilizing vision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Frame</td>
<td>Immediate</td>
<td>Project lifespan</td>
<td>Ten to twenty years</td>
<td>Indefinite future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scope</td>
<td>Individual or family</td>
<td>Neighbourhood or village</td>
<td>Region or nation</td>
<td>National or global</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief Actors</td>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>NGO plus community</td>
<td>All relevant public and private institutions</td>
<td>Loosely defined networks people &amp; organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO Role</td>
<td>Doer</td>
<td>Mobiliser</td>
<td>Catalyst</td>
<td>Activist/educator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management Orientation</td>
<td>Logistics management</td>
<td>Project management</td>
<td>Strategic management</td>
<td>Coalescing and energising self-managing networks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development Education</td>
<td>Starving children</td>
<td>Community self-help</td>
<td>Constraining policies and institutions</td>
<td>Spaceship earth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Relief and welfare

Relief and welfare involves direct service delivery to meet an immediate deficiency or shortage experienced by the poor e.g. needs for food, health care or shelter. The assistance relates directly to the individual or family and depends directly on the funds, staff and administrative capability of the assisting organisation. Faith-based organisations are commonly at the forefront of relief and welfare interventions.

The underlying assumption seems to be that with a little short-term assistance people are able to get on their feet again or that stimulating the economy will provide people assisted with the necessary opportunities. With such interventions the micro
and macro reasons for being hungry are seldom considered and explored (Korten1990:116).

Such assistance is essential but is of temporary nature and does not affect the reasons for or factors contributing to poverty. It also develops beneficiary dependence (Korten1990:117).

The role of the organization is primarily that of a doer.

- **Small scale, self reliant local development**

In this case the assisting organisations focus on developing the capacities of the people to satisfy their own needs more effectively through self-reliant local action, often referred to as community development strategies to empower the people to help themselves. The beneficiaries are involved as groups in the decision making and implementation of responses to meet their needs. These efforts are developmental yet fit the size and limited financial and technical capacities of the people. The focus is on groups and collective action in partnership with the organisation (Korten1990:118).

The assumption is that the community has the potential for self advancement but it remains dormant because of the inertia of tradition, isolation, lack of education and proper healthcare. The inertia can be broken through the intervention of an outside agent who assists the community to realize its potentials through education, local organisation, consciousness raising, small loans and the introduction of new simple technologies. The assumption of this approach is that the problem lies solely with the beneficiaries' lack of skills and physical strength. A further assumption is that by developing the economic resource value of the person and the economic system will provide the opportunities for gainful employment. A variation of this view, based on the
teachings of Saul Alinsky, is more militant and includes developing the beneficiaries’ organizing techniques so as to be able to confront local power elites. Another assumption is that the problem exists due to a combination of a lack of skills of the individual beneficiaries and patterns of exploitative relationships at the local level. Access to opportunities is also emphasised. (Korten1990:119-120).

These strategies are developmental, yet regarded as overly simplistic by Korten (1990:120). Local power structures can only be confronted to a limited extent. They are maintained by protective national and international systems against which local groups are relatively powerless. In these strategies the role of the organisation is more that of a mobiliser than an actual doer. To a varying extent these efforts tend to focus on education and human resource development

- **Sustainable systems development**

These strategies are focused beyond the local community and attempt changes in specific policies and institutions at local, national and global levels. Third generation strategies work to change existing systems so that second generations strategies have the necessary links to supportive national systems which tend to be hostile to small scale, self-reliant local development strategies. Here NGOs work with major national organisations to assist them to reorientate their policies and work in ways that strengthen broadly based local control over resources. Sustainable systems development may involve the creation of new institutions of large enough proportions to provide essential local services on a sustained, self-financing basis (Korten1990:120).

The underlying theoretical assumption is that local inertia is sustained by structures that centralise control of resources, prevent essential services from being
available and accessible to the poor and maintain systems of exploitation and corruption. Creating these changes often means working simultaneously to build the capacity of the people to make demands on the system and to build alliances with enlightened powers in support of action that makes the system more responsive to the people. The work of the NGO is catalytic rather that of than an operational service provider (Korten1990:121).

The deficiency of these strategies is that at macro level it requires countless replications in a basically hostile political and institutional context.

- **Peoples' Movements**

These strategies seek to address the deficiency of sustainable systems development and facilitate global people’s movements. They spread ideas- a vision of a better world. Movements are voluntary and consist of continuously shifting networks and coalitions. These movements include women, children’s and worker’s rights movements.

The focus is on the communication of ideas and dissemination of information through mass media to energise voluntary action by people within and outside their formal organisations to support social transformation. This includes mobilizing a critical mass of independent, decentralised initiative in support of a social vision. These would include the Millenium Goals to halve poverty by 2015 and the idea of reducing poverty by writing off the debt of third world countries.
5.2.1.3 Guidelines from poverty alleviation projects in South Africa

Closer to home, Gathiram (2005:129) from Kwa-Zulu Natal argues that although a social developmental approach has been adopted to deal with the problem of poverty in South Africa, implementation has mainly entailed small-scale poverty alleviation projects which have focused generally on financial and technical skills at the expense of social empowerment. Gathiram maintains that focus on financial and technical skills in itself can be disempowering and maintain the status quo, since it is taking place within a neo-liberal macro-economic framework. She advocates for a different approach to poverty alleviation with a focus on creating an empowered, knowledgeable and active society that can challenge poverty and transform society. Existing practices need to be re-examined and the social empowerment component strengthened as it is just as important as economic component. Poverty alleviation projects must be considered and planned within the broader social, political and economic processes taking place. Beneficiaries need to be facilitated to become aware of and understand the world in which they live and participate in decisions on service delivery. People need to be actively involved and socially empowered to wage the war on poverty. Situations of passive acceptance need to be avoided because they actually allow poverty to grow. The author substantiates her argument with a reference to Eade who maintains that this is imperative because civil and political rights tend to correlate broadly with equitable economic arrangements.

Each of the above arguments add to developing a comprehensive framework for critically assessing the possible effect of programs considered for poverty alleviation.
5.2.1.4 Ethical considerations

Interventions are not neutral; they are value laden and have ethical implications. A moral approach to poverty places obligations and claims on society, makes it a duty or virtue to help and leads to involuntary charity and relief based interventions. Relief operations assume that helping the poor is good and desirable and this may sometimes be used to justify dubious policies and fundraising strategies. However a “rights” approach to poverty transforms poverty alleviation to a justice issue and if a social worker is involved it a social worker is a case of promoting social justice. Patel (2005:224) writes that social justice implies the following:

[u]pholding and protecting rights, opportunities, obligations and social benefits equally for all citizens, especially the most disadvantaged. The practice of justice should result in social change.

To consider the ethical implications of interventions at the planning stage as well as at the evaluation stage means to constantly ask questions like the following:

- What difference does the intervention make?
- How does it enhance people’s well being?
- For whose benefit is the intervention?
- In what ways do different stakeholders benefit?
- Do the most disadvantaged benefit most?
- In what ways does the intervention possibly perpetuate the situation or cause other problems?
• How and to whose advantage are different value conflicts resolved?

Based on the theoretical perspective outlined in chapter two, further questions are about the method of intervention; how it is being done:

• In what respects is it people centered and by implication, also participatory in its method?

• While addressing a manifestation of poverty in what ways is it (being developmental) an internally driven process?

• How does it recognise and address the multiplicity of fundamental human needs?

• How does it recognise the cultural context e.g. if day labourers are mostly Africans, how does it consider an African world view?

Because all interventions are value-laden the responsibility of a social worker involved in them should include promoting an awareness of often unexpressed values so that goals and methods are made explicit. Any intervention under consideration should include a critical conscientization about whose values are affected by a particular decision and what effect will it have on all the affected and affecting stakeholders.
5.2.2 EXISTING POLICIES AND PROGRAMS FOR DAY LABOURERS AS GUIDELINES

In this section some known polices and programs relating to day labourers will be described.

5.2.2.1 Worker centres

Valenzuela & Theodore (2005) mentioned that the main interventions in the USA for day labourers are centered around the following:

- Creation of worker centres by municipalities.
- Community organising of street corners.
- National network of day labourers (federation, coalition).
- Legal advocacy.
- Direct action against employers who do not pay, underpay and abuse day labourers.

In the following section more detail will be presented on some of these interventions.
Worker centres represent a comprehensive approach to the day labour market and they have made meaningful contributions to improving conditions in the USA. The essence of this intervention is that:

Worker centers formalise day labour employment by allowing workers to safely search for jobs and encouraging employers to hire labourers from their premises.

(Valenzuela et. al. 2006:23).

Worker centres operate at grassroots as mediating institutions between day labourers and the community, especially employers and others affected by day labourers’ presence. They have increased the transparency of the hiring process and have provided a structure for holding employers accountable for workplace abuses as they are able to monitor and intervene in workplace abuses experienced by day labourers. On the other hand, they can also hold workers accountable, monitor worker quality and provide opportunities for workers to be incorporated into the mainstream economy through placement assistance and skills training. The contributions of worker centres have extended beyond the day labour market to the wider community. In the communities in which day labourers work and live, these centres participate as key stakeholders in the resolution of the neighbourhood tensions and conflicts that may arise as a result of day labourers gathering near residential areas (Valenzuela et. al. 2006:230; CommonDreams 2007).

Day labour worker centres are a relatively recent phenomenon, with most having been established since 2000. In 1996 there were four worker centres in the USA, in 2004 there were 63 in 17 states and in 2006 there were 140 in 31 states in
cities and rural areas (Valenzuela et al 2006:iii, 61; CommonDreams 2007). However, there will always still be workers who stand on their own at different sites and do not make use of the centres.

Worker centres started for various reasons and in various ways. In many different cities and rural areas, day labour worker centres, have been established by community organizations and workers’ rights advocates in attempts to reduce violations in the day labour market and to address day labour workplace abuses. Some have become established in conjunction with the passing of anti-day-labour solicitation ordinances that require workers to vacate open-air hiring sites in favour of workers centres (Hendricks 2004). Knowing that it is unconstitutional to ban soliciting work, the city of Pasedena, California in 2003 approached the day labour situation as a traffic problem and passed an ordinance in response to complaints by neighbourhood residents to ban prospective employers causing traffic problems by stopping suddenly to hire day labourers. Such regulations encouraged the establishment of an organised worker centre (Edwards 2003). Others have been established in response to complaints in efforts to deter the scores of labourers who stand around from soliciting work at informal sites (Abram 2003). Some have started after attempts to make peace between contending factions (employers, workers, merchants, residents, law enforcement, and city officials) and the formation of coalitions of community members. In these cases the objective was for all parties to work together toward solutions that would bring consensus to as many actors as possible in that particular community. Some worker centres developed as a consequence of organisations like Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHILRA) becoming involved in organising the people at an informal hiring site. (Bacon 2005; Valenzuela 2000, Valenzuela 2003:326). This is discussed in more detail in the next section under (3.1.2) “community organising of street corners.”
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Some worker centres have been created through partnerships between community organisations, municipal governments, faith-based organisations and other local stakeholders such as local businesses and labour unions. Usually, one of the community organisations, municipal governments or faith-based organisations assume the responsibilities of a lead partner and operate the centre. Recent statistics indicate that community organisations operate 43 day-labour worker centres (68%), while city government agencies and church groups each operate 10 centres (16% respectively) (Valenzuela et al: 2006:iii, 28; CommonDreams 2007). Official or regulated hiring sites are financially sponsored either by a city or municipality, a community based organization, or a private entity such as a home improvement store.

To establish a worker centre requires a strategy directed at different levels of the community. There has to be coalition-building among local police, city council members, church officials and immigrant rights organisers to eventually open a worker centre. Local police have proved to be instrumental in convincing both employers and day labourers that their exchange needs to be undertaken at an official hiring site. Council members are important as they assist in accessing municipal resources finding ways to bypass zoning ordinances, confronting city bureaucracies, urging merchant donations, leveraging city resources and instigating local and popular support for a hiring centre. Immigrant rights organizations can work closely with day labourers to ensure support or to prod those who might doubt the value of a hiring site. They also serve as voice of day labourers making known the concerns and needs of day labourers to city officials, residents, merchants, and others.

Most day-labour worker centres vary from providing fairly basic day–time accommodation such as a simple covered structure, similar to a large bus shelter, with the addition of a water fountain, a potable toilet, picnic/plastic tables and chairs. Better equipped centres may include staff trained to deal with workplace violations, possibly
telephones, classrooms and parking facilities. These simple provisions are an improvement over informal hiring sites. Many others are located in commercial buildings where they coordinate workers’ rights activities, provide emergency services and sponsor community events. Most day labour worker centres function as full-service community organizations. All operate as hiring halls where employers and day labourers can arrange work for the day (Theodore 2006:419).

In the National day Labour Study Valenzuela et. al. (2006:23) found that most worker centres:

- Provide a defined space for workers to assemble, as well as a job-allocation system (either a lottery, list of available workers, rotating list (Estrella 2004) or some other selection mechanism) that imposes order or a hiring queue on the day labour hiring process.

- Require job seekers and employers to register with centre staff. Some centres provide an ID card (Paltrow 2005).

- Set minimum wage rates.

- Monitor labour standards, employer behaviour and worker quality.

The majority of centres provide a variety of services ranging from legal representation to recover unpaid wages, worker rights education, adult education, English classes and access to health clinics (AFL-CIO) training on occupational health issues (Lee 2003). Lee (2003) points out that any service that is rendered to day labourers at a centre has to contend with the fact that the pool of participants is constantly changing and make allowance for much repetition of services.

Valenzuela et. al. (2006:24) state that there is no best-practice model or strategy for a worker centre. The strategy of worker centres strategy can be adapted to
local conditions and be successfully implemented in central business districts, residential neighbourhoods and suburban locations. The process of establishing a worker centre must take place by bringing together day labourers, employers, merchants, residents, other community stakeholders and the public sector to devise appropriate strategies.

Valenzuela et. al. (2006:24) found that the following are essential for a worker centre to be effective:

- Worker centres should be visible and centrally located near where day labourers gather and employers look for workers. If the worker centres are not situated visibly, day labourers simply do not make use of them and stand on the street where they are visible.

- When worker centres are considered day labourers and employers should be involved.

- As worker centres generally operate on minimal budgets creative cost-sharing should be developed, including public-sector resources, local businesses, private donations and foundation grants to ensure the sustainability of centres.

- Inception of centres should not be punitively enforced.

- Expectations for worker centres should be realistic. To become effective time and resources are need.
Although worker centres offer many advantages over informal hiring sites, not all responses to worker centers have been positive. In the USA in Herndon, Phoenix and Farmingville, Freehold, there have been very negative responses to worker centres with residents complaining about drawing immigrants to the area some of whom inevitably just hang around outside without using the centre. (Valenzuela et. al. 2006:23, Cho 2005; Perez 2004; Peterson 2003; Economist 2003; Branigin 2003).

5.2.2.2 Community organising of street corners

The Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights in Los Angeles (CHIRLA) was formed in 1986

[t]o advance the human and civil rights of immigrants and refugees in Los Angeles, promote harmonious multi ethnic and multi racial human relations and through coalition building, advocacy, community education and organizing, empower immigrants and their allies to build amore just society.

(CHIRLA 2006).

CHIRLA is a non-traditional union in Los Angeles. As a union its purpose has not been collective bargaining but to agree on uniform standards for wages, although individual sites set their own standards- there are now $6, $7 and $8 corners all run by workers themselves. The union has increasingly become day labourers’ voice in debates over ordinances, while it negotiates with the police and sheriffs over law-enforcement and public-relations issues (Bacon 2005).

Bacon (2005) describes in detail how in the early days CHIRLA went about organising day labour street corners. This is included because of the useful guidelines provided in applying a Freirian approach (see chapter 6 section 2.5.2).
CHIRLA was started by Alvarado who fled from El Salvador, in 1989, where he had been trained in the Freirian methods of popular education. After a while in Los Angeles as a day labourer, he started teaching co-workers to read and then held classes at the YMCA. From there he formed CHIRLA and started to organize hiring sites.

CHIRLA still gives literacy classes at all its organized day labour sites, often as a means to organize the site. The Freirian methods are used based on the principles of ‘radical transformation’ based on hope; ‘relevance based on generative themes of what is important for the community; ‘critical dialogue’ of equal participation; ‘problem posing’ through which people search for solutions themselves; learning through continuous ‘reflection on action’ and awareness of personal ‘values’ in education (Hope & Timmel 1995a:16-23). Education is political; it is a process of teaching politics while tackling the alphabet- “teaching the world while teaching the word.” The assumption is that critical reflection is essential for meaningful action. By enhancing political awareness and conscientisation or consciousness-raising people become better able to understand and question these factors that perpetuate their situation (poverty) and powerless (Henderson & Thomas 2002:185). The Freirian method gives ‘voice’ to the day labourers.

CHIRLA views the day labour program as a means to organise and unite the workers so that they can learn to take agency over their own lives. Once they are organised at a hiring site they make their own decisions on how to improve their situations, e.g. decide to learn English to increase their earning power or develop a formal hiring site. The working assumption is that through organising at a local level, workers learn to become good political analysts, grow politically and intellectually, and start to influence others.
Organising a hiring site may take place as follows: One or two organizers from CHIRLA spend time at the hiring site talking to the men to convince them to get organized and form a committee. This may take a few weeks. Henderson and Thomas (2002:111) explain that reasons for getting organized are

[that] before people become organised, group members are often not visionary. They may perceive something is wrong, but often they do not know what they want to do by way of improving the situation or how to go about it. The worker’s task then is to develop in people a capacity for visionary thought, to help them cross what Freire has called ‘the frontier which separates being from being more also.’

The day labourers are motivated by being informed that they are more likely to be able to avoid trouble with authorities, agree on how to do things and be able to find ways of dealing with the fierce competition for jobs.

At one site CHIRLA started organizing the workers as described above. Once a core of workers had formed, the committee voted to organize a new formal site. CHIRLA assisted them to negotiate with a nearby business to donate the use of an old parking lot behind its store, and the city provided some funds for staffing. The committee met with the sheriffs and the surrounding residents to negotiate a set of rules for people seeking work. A stretch of curb was designated as an official hiring site, so contractors would not cause traffic problems as workers gathered around their vehicles. Other rules included a ban on drinking or pestering people who pass by. A final rule was an agreement to insist on a $6 hour minimum wage. CHIRLA also assisted the committee with leaflets to market the site to contractors and personally tried to convince day labourers to use the hiring site.
A site may start with a few very basic facilities: toilets, water, free coffee, plastic chairs, a canvas awning to shelter workers from the sun and negotiations with the authorities that there will be no raids. As the site develops a portable structure used as office space and for classes may be added. Some sites have facilities where labourers may be able to watch TV and play games while waiting. At one of the sites on a larger lot, day labourers had planted rows of cabbages and onions, extending for nearly 100 yards, hugging the fence at the edge of the property.

The following illustrates how the competition for work at a site may be managed: A truck with a young white man in paint-splattered work clothes gets out. Some of the waiting labourers point to a counter under the awning, on which two plastic jars have been placed. In the jar with a yellow plastic lid every worker has placed an orange ticket bearing his name. In the other jar are the names of the workers who speak English. After taking a name from each jar, the contractor asks the site manager about the expected wages. He is told to talk to the workers whose names he has pulled out. After agreeing on 8 dollars an hour the men climb into the back of the truck.

A distinguishing feature of CHIRLA activities is that one of the first steps in the organising process is to set up a soccer team at a hiring site. The view is that in any case the workers play while waiting for work, so soccer is used to facilitate the organising process. CHIRLA assists with organising the matches, encouraging cooperation in this very competitive environment and using the competition to develop co-operation. CHIRLA has developed a soccer league with the teams from the different sites with which they work.

At one of the hiring sites CHIRLA organisers found the beginnings of a band. They helped a group to form a band, which one of the organisers joined. It became the
means of organising the site. The members created their own ‘anthem’ about life as a
day labourer and sang about what they could do if they were organised. “We learn to
live with each other and learn to organise ourselves to the rhythm of our happiness and
sadness, creating a culture of liberation.” They went on to become the “Los Jornaleros
del Notre” band and are used to promote the activities of CHILRA.

CHIRLA has also helped the men from a hiring site set up the first day labour
theatre group. They developed a play “The Curse of the Day Labourers.” The plot grew
out of the experience of men at a site being harassed and was. They play initially a
forum of self-expression. Later the goal was to take the show on the road, to all the
corners and curbs and lots across the L.A. basin where people line up for work. When
they perform they move among the audience asking questions and engaging them as
participants. The assumption is that the play is empowering: “If you can demand your
rights from an employer in a play, then you can do it in real life.”

The key element of CHILRA’s way of assisting day labourers is that they are
given the opportunity to take agency of their lives and that assistance to them is
developed from ‘the bottom up’ and not predetermined as a service offered by the
organisation.

More recently CHIRLA has been involved in uniting immigrant students across
California, working to introduce a bill outlining overtime protection for household
workers and convening people to fight for comprehensive reform (CHIRLA 2006).

5.2.2.3 National Day Labor Organising Network (NDLON)

NDLON is the largest and most structured association of worker centres in the
USA as well as being a day labourer association. It operates as an umbrella
organization for over 40 centres that focus on correcting systemic violations of the rights of day labourers and giving them a public voice (CommonDreams 2007).

NDLON was founded in 2000, as a collaborative between eighteen community-based organisations which organise day labourers in different parts of the country of the USA (This Tuesday 2007).

The mission of the NDLON is to strengthen and expand the work of local day labourer organising groups in order for them to become more effective and strategic in building leadership, advancing low-wage worker and immigrant rights developing successful models for organising immigrant, contingent/temporary workers.

NDLON fosters healthy, safer and more humane environments for day labourers to obtain employment and raise their families. In this sense, NDLON advances the human, labour, and civil rights of day workers throughout the United States (This Tuesday).

5.2.2.4 Men at the Side of the Road (MSR)

Other than efforts of individuals of which I am personally aware, the only known organised intervention in South Africa to assist day labourers is Men at the Side of the Road (MSR).

MSR was established in 2001 as a registered non-profit organisation. It originated when Charles Maisel started speaking to roadside jobseekers in Cape Town in 1999 and began keeping record of their circumstances. The mission of MSR is to inspire and organise unemployed people who stand on the side of the road and to assist them to participate in their own economic development. MSR is well established
Chapter 12. Review and recommendations

in Cape Town and has successfully expanded its services to the cities of Tshwane, Johannesburg, Nelspruit, George and Kimberley. Although all centres are social franchises of the national organisation, they have developed their own characteristics. Each centre has a coordinator and one or more fieldworkers. The fieldworkers visit the sites and recruit men for registration with the Masiphumelelo Unemployment Federation (The Federation).

The activities of MSR include:

- **Job placement** which has evolved as the main function of MSR. This entails finding job opportunities and matching men with the opportunities as well as following up on the success of the placement and satisfaction of the clients. Registration of the men, as well as training and assessment, are instrumental in the job placement process.

- **Skills training and assessment.** A large number of men have been trained in a range of skills in partnership with credible companies and volunteers. At some centres men have also been assessed to confirm their alleged skills. Those who have been trained or assessed have their skills indicated on the card. (Mohlabeng 2005:32).

- **Developing organized hiring sites with basic amenities** (basic shelter, water, sanitation and food facilities) at the places where the men gather waiting for work. This has not yet materialized due to difficulties encountered with local municipalities.

- **The Tools Project** was established and was a successful marketing strategy in some centres. The tools were requested and collected via a
public campaign and then repaired at a central collection and repair workshop. The workshop also served as a training centre where every two weeks a new group of 4-8 unemployed registered men attended the workshop and were trained in repair work, mainly of gardening tools and equipment. If interested, the men were loaned tools to start their own small businesses or do jobs, like painting, gardening or building. (Babich 2005:16).

- **Masiphumelelo Federation.** Originally the intention was to organize the registered men in a federation, like a labour union, through which their interests could be served and their legal rights protected. Presently the men are only registered. The register of unemployed men in each centre provides a data base from which candidates for training and job placements are drawn as opportunities are developed. The men are issued with ID cards with photos as proof of their registration with the Federation, enhancing their employability.

MSR have been instrumental in increasing the visibility, giving voice to and changing people’s perception of the unemployed men looking for jobs from the roadside through a great amount of media exposure which has created awareness of their plight.

### 5.2.2.5 Jimmy Yen’s literacy movement

During World War 1 some Chinese men were taken to France as prisoners of war. Jimmy Yen, working for the YMCA, was sent to France to see what he could do to help them. He very soon realised that their most devastating experience was that of homesickness. There was no way in which these Chinese could keep in touch with their families in China, since neither they, nor their families could read or write. Some
approached him to write letters for them. Soon Yen informed them that he would no longer write letters for them and that those who wanted to continue writing to their people at home must do so themselves. He used the opportunity to start literacy classes which sparked a literacy movement among Chinese peasants. (Hersey in Louw 2002:42).

5.3 Recommendations for action in Tshwane

O'Leary (2005: 272) advises making recommendations rather than producing a hypothetical wish list to conclude a research report. These need to be achievable and recommendations should be incremental. In the light of this, my recommendations only pertain to the first steps of setting in motion a process of action to improve the situation of day labourers at informal hiring sites. These include the following:

5.3.1. Dissemination of research results

Because the research as been conducted in an academic environment and not a practice one a dilemma exists on how to disseminate the results. On the one hand the academic environment lend credibility to the results, but on the other there is no direct access to its use. Nobody is waiting for it, although it has been used by MSR and within the Department of Social Development in the Tshwane municipality. If these research results are to lead to action, their dissemination needs to take place. O'Leary (2005:284 appropriately warns that the results of a PhD thesis are sadly, most poorly disseminated and academic publishing may not contribute much to action on the established real-world problem. The challenge is to go beyond an academic model to inform the concerned community.
Way and means need to be found to disseminate the research results to the Integrated Development Program of local government. (see chapter 7.3.5)

It is an ethical obligation that ways and means have to be found to inform at least some day labourers about how their voices have been heard. Any organisation venturing to work with day labourers could pass on the information and verify whether and how it applies to them.

5.3.2 Practical action

The day labourers' situation, regarding their poverty as manifested in a measure of hunger, lack of overnight shelter, day-time shelter, access to basic amenities at hiring points, education and training, income security, legal protection and physical protection, should be addressed. The question is by whom and how?

5.3.3 Hold a conference/workshop

A possibility is to create a forum to plan the way forward for Tshwane. This could be by means of a conference/workshop. This would require that an individual or an organisation take the initiative of gathering organisations in any way involved and concerned with day labourers to share what they are doing.

5.3.4 Research to identify and organise existing organisations and individual rendering services to day labourers

Research to identify and explore individuals and organisations rendering any form of voluntary services to day labourers may be needed. Once identified, they could develop a forum organise themselves to plan a synergic strategy to offer more
comprehensive and holistic services. Stakeholders who need to be approached are the relevant Departments of the Municipality, the local office of the Department of Social Development, voluntary organisations; NGO’s, faith-based groups, service organisations, existing overnight shelters and individuals.

6 Conclusion

In this chapter a number of suggested socially focused interventions to address the day labour situation were mentioned. This was followed by guidelines to assess possible interventions. These included Korten’s (1990:114-128) strategies of interventions for voluntary organizations, Max-Neef’s (1989:32) range of satisfiers and some questions based on the ethics and values of development and social work. A section in which different interventions from practice which address the day labour situation was included.

The conclusion is: Eno limwe kali tsakana hambo an Ovambo idiom from Namibia that can literally be translated as “one tree is not enough to build a fence” with the meaning that “one person or one way is not enough to alleviate poverty in a country” (Stewart 2005:143). Any effort planned to respond to the situation of day labourers standing at informal hiring sites needs a well considered comprehensive approach which takes into consideration Max-Neef’s and Korten’s guidelines.
WORKER CENTRE IN LOS ANGELES

1. Worker centre indicating availability of workers

2. Toilets at worker centre
3. Temporary structure used as worker centre

4. Recreational activities at worker centre
MEN AT THE SIDE OF THE ROAD (MSR)

5. Tools collection

6. Training and assessment

7. Masiphumelele Unemployment Federation ID card
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Quesada J. 1999. From Central American warriors to San Francisco Latino day laborers. Suffering and exhaustion in a transnational context. Transforming Anthropology. 8 (1&2),162-185.


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Xipu L. 2003 Personal communication


Appendix 1

QUESTIONNAIRE:

DAY LABOURER SURVEY IN PRETORIA
DAY LABOURER SURVEY IN PRETORIA, 2004

UNISA

SURVEY DETAILS

Interviewer: Complete the following questions after the interview.

Site ID ........... Interviewer ID ...........
Date ........... Starting time ...........

How many people at the hiring site when survey started? ........

Length of interview (118) ........

Respondent: Male Female

In general what was the respondent's attitude toward the interview? (121)

Friendly and interested
Co-operative but not particularly interested
Evasive about some questions
Impatient and restless
Hostile
Other: specify:

Was the whole questionnaire completed? Yes No

If no, provide reason:

(Interviewer: Before commencing with the questions find out if the person is waiting to be picked up or hired. Do not continue if he is waiting to be picked up for a previously arranged job.

SECTION A: HIRING SITE

Interviewer: Explain that the first set of questions is about the hiring site.

1 Is this the only hiring site where you stand?

Yes  ☐
No   ☑

1
2. What is the main reason why you came to this site? Mark only one answer. (38)

   ① The site is close to my house
   ② My friends come here
   ③ More jobs here
   ④ Better pay here
   ⑤ Less harassment here (police, business owners, residents)
   ⑥ I have connections to employers here
   ⑦ This is the only site I know
   ⑧ Other

Specify........................

3. How did you get information on about possible hiring sites? (27)

   ① From relatives
   ② From friends
   ③ From my church
   ④ I found out myself. I saw it.
   ⑤ Through other day labourers
   ⑥ Other

Specify............

4. Have you stood at other sites in Tshwane?

   ① Yes
   ② No

If yes specify:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Suburb/area</th>
<th>Street</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. What other hiring sites do you know about?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Suburb/area</th>
<th>Street</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. At what time in the morning do you arrive at this hiring site?  
   Specify..........................  

7. At what time do employers start hiring day labourers at this hiring site?  
   Specify..........................  

8. If you are hired here, and you do not work in this area in what area do you work?  
   Specify..........................  

9. What time do you leave this site if you are not employed that day?  
   Specify..........................  

10. When you realize that you may not be employed that day, what do you do the rest of the day?  
    Specify..........................  

SECTION B: PERSONAL BACKGROUND

Interviewer: Explain that this next set of questions is about your own background.

11. In which country were you born? (2)  
    ① South Africa,  ⑥ Mocambique,  
    ② Zimbabwe,  ⑦ Botswana,  
    ③ Namibia,  ⑧ Lesotho,  
    ④ Swaziland.  ⑨ Other: Specify  
    ⑤ Unknown  

12. If you came from outside Tshwane to work here, which province did you come from?  
    ① Gauteng  ⑥ North West  
    ② Mpumalanga  ⑦ Free State  
    ③ Kwa Zulu-Natal  ⑧ Northern Cape  
    ④ Eastern Cape  ⑨ Western Cape  
    ⑤ Limpopo  form outside South Africa  

13. What is your home language?  
    ① English  ⑦ Afrikaans,  
    ② Sesotho,  ⑧ Setswana,  
    ③ Sepedi,  ⑨ Isixhosa,  
    ④ Isizulu,  ⑩ Tshivenda,  
    ⑤ Isindebele,  ⑪ Siswati  
    ⑥ Xhitsonga  ⑫ Other: Specify  


14. How old are you? (1)
   ① (under 20)
   ② (21-25)
   ③ (26-30)
   ④ (31-35)
   ⑤ (36-40)
   ⑥ (41-45)
   ⑦ (46-50)
   ⑧ (51-55)
   ⑨ (56-60)
   ⑩ (over 60)
   ⑪ Refused to answer

15. What is your present marital status? (5)
   ① Never married
   ② Separated
   ③ Married
   ④ Customary marriage
   ⑤ Widowed
   ⑥ Divorced
   ⑦ Living with a partner

16. How many children do you have? (6)

17. How many people do you help to support with your income?

18. How often do you go home to your family?
   ① Daily
   ② Weekly
   ③ Monthly
   ④ 4 times a year
   ⑤ Twice a year
   ⑥ Once a year
   ⑦ Other: specify..........................
   ⑧ Refused to answer

19. Where do you sleep?
   ① Construction site
   ② Backyard room
   ③ Veld/bushes
   ④ At home
   ⑤ On the street
   ⑥ Shack
   ⑦ Hostel
   ⑧ Other: specify..........................
20. Have you experienced the following types of abuses where you sleep? (Interviewer: Mark only one category for each item)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Never (1)</th>
<th>1-5 Times (2)</th>
<th>more than 5 times (3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Insulted or harassed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threatened</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assaulted</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have called the police on you</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robbed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other: Specify</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

21. How much do you pay each month for your shelter where you sleep? (16)

- 1. Less than R50
- 2. R50-R99
- 3. R100-R199
- 4. R200-R299
- 5. More than R300

22. Where and how do you keep your personal possessions safe?

23. The next question is about the food you have eaten in the last 30 days? (17)

- 1. We/I had enough of the kinds of food I want to eat
- 2. We/I had enough but not always the kinds of food I want
- 3. We/I sometimes do not have enough to eat
- 4. Refused to answer

24. What is the highest standard or grade you passed? Indicate standard or grade:

Standard/Grade .............

25. Why did you leave school?

Specify.........................

26. What other formal skills training did you have?

Specify.........................
27. How well can you
Understand English
① None
② Little
③ Manage
④ Well
☐ 41

Speak English
① None
② Little
③ Manage
④ Well
☐ 42

28. How well can you
Understand Afrikaans:
① None
② Little
③ Manage
④ Well
☐ 43

Speak Afrikaans:
① None
② Little
③ Manage
④ Well
☐ 44

SECTION C: EMPLOYMENT AND EMPLOYMENT SEEKING HISTORY

Interviewer: Explain that the next set of questions are about your past work experience.

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

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

DAY 1:
Description of job:
How many hours did you work?
How much were you paid?

DAY 2:
Description of job:
How many hours did you work?
How much were you paid?
DAY 3:
Description of job
How many hours did you work?
How much were you paid?

DAY 4
Description of job
How many hours did you work?
How much were you paid?

DAY 5:
Description of job
How many hours did you work?
How much were you paid?

DAY 6
Description of job
How many hours did you work?
How much were you paid?

DAY 7:
Description of job
How many hours did you work?
How much were you paid?

30. How many days did you stand and wait for work as day labour during the last week?
1  2  3  4  5  6  7  
☐  45

31. What kind of jobs have you had as a day labourer?

Interviewer: Do not read the list. Use the list to mark “yes” for those jobs that are mentioned. (47)

☐ Yes: Gardening
☐ Yes: Digging/ shovelling
☐ Yes: Loading and unloading
☐ Yes: Construction (demolition/cleanup)
☐ Yes: Bricklaying/Drywall
☐ Yes: Roofing
☐ Yes: Carpentry
☐ Yes: Painting
☐ Yes: Plumbing
32. Have you ever had a permanent job? (33).
   1) Yes  
   2) No
   3) Specify

33. How long did you have the permanent job?
   Months ............  Years .................

34. What was your last permanent job?
   Job title:

35. Why did you leave the permanent job? Interviewer: Only mark one.
   1) Laid off
   2) Fired
   3) Quit
   4) Found a better job
   5) Wage too low
   6) Other
      Specify .................
   7) Refused to answer

36. Are you currently looking for a regular job? (38)
   1) Yes
   2) No

37. Do you prefer piece jobs to full time employment?
   1) Yes
   2) No
38. If yes, why? 

39. Presently, do you have another (regular) job, other than looking for waiting for a piece job?
   ① Yes
   ② No

40. How many days did you work at this regular job last week? (37)

41. What skills, abilities and experience do you have that enable you to get piece jobs?

42. What type of training would improve your opportunities to get more piece jobs or regular work?

43. Have you ever missed a job opportunity due to lack of tools to do the job?
   ① Yes
   ② No

44. What is the minimum wage per day that you are prepared to work for?
   R ........

45. What is the lowest wage you have been paid?
   R ........

46. Approximately, how much did you earn in wages last month?
   R ........... (Round to the nearest Rand)

47. During a good month of work, how much do you earn as a day labourer?
   R......... (Round to the nearest Rand). (53)

48. During a month of bad work, on average how much are your earnings?
   R ........... (Round to the nearest rand.) (53)

49. Do you get hired by the same employers repeatedly (more than three times). (57)
   ① YES
   ② NO
SECTION D: ABUSE

Interviewer: Explain that the next set of questions is about abuse you may have been experienced.

49. How often have you experienced the following types of abuses from employers as a day labourer during 2004? (Interviewer: Mark only one category per item) (85)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>1-5 Times</th>
<th>6-10 Times</th>
<th>More than 11 Times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non payment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay less than agreed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abandoned at work site</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No food water or breaks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assault</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insulted or threatened</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worked more hours than agreed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robbery</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other: Specify</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

49. How often have you experienced the following types of abuses by people associated with businesses near the sites during the last two months? (Interviewer: Mark only one category per item) (86)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>1-5 Times</th>
<th>6-10 Times</th>
<th>More than 11 Times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Insulted or harassed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threats</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assault</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Were refused services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have called the police on you</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robbery</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other: Specify</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
52. Have you ever experienced abuse by police or metro police?
   □ Yes □ No

53. If yes, how often have you experienced the following types of abuses from the police
   (or Metropolitan police) as a day labourer during 2004? (Interviewer: Mark only one
category per item) (87)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>1-5 Times</th>
<th>6-10 Times</th>
<th>More than 11 Times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Insulted or harassed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arrested</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threatened</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confiscated papers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forced to leave the site</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asked about immigration status</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photographed/videotaped</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assaulted</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robbed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Specify</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

54. Have you ever experienced abuse by security guards?
   □ Yes □ No

55. If yes, how often have you experienced the following types of abuses from security
   guards as a day labourer during 2004? (Interviewer: Mark only one category per
   item) (88)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>1-5 Times</th>
<th>6-10 Times</th>
<th>More than 11 Times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Insulted or harassed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robbery</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have called the police on you</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
56. During 2004 as a day labourer have you, been the victim of, or involved with any of the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>①</td>
<td>②</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insult or harassment</td>
<td>121</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threats</td>
<td>122</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assault</td>
<td>123</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have called the police on you</td>
<td>124</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robbery</td>
<td>125</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theft</td>
<td>126</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beatings/fighting</td>
<td>127</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sexual abuse/harassment</td>
<td>128</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug exchange solicitation</td>
<td>129</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime solicitation</td>
<td>130</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other: Specify</td>
<td>131</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

57. In the past year, have you observed day labourers participate in the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>① Yes</th>
<th>② No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>132</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insult or harassment</td>
<td>①</td>
<td>②</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threats</td>
<td>①</td>
<td>②</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>133</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theft</td>
<td>①</td>
<td>②</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>134</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assault</td>
<td>①</td>
<td>②</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>135</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robbery</td>
<td>①</td>
<td>②</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>136</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beatings/fighting</td>
<td>①</td>
<td>②</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>137</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual abuse/harassment</td>
<td>①</td>
<td>②</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>138</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug exchange solicitation</td>
<td>①</td>
<td>②</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>139</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Crime</td>
<td>①</td>
<td>②</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>140</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
58. Do you know of a place or person to whom you can report work place and other abuses? (89)
   ① Yes  ② No.  □ 141

59. If yes, who? ............. □ 142

SECTION E: WORK RELATED INJURIES

Interviewer: Explain that you will now ask questions about any job injuries that he may have had while working as a day labourer.

60. As a day labourer, have you EVER suffered a work related injury? (61)
   ① Yes ..... Continue □ 143
   ② No ..... Skip to Q62

61. Did you get the medical care you needed for any of the injuries? (63)
   ① Always .... Skip to Q62 □
   ② Sometimes
   ③ Never

62. Why did you not get the medical care you needed? (64)
   ① Could not pay for it
   ② Fear of doctors/treatment
   ③ Did not know where to go
   ④ Was denied medical treatment
   ⑤ No medical aid/insurance
   ⑥ Medical aid would not approve care
   ⑦ Language barriers
   ⑧ Transportation problem
   ⑨ Usual place in area no longer available
   ⑩ Other: Specify □ □ 145 – 146

63. When you received medical attention for injuries, who paid for the treatment? (66)

   If family/friends  ① Yes ② No □ 147
   Employer/company  ① Yes ② No □ 148
   Public/government insurance  ① Yes ② No □ 149
   Private insurance  ① Yes ② No  □ 150
   Workers compensation insurance  ① Yes ② No □ 151
   Did not pay  ① Yes ② No □ 152
64. In the past year, how many days have you missed as a result of work related injuries? (68) □□ 153 - 154

SECTION F: HEALTH STATUS AND ACCESS

Interviewer: Explain that the next set of questions are about health and access to health care.

65. In general, would you say that your health is? (71)
   ① Excellent □
   ② Very good □
   ③ Good □
   ④ Fair □
   ⑤ Poor □
   ⑥ Don’t know/ nor sure □
   ⑦ Answer refused □ 155

66. Do you suffer from any serious medical condition?
   ① Yes □ 156
   ② No □

67. If yes, specify the medical condition. Interviewer: Do not read the list. Use the list to indicate the mentioned medical condition. (72)
   Diabetes □
   Hypertension Yes □ No □ 157
   Arthritis Yes □ No □ 158
   Heart disease Yes □ No □ 159
   Asthma Yes □ No □ 160
   Cancer Yes □ No □ 161
   An ulcer Yes □ No □ 162
   Hernia Yes □ No □ 163
   Kidney problems Yes □ No □ 164
   Any kind of liver condition Yes □ No □ 165
   Tuberculosis Yes □ No □ 166
   Sexually transmitted infections: such as HIV/AIDS, Chlamydia, genital herpes, gonorrhea, syphilis
   Other □ 168
   Answer refused □ 169

14
68. Should you become ill and need medical attention where would you go for medical help?
   ① Doctor’s surgery
   ② Government Hospital/ clinic
   ③ Hospital emergency room or urgent care
   ④ Alternative health care providers (sangoma etc)
   ⑤ Other
   Specify.............

69. During the last 12 months, was there a time you did not get any medical care you felt you needed? (78)
   ① Yes  ② No  ③ Don’t know /not sure

70. If yes, for what? .................

SECTION G: RELATIONSHIPS, SOCIAL NETWORKS, ASSOCIATIONAL ACTIVITY, ORGANIZATIONAL ACTIVITY

Interviewer: Explain that the following questions are about social relationships and other activities.

71. Are you part of a group of day labourers that support one another?
   ① Yes  ② No

72. If yes, why have you become a group? In what ways are you similar?
   ① Come from the same place
   ② Speak the same language,
   ③ Arrived at the same time
   ④ Related
   ⑤ Age
   ⑥ Faith
   ⑦ Sport interest
   ⑧ Other

73. Do you rely on other day labourers for assistance with: (95)
   ① Yes  ② No
   Finding work?

   ① Yes  ② No
   Transport/getting lifts?

   ① Yes  ② No
   Loans?

   ① Yes  ② No
   Favours?

   ① Yes  ② No
   Food?

   ① Yes  ② No
   Shelter to sleep/housing?

   ① Yes  ② No
   Social life?
74. Do you belong to or go to religious gatherings, e.g. church (77)
   ① Yes
   ② No

   In the past year, how often did you attend the church (mark only one)
   Times per week
   Times per month
   Times per year

Do you participate in or go to a sports club/organisation?
   ① Yes
   ② No

   In the past year, how often did you attend a sports club/organisation?
   Times per week
   Times per month
   Times per year

Do you belong to or go to a burial society
   ① Yes
   ② No

   In the past year, how often did you attend the burial society meeting?
   Times per week
   Times per month
   Times per year

Do you belong to or participate in any other organization?
   ① Yes
   ② No

   Specify what organization..................

   In the past year, how often did you attend other organisation visit
   Times per week
   Times per month
   Times per year

75. Would you use a formal day labour centre or hiring hall? (100)
   ① Yes
   ② No
76. If not, why not? (101)
   ① Don't know about worker center
   ② Don't like rules at worker center
   ③ Have better job opportunities at corner/ street
   ④ Other
   Specify  □
   191

77. Would you belong to a labour union that represents day labourers? (102)
   ① Yes
   ② No  □
   192

78. How many times within the past 12 months did you send/take money home? (106)
   Specify: ........................
   □□
   193 – 194

79. How much in total did you send/take back in the last 12 months? (If unsure, estimate, to the nearest Rand)(107). R ............
   □□
   195 - 196

80. How do you send the money home?
   ① Post
   ② Bank
   ③ Friends
   ④ Relatives
   ⑤ Personally
   ⑥ Other  □
   197

81. To whom was the money sent/given? (108)
   ① Family: parents wife children
   ② Other relatives
   ③ Friends
   ④ Bank
   ⑤ Other organisational projects
   ⑥ Other: Specify  □
   198

82. How does the money you send back get used?(109)
   ① Yes  ② No  Paying off debt
   □
   199
   ① Yes  ② No  Food
   □
   200
   ① Yes  ② No  Clothing
   □
   201
   ① Yes  ② No  Housing
   □
   202
83. Do you have a bank account? (111)
   ☐ Yes  ☐ No

84. What amount of money do you need to go to your home or family? This includes transport and contributions etc. R .................

85. Is there anything else that we didn’t ask about that concerns you or that you think we should have asked you about? (117)

Interviewer: Thank the respondent for his participation.
SECTION H:

Interviewer: Make notes on any other relevant information shared by the person, e.g.

Concerns about his existence as a day labourer. What is he worried about?

How has working as a day labourer affected relationships with family?

How has working as a day labourer affected how he thinks about the future?

What past experience have equipped him to deal with life as a day labourer?

What skills has he developed that enable him to meet his basic daily (existence) needs? What survival skills has he developed?

What are the things that still make him hopeful or positive.

This survey is being conducted by department of Social Work at UNISA
For more information: Tel Mrs Louw 4296470
**Appendix 2**

**DAILY SITE CONTROL SHEET FOR DAY LABOUR SURVEY IN PRETORIA, 2004**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Site no:</th>
<th>Name of interviewer:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Count upon arrival</td>
<td>Time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count after completion of first questionnaire</td>
<td>Time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count after completion of second questionnaire</td>
<td>Time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count after completion of third questionnaire</td>
<td>Time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count after completion fourth questionnaire</td>
<td>Time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count after completion of fifth questionnaire</td>
<td>Time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count after completion of sixth questionnaire</td>
<td>Time</td>
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</table>

**Other counts:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Count:</th>
<th>Time:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Count:</td>
<td>Time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Time of departure:**
Appendix 3

Page one:

Study of day labour in Tshwane

We need your help with this study about day labour in Tshwane.

We want to learn from you about your life and experiences as a day labourer. This survey is important because it will provide information that can be used to create programs and policies to improve the lives of workers like yourself.

Your participation is completely voluntary. You may choose to answer any question or terminate the interview when you like. There will be no way to connect you to the survey and we will not ask you for your name or address of where you live.

The study is conducted by the Department of Social Work at the University of South Africa (UNISA)

Page two:

What are the purposes of this study?

To identify locations where day labourers look for employment

To learn about the conditions of day labourers.

To learn about how work is obtained

To learn about relations with day labourers

Thank you helping in our efforts
CONSENT FORM

Consent for the participation in the research of H Louw on Day labourers in Tshwane.

I understand what the research is about and grant permission that my contributions be recorded and used in reports and publications that may arise from the research.

Signature:                                      Date:

Name:

Address or other means of contact.
Appendix 5

TSHWANE DAY LABOUR STUDY: FEEDBACK BY FIELDWORKERS

Name: 
Sites visited: 

1. How have you experienced participating in the research?

2. What was good? (Think about the training, preparation, arrangements etc.)

3. What was not so good (Think about the training, preparation, arrangements etc.)

4. What have been the benefits of the research for you?

5. What have you learnt about research?

6. Suggestions that could have made the research easier or more beneficial for you?

7. Other suggestions that could improve similar future research.

8. Other comments.