

Advancing our understanding of urban informality using a multi- actor perspective: The case of Operation Clean Sweep (2013), Johannesburg.

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A research report submitted to the Faculty of Engineering and Built Environment, School of Architecture and Planning, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Science in Development Planning.

Declaration

I declare that this research report is my own unaided work. It is submitted for the degree of Master of Science in Development Planning to the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination at any other university.

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Abstract

Perspectives on urban informality vary, with some being concerned with the ways in which unserved members of the urban population meet their need for housing or an income, whilst others view it as a failure to plan. However, for the purpose of this research, urban informality was unpacked by considering the political and social aspects of it- to reveal the various actors involved in it and their roles and interests. To achieve this, various sources of literature were consulted, and an analysis of urban informality- in the form informal street trading was conducted using the political and social aspects as a lens. What emanated from this endeavour is a set of actors involved in informal street trading, grouped according to their characteristics. The way they relate to one another- which is fluid based on their interests, was also highlighted. This information on the actors involved in informal street trading was translated into a conceptual framework.

Operation Clean Sweep- which is a policy approach employed by the City of Johannesburg in 2013 to manage informal street trading, was used as a case study. To paint a picture of the operation, written accounts on it were considered, which included journal articles, papers from reputable research institutions and journalistic reports. These allowed for the events prior, during and after the operation to be mapped. The accuracy of the information gathered on the operation was corroborated using data triangulation. Once a consistent storyline of the operation had been established, the social and political aspects of urban informality were used as a lens to identify the different actors involved in it. Finally, the conceptual framework developed to map the actors involved in informal street trading was augmented, to include a similar set of actors identified in Operation Clean Sweep. These two sets of actors emanating from literature and those involved in Operation Clean Sweep were juxtaposed and their similarities and differences were noted.

The outcomes of the research revealed the prevalence of a multiplicity of actors involved in informal street trading, as captured in literature on informal street trading- and confirmed through an analysis of Operation Clean Sweep. Furthermore, it becomes evident that this myriad of actors have a common interest- despite their heterogeneity and the different roles they assume, which is gaining access to limited prime urban space. The fluid nature of their relationships was also revealed. The outcomes emanating from the study highlight the value of understanding the multifaceted nature of urban informality and the limitations of applying policy approaches in a linear fashion.

Key words: urban informality, informal street trading, actors, interests, urban space

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Acronyms

CID- City Improvement District

CJP- Central Johannesburg Partnership

COJ- City of Johannesburg

CUBES- Centre for urbanism and the Built Environment Studies

DED- Department of Economic Development

GDED- Gauteng Department of Economic Development

JDA- Johannesburg Development Agency

JPC- Johannesburg Property Company

JMPD- Johannesburg Metropolitan Police Department

MMC- Member of the Mayoral Committee

MEC- Member of the Executive Council

QLFS- Quarterly Labour Force Survey

SAITF- South African Informal Trading Forum

SANTRA- South African National Retail Alliance

SERI- Socio- Economic Rights Institute of South Africa

SESE- Survey of Employers and the Self- Employed

WIEGO- Women in Informal Employment: Globalising and Organising

Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter will be introducing the notion of urban informality, represented in the form of informal street trading in the inner-city of Johannesburg and the importance of considering the social and political aspects of it in order to reveal the multiple actors involved and their roles and interests. It will then move on to discuss the City of Johannesburg's attempt at managing informal street trading, in the form of Operation Clean Sweep and end off with an overview of the rationale for the research, the main research question and sub-questions and methods.

1.1. Perspectives on urban informality

There are different ways of defining urban informality and each advances our understanding of it. It can be presented as being concerned with the housing or economic sector, serving as a means of either a livelihood or attainment of commodities or as an outcome concerning a legal status (Banks, Lombard and Mitlin, 2020). Banks et al., 2020). However, for the purpose of this research focus is on the multiplicity of actors involved in urban informality- particularly informal street trading, and the roles they assume and the interests they pursue. To achieve this, the political and social aspects of urban informality- which Banks et al. (2020) highlight as key in revealing the prevalence of the actors involved beyond the poor, were considered. These aspects of urban informality were used to analyse Operation Clean Sweep- which is the City of Johannesburg's policy response to managing informal street trading. The outcomes of this analysis have proven to be useful in shifting the conceptualisation of urban informality beyond an association with the poor and marginalised, to include other actors who engage in it for reasons other than survival. Additionally, they have illuminated the nature of the relationships between the different actors- which is fluid in nature and highlighted the continuum between informal and formal activities.

The choice to focus on informal street trading- as opposed to any other informal sector, is because it is a phenomenon that characterises cities in South Africa and serves as a means of livelihood amidst high levels of unemployment in the country (Broadway, 2017). Willemse (2011) sees informal street trading serving two benefits, one being that it contributes towards job creation and another is that it serves as an income generating activity. Arias (2019) emphasises the contribution that street trading makes to the South African economy by highlighting the R51.7 billion expenditure in the informal economy recorded in 2004. Furthermore, Fourie and Skinner (2018) indicate that informal businesses provide a means of a livelihood and income to more than 2.5 million workers and business owners. Lastly, Peimani and Kamalipour (2022) demonstrate the importance of understanding street trading by drawing on links that it has with the Sustainable Development Goals concerned with poverty alleviation and economic prosperity- to mention a few. The contribution that informal street trading makes and the value of advancing our understanding of it can therefore not be denied. Given the contribution that informal street trading makes to the economy and

poverty alleviation, Modiba (2022) highlights the importance of finding approaches to managing this activity in a manner that recognises its value. Du Plessis, Ngcobo and Fuo (2022) further add that the establishment of a relationship of mutual understanding between the state and street traders, would assist in promoting the local economy.

Lastly, Operation Clean Sweep was used as a case study because it is an event that negatively impacted informal street traders. Applying a social and political lens to understanding the actors involved in the operation was useful in illuminating the different layers of informal street trading and the considerations that policy must make to ensure relevant solutions.

1.2. Background

The City of Johannesburg embarked on a Mayoral campaign referred to as Operation Clean Sweep in 2013, which was intended to be a crackdown on illegal informal street trading in the inner- city of Johannesburg (Pieterse, 2017). This operation took place on the back of several plans and policy documents concerned with inner- city regeneration efforts, considered as necessary to address crime and grime- and create a world class city (SERI, 2015). Examples of such plans include the 2007 Inner City Regeneration Charter, which called for urban renewal and regeneration and associated unmanaged informal street trading with littering (*ibid*); and the Inner- City Management strategy, which was concerned with removing informal street trading taking place in areas identified as mayoral priority areas (Arias, 2019). Operation Clean Sweep set out to remove stalls in the inner city, that were in violation of municipal by- laws and prior to its execution, the City held discussions with informal street trader organisations and agreed that registered street traders would not be affected (Social Law Project, 2014). However, all street traders were removed irrespective of their operating status (*ibid*), which brings the legal grounds of the operation and the true intentions behind its implementation- into question. Approximately 6000 traders were removed from where they were operating, and their goods were confiscated (*ibid*). 2000 of these traders were affiliated with street trading organisations and were operating legally (*ibid*). The effects of the operation were felt by both street traders, who lost their ability to generate an income and formal businesses that benefited from the foot traffic generated by the informal street traders (Arias, 2019).

1.3. Problem statement

Predominant perspectives on urban informality are concerned with the way the marginalised devise ways to meet their needs, which include- but are not limited to employment and housing. Additionally, a dichotomy is often drawn between the informal and formal ways of meeting these needs. The heterogeneity of the actors involved in informal activities, the roles they assume and their interests is not always considered. This results in a linear application of policy responses aimed at managing informal activities, that does not recognise the different ways the actors involved will be impacted. Additionally, the ways the actors interact with each other is not recognised and results in a lost opportunity to capitalise on the prevalence of symbiotic relationships presented in the form of a continuum between informal

and formal activities. A link that Rogan and Skinner (2019) believe is worth getting a deeper understanding of, to aid the development of more refined policy approaches. The implementation of Operation Clean Sweep by the City of Johannesburg bears testament to this, as it resulted in a strained relationship between informal street traders and the City- as the former lost the ability to generate an income. Furthermore, the linkages between informal street traders and formal businesses were negatively impacted, resulting in a loss of income for both. Applying the political and social aspects of urban informality to the case of Operation Clean Sweep is therefore useful in revealing the multifaceted nature of urban informality and the way the actors involved were impacted differently by the policy response employed.

1.4. Rationale

This research is not intended to examine the informal street trading policy for the City of Johannesburg (CoJ). Rather, it sets out to assess the practice of informal street trading and the attempt by the CoJ to manage it through Operation Clean Sweep, which is a policy response implemented to address informal street trading in the inner- city of Johannesburg. The myriad of actors involved in informal street trading- either in pursuit of a livelihood or for other purposes including managing it, and their roles and interests are identified using the political and social aspects of urban informality as a lens (Banks et al., 2020). This approach to analysing informal street trading, using the case of Operation Clean Sweep, has been useful in highlighting the multifaceted nature of this activity, presented in the form of a multiplicity of actors assuming different roles and interests. It becomes clear in the research findings that the actors identified are impacted differently by the operation and this highlights the risk of simple conceptualisations of informal street trading, which result in the development and application of linear and one- size approaches towards managing it. A sentiment shared by Kamalipour and Peimani (2019), who state that the built environment must be influenced by an in- depth understanding of how street trading manifests in public space; in the form the actors involved in informal street trading.

1.5. Main research question

Who are the various actors involved in Operation Clean Sweep and how were they impacted by the operation- based on the roles that they assumed and their interests?

1.6. Research sub- questions

- What were the objectives of Operation Clean Sweep, how was it implemented and what were the outcomes?
- Who are the various actors that were impacted by the implementation of Operation Clean Sweep, and what were their roles and interests?
- How do the actors involved in Operation Clean Sweep compare to those involved in urban informality- as identified through literature?

- What key insights emerge from considering the actors involved in Operation Clean Sweep and their roles and interests, and how do these contribute to the understanding of urban informality and the management thereof?

1.7. Methods

a. Establishing an understanding of informal street trading

For this research, the literature that has been considered is that of urban informality in the global South, as it is more relevant to the South African context and thus the City of Johannesburg. The research method used for the study entailed a review of academic literature on 'urban informality' to obtain a comprehensive and consolidated perspective on it, particularly as it relates to the actors involved in informal street trading and their roles and interests. In addition, the review assisted in establishing a base on current perspectives held on urban informality and the ways in which considering the actors involved in informal street trading will advance the understanding of the concept. Most of the sources used are academic journals on urban informality and informal street trading specifically, spanning from the early 2000s all the way through to 2020. Considering material within this timeframe was useful in providing an early conceptualisation of informality and what it has come to mean to date.

The social and political aspects of urban informality were used as a lens to analyse and map the actors involved in informal street trading. The outcomes that emanated from this analysis and mapping revealed the multi-faceted and heterogeneous nature of urban informality-presented in the form of informal street trading, and the various actors involved and the fluidity of their relationships-based on the interests they are pursuing. This information was translated into a conceptual framework which was later used as a tool for analysis.

b. Painting a picture of Operation Clean Sweep

As it relates to Operation Clean Sweep, academic literature and published reports from credible research institutions- providing information on the operation, its objectives and envisaged outcomes were analysed. Journalistic accounts of the operation were also consulted. Due to the secondary nature of some of the information on Operation Clean Sweep, data triangulation was applied to compare the different accounts on the operation, to ensure consistency and validity across the different sources (Noble and Heale, 2019). It must be highlighted that some of the detailed aspects of the operation could not be included in the research as they were either not adequately explained or did not consistently feature across the sources used.

c. Using the conceptual framework as a tool for analysis

The conceptual framework, which maps the actors involved in informal street trading and their interests- as per literature, was further enhanced with the findings emanating from an analysis of the actors involved in informal street trading in the inner-city of Johannesburg

and Operation Clean Sweep. This juxtaposition between the two sets of actors revealed the multiplicity of actors involved in informal street trading and how they relate to one another based on their interests. It further assisted in drawing similarities and differences between them.

d. Ensuring representation

To ensure that the voices of less powerful or marginalised actors- such as informal street traders, are represented in the study, documented accounts on Operation Clean Sweep by research entities such as the Centre for Urbanism and the Built Environment Studies (CUBES), Socio-Economic Rights Institute of South Africa (SERI) and Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO) were used. These institutions have been approached by informal street traders and their organisations to assist with research efforts or legal representation, and their publications have been valuable in providing an account of the experiences of informal street traders in the inner city of Johannesburg. Additionally, a newspaper article, reporting on the operation was used to provide a journalistic account of the operation. It captured the mood following the implementation of the operation and featured interviews from those impacted by it.

e. Reasons for not conducting interviews

The method adopted to conducting the research was concerned with reviewing a wide array of written sources. The intention was not to conduct interviews, but to rather collate information from diverse sources, especially as it relates to painting a picture of Operation Clean Sweep, before and after its implementation. The sources used include academic accounts of the operation, research endeavours on the operation by research institutions- featuring interviews from the street traders impacted; and journalistic accounts- capturing the aftermath of the operation and the general mood following its execution. Data triangulation was then used to establish consistency across the sources. The review of the various sources provided a strong base of the operation and the actor analysis was then applied. Although it was not within the scope of this research, conducting interviews with the actors involved in the operation is an apt point of departure for future research endeavours, as this would add texture to the research.

1.8. New Informal Trader Policy for the City of Johannesburg

According to an undated media statement issued on the City of Johannesburg's website, an update to the Joburg Informal Trader Policy by the Department of Economic Development is underway, however it is not clear when it commenced (www.joburg.org.za). It is also mentioned that workshops with trader organisations and other relevant stakeholders started in March and would continue up until June 2021 (*ibid*). A separate CoJ webpage provides a notice dated 18 June 2021, which confirms that an online review session on the draft informal trader policy was held with stakeholders of the City of Johannesburg on the said date (www.joburg.org.za). Furthermore, it mentions that the public was given 30 days to provide

inputs on the draft informal trader policy, which were due on the 30th of June 2021 (*ibid*). Due to the current draft status of the latest Informal Trader Policy and iterations that will ensue following public consultations, the policy could not feature in the present research.

The final updated Informal Trader Policy would have been useful to include in the research in order to assess the way informal street trading is understood as it relates to the multiplicity of the actors involved in it, its relationship to the formal sector and whether previously held aspirations of transforming the City of Johannesburg into a world class city- which come with restrictions on where informal trading can take place, are still held. These insights would have painted a picture of what has informed the new informal trader policy and the extent to which the outcomes of this study can inform it, especially as it relates to the multiplicity of actors involved in informal trading- who stand to be impacted differently based on the policy response implemented.

1.9. Study limitations

The limitations, related to the content considered in the study and the shortcomings that emanate from solely relying on secondary data, can be summarised as follows:

- The Joburg Informal Trader Policy is currently under review and undergoing several iterations - based on inputs received from public consultative processes. It would have been useful to review the final Informal Trader Policy, to assess the extent to which it considers the multifaceted nature of informal street trading in terms of the various actors involved in it and their roles and interests. However further information on the Policy under review could not be obtained, following an unsuccessful attempt at getting hold of the City using the details provided on its media statement concerning the policy update. Although this represents a gap in the study, it does not take away from the intellectual contribution that the research makes. This is because the current scope of the study is not intended to do a deep- dive into policy, but rather reveal the interpersonal aspects of the actors involved in informal street trading and how approaches employed to managing it affect them in varying ways. However, considering the final Informal Trader Policy is an aspect of this research that can be expanded on in future, especially if the intention is to analyse the legislative side of informal street trading.
- Relying on secondary data has proven to be challenging in some instances, as there have been some gaps in information that made it difficult to draw conclusive conclusions. This has in turn made using data triangulation difficult in some respects- particularly in cases where different sources of information did not present a consistent message on the sequence of events that ensued prior to, during and post Operation Clean Sweep.

1.10. An overview of the remaining chapters

a. Chapter 2: A multi- actor perspective on urban informality

This chapter reviews literature on urban informality, represented in the form of informal street trading in the inner-city of Johannesburg and highlights the importance of recognising the multiple actors involved in it. It moves on to discuss each actor in greater detail, including the role and interests that they pursue in informal street trading. The heterogeneity among the actors also becomes evident. The chapter ends off with a conceptual framework, demonstrating the actors involved in informal street trading and how they relate to one another. It becomes evident that informal street trading is comprised of a myriad of actors—either informing, influencing or being affected by the manner in which informal street trading is managed.

b. Chapter 3: Informal street trading and Operation Clean Sweep

This chapter provides an overview and context on informal street trading in the inner-city of Johannesburg and a detailed account on Operation Clean Sweep, implemented by the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality, to manage informal street trading. The actors involved in informal street trading in the inner city of Johannesburg and Operation Clean Sweep are identified, including their roles and interests and the chapter ends with an analysis of the aftermath of the operation.

c. Chapter 4: A comparative analysis of the actors identified in literature on urban informality and those involved in Operation Clean Sweep

This chapter compares the actors captured in literature on urban informality, with those involved in informal street trading in the inner-city of Johannesburg and Operation Clean Sweep, to identify similarities and areas of difference. The outcomes emanating from the comparative analysis either echo what is already contained in urban informality literature or add to the existing body of knowledge based on additional insights gleaned from analysing the actors involved in informal street trading in the inner-city of Johannesburg and the operation.

d. Chapter 5: Lessons gleaned from applying a multi- actor perspective on urban informality

This chapter provides a high-level overview of the overall themes and insights that have emerged from analysing the multiplicity of actors involved in informal street trading and their respective roles and interests. It concludes with a reflection on the value that this type of analysis adds to future policies and approaches concerned with managing informal street trading.

Chapter 2: A multi- actor perspective on urban informality

2.1. Introduction

Perspectives on urban informality abound and each one represents an opportunity to understand different aspects of it- which are concerned with attaining a livelihood or meeting a need for shelter. However, this research is concerned with the meaning of urban informality beyond economic and spatial considerations, to include the way informal practices extend beyond the poor, to include the prevalence of other actors such as the state, middle to high-income urban residents and business interests (Banks et al., 2020). Additionally, in line with extending the conception of urban informality beyond the poor, Roy (2009) cautions that associating informality with the poor masks the ways it is used by the wealthy and powerful- such as the state, to perpetuate ambiguity on the management of informality by criminalising some forms of it while turning a blind eye at others. As a result, this study not only extends the analysis on urban informality past an association with the poor, but also looks at the ways in which more powerful and influential actors use informality to pursue their interests.

The above is achieved by considering the conceptualisations of urban informality, as coined by various authors- mainly concerned with the social sciences. The ways in which economics and politics inform and influence urban development have also been noted. Focus is placed on the informal economic sector- particularly informal street trading taking place in the global South. However, insights provided by Haid and Hilbrandt (2019) on urban informality and its relationship with the state- based on the global North are also considered; although there may be contextual differences with the global South. This is because Haid and Hilbrandt (2019) mention that the findings made on urban informality, despite their geography, contribute to the overall body of knowledge on the subject. In her work entitled '*Informal street vending: a comparative literature review*' Recchi (2021) agrees with the sentiment that studying informality- specifically street vending, in both the South and North provides a holistic understanding of it. She states that there is value in studying informal street trading in both parts of the world- especially the 'understudied' north, because it is an activity that is growing everywhere in the world and not just in developing countries. Her study notes some differences and similarities in informal street trading between the South and North- using the same analytical lens and highlights areas for future research (*ibid*).

The remainder of the chapter moves on to discuss the roles assumed by the actors involved in urban informality- represented in the form of informal street trading and their interests, as identified in literature. What becomes evident is that informal street trading is multifaceted in nature and is made up of an ecosystem comprised of various actors, who relate to one another in various ways. Furthermore, it becomes clear that the actors involved in informal street trading do not function as a coherent whole and can be further divided into sub-categories based on several characteristics they exhibit- such as registered versus unregistered informal street traders. Revealing the dynamic nature of informal street trading in terms of the actors involved, their relationships and interests pursued is useful in advancing our understanding of it beyond its association with the poor or marginalised.

2.2. The conceptualisation of urban informality

Various authors offer different ways of understanding urban informality, with Keith Hart providing early insights into it through the work he conducted in Ghana in the late 1960s. He was concerned with urban informality- presented in the form of the informal economy, using the context of southern Ghana (Skinner, 2008). In his work entitled '*Informal Income Opportunities and Urban Employment in Ghana*' he cautions against using western tools to analyse income and expenditure in cities of the south and demonstrates how doing so does not accurately reflect the context on the ground (Hart, 1973). He achieves this by firstly painting a picture of the informal economy in urban Ghana, which is heterogeneous in terms of the size and scale of the enterprises run by the urban working class, the commodities traded and the workers' ability to change between different informal jobs (*ibid*). Secondly, he discusses the imbalance between the limited income generated from formal employment and expenditure, and the way the urban working class overcomes this imbalance by taking on additional jobs in the informal sector (*ibid*). Lastly, he draws links between formal and informal economic activities, and how money generated in both the informal and formal sector is spent within the sectors interchangeably (*ibid*). His observation of urban informality is useful in demonstrating how income is generated, supplemented and injected into both the informal and formal economy; and the need to ensure that the measurement of economic activities in cities of the south is carried out in a context specific way. Yusuff (2011) discusses the heterogeneity of informal businesses- in terms of differentiated labour required for different types of activities and the distributive links between informal and formal businesses. Additionally, he highlights how formalising informal activities may result in an exploitative relationship, evidenced in how the formal sector saves on costs by using informal workers to distribute their goods to wider markets (*ibid*). Like Hart (1973), he analyses urban informality using an economic lens. On the other hand, Banks et al. (2020) expand on the concept of urban informality beyond economic conceptions, to include the politics and relationships that are involved in it. The various approaches and lenses used to understand urban informality will now be explored, with the aim of creating a context on what urban informality represents, the reasons that are attributed to its emergence and the value of noting the prevalence of a multiplicity of actors involved in it and their interests.

Banks et al. (2020) mention that it is important not to confine the exploration of informality to narrow sectors- such as the economic and housing sector and as a means to a livelihood, as these conceptualisations confine it to the urban poor and excludes powerful actors involved in informal activities. As a result, Banks et al. (2020) advocate for the expansion of studies on informality- to include the social and political relations between actors ranging from the state to those operating within economic, spatial and political spaces; and the examination of the relationships that exist among them, for purposes of distributing resources or attaining and maintaining power. In line with the approach suggested by Banks et al. (2020), this research will be concerned with exploring the myriad of actors involved in informal street trading. This will be achieved by extending the analysis beyond informal street traders pursuing a livelihood, to include other actors involved for purposes of extracting and exploiting at the exclusion of others (*ibid*). Furthermore, Banks et al. (2020) assert that urban

informality takes place on different urban scales and for the purpose of this research, the urban scale that will be considered is that of the City of Johannesburg metropolitan area. This will be achieved by paying attention to the policy response employed in this area, to addressing urban informality in the form of informal street trading.

An important influence for Banks et al's (2020) understanding of urban informality is the work of Roy (2005) who discusses two schools of thought on urban informality, comprising of one that views it as a product of uncontrollable migration; while the other recognises it as a proactive way in which the urban poor make a living (*ibid*). She notes that the common thread that runs between both conceptualisations is that they associate informality with poverty and regard it as being separate from formality (*ibid*). As a result, they fail to recognise the production linkages that exists between the formal and informal sectors (Roy, 2005). Additionally, Roy (2009) discusses the state's hand in producing informality- which is found to apply double standards to managing it. Here Roy- in both accounts, begins to expand the conceptualisation of urban informality beyond the poor by emphasising the importance of noting the relationship between the formal and informal sector and the involvement of the state in producing informality in pursuit of its interests.

As it relates to geographic aspects of urban informality, Haid and Hilbrandt (2019) call for a broadened understanding of this phenomenon beyond the global South, to include cities of the North and emphasise that doing so makes the study on urban informality much richer; in line with sentiments shared by Recchi (2021). Their focus on urban informality is based on the global North and they provide valuable insights on the relationship between the state and informality, and how the former is not a coherent entity- but is rather made up of heterogeneous actors pursuing various interests (*ibid*). This perspective adds value to studies conducted on the global South, as it broadens the concept of the state and its relationship with urban informality and demonstrates how the phenomenon of the state representing different interests is not unique to the global South- but is also prevalent in the North. The various roles assumed by the state, as offered by Haid and Hilbrandt (2019) will be discussed further, as their analysis proves to be useful in illuminating the plurality of the state and its relationship with urban informality.

Lindell (2019) provides a different insight on urban informality, which is concerned with the way street workers have transformed urban space to accommodate their livelihoods. She also highlights how they must contend with other urban actors- such as the state or private developers, who are preoccupied with notions of creating a modernist city, which is free of informal activities (*ibid*). She mentions that efforts by the latter, to eliminate informal activities are often thwarted by street workers who have devised ways to navigate spatial regulation by drawing on their relations with a variety of actors, or by making use of movable infrastructure which allows them to conduct their work in a flexible manner (*ibid*). Willemse (2013: 170) refers to the street traders' ability to move and avoid evictions as 'mobile trading'.

Furthermore, Recchi (2021) mentions that in addition to avoiding being evicted, mobility enables traders to operate below the radar by becoming less visible. Another added benefit of mobility is that street traders can find customers by moving to places where there is activity, something that working from a fixed market does not allow (Ndletyana, 2013). Ndletyana (2013) provides an example of how street traders would conduct their business in proximity to a hub of activity- such as selling food to labourers at a construction site; and will look for another area to service once the activities of the construction site are concluded and the labourers move elsewhere. This demonstrates how mobility allows street traders to move to places that offer a customer base.

Similar to the assertions made by Lindell (2019) on the state's desire to create world class cities based on modernist planning prescripts, Kamete (2013) discusses the misplaced fixation that authorities in sub-Saharan African cities have with modernist planning approaches and the desire to create order, which Modiba (2022) finds to be apathetic to street trading. Rogerson (2008) contributes to Kamete's (2013) discussion by referring to how an image of an orderly European city tends to be pitted against that of a disorderly African one. Benit-Gbaffou (2018) adds that the major gap in modernist planning prescripts lies in its inability to recognise contextual challenges felt by cities located in the South- which range from high levels of poverty to unemployment. Roy (2005) suggests that these modernist planning notions, which have informed international best practice, must be replaced with a more realistic approach to planning- based on the realities and context on the ground. She asserts that this can be achieved by 'replacing best practice models with realistic critique' which encourages learning from what is currently not working as a result of applying planning models considered as best practice (Roy, 2005: 156). Additionally, Kamete (2013) advises that authorities must rather focus on the opportunity presented by informality by recognising the void that it is filling- in meeting the needs of an unserved urban poor; and admit that it is growing due to the inability of the formal system to provide housing and employment. He highlights that this is the case in South Africa, where the national and local government is concerned with creating a world class modern city, as opposed to channelling efforts into creating a city that can accommodate most of its residents (*ibid*).

It is therefore clear that urban informality holds different meanings, depending on the approach applied to understanding it. The approaches that have been discussed include using different schools of thought as a lens or noting the political and social aspects of it- in addition to spatial and economic considerations. Additionally, the limitations with associating urban informality with the marginalized have been revealed and the failure of modernist approaches to planning- including their relevance in managing informality, have been highlighted.

2.3. Considering the political and social aspects of urban informality

The following section discusses the prevalence of a myriad of actors involved in urban informality and the double standards applied by the state- when managing it. Furthermore, the heterogeneity of the actors identified is elaborated on.

2.3.1. The prevalence of various actors involved in urban informality

To reveal the prevalence of other actors involved in urban informality- beyond an association with the poor, it is useful to consider the political and social aspects of it- as advocated for by Banks et al. (2020). Lindell (2019) supports this approach from a spatial perspective and asserts that understanding the spatial politics of street work is useful in revealing the myriad of actors involved in transforming urban spaces. She further states that such an approach also brings to the fore the irregular ways in which regulations are enforced within different spaces and on different urban actors; and the ways street workers navigate such regulation- and at times challenge it, by organising themselves in an effort to maintain their legitimacy and right to the city (*ibid*).

2.3.2. Heterogeneity of the actors involved informality

Lindell (2010) highlights that informal economies are not coherent, but are rather heterogeneous, as they comprise of a variety of groups possessing different levels of income and ability to participate in the economy. In line with this, Yusuff (2011) discusses differentiated labour in the African informal sector- comprising of those running enterprises requiring a certain degree of skill, family businesses and those engaging in survivalist activities. Furthermore, Banks et al. (2020) highlight this difference by regarding informality as representing a site wherein various actors devise strategies to either extract, exploit or exclude those that may not have power or influence. This demonstrates the heterogeneity of the actors operating in urban informality, and the fact that not all of them are poor or are operating under dire conditions. Lindell (2010) adds to the point made on the heterogeneity of street workers by highlighting that they exhibit different identities and pursue different class interests. This recognition of 'difference' addresses what Yusuff (2011) notes as missing in dependency theory, which is the acknowledgement of the various actors participating in informality- beyond the poor, and the fact that not all informal operations are survivalist.

To further understand the heterogeneity of the actors participating in informality, it is useful to note that their interests differ as well. Banks et al. (2020) highlight this point by emphasising the importance of conducting a differentiated analysis on the actors involved in informality, to reveal those engaging in informal activities in pursuit of a livelihood or to meet their needs for shelter, and those that use informality as a loophole to pursue their interests- which include securing a position of power or evading costly regulatory requirements. This therefore reveals how the motivation to engage in informal activities varies among both formal and informal actors, and in line with this, Haid and Hilbrandt (2019) indicate that

informality and illegality do not mean the same thing, as those pursuing formal activities- regarded as legal, may be doing so in informal ways.

2.3.3. The relationship between the state and informality

In terms of the type of actors involved in urban informality, Banks et al. (2020) highlight that both the elite and urban poor take part in informality. However, these actors appear to be treated differently when it comes to their transgressions, as Kamete (2013) points to how instances of corruption or tax invasion performed within the formal sector are remedied by applying penalties to the guilty parties involved- as opposed to dubbing the formal sector in its entirety as undesirable. Whereas informal activities by the marginalised are met with more radical measures- which vary from eradicating it to formalising it (*ibid*). This suggests that there is little to no tolerance towards informal activities, hence the heavy- handed efforts towards addressing it; whilst the formal sector appears to be immune from being eliminated- even when illegal acts are performed (*ibid*). This aligns to what Roy (2005: 156) dubs as the state creating the 'unplanned and unplannable' which she illustrates by referring to how formal housing built in the absence of planning controls- using informal subdivisions is permitted by the state, whilst squatter settlements built on invaded land are considered as illegal. This demonstrates how the state applies rules in an inconsistent manner, between formal and informal urbanites. Pezzano (2016) echoes these sentiments by indicating that this is how the state in sub- Saharan Africa maintains the role of determining what is formal and legal, in a way that favours the urban elite and side-lines those engaging in informal activities.

It is therefore clear that there is a prevalence of multiple actors involved in informal activities, and the type of actors and nature of informal activities varies. Another important point to note is the fact that activities regarded as illegal are not only confined to informality, but also include activities taking place in the formal sector- which are pursued in an informal manner. The following section will now turn to the various actors involved in urban informality, and specific reference will be made to informal street trading.

2.4. Actors involved in informal street trading

This section unpacks the various actors involved in urban informality- particularly informal street trading, and the web of relationships among them. It becomes clear that in some cases, the different groups of actors identified can be further divided into sub- actors. This is because although they might represent a collective, they are heterogeneous in terms of the roles they play and interests they pursue. An example of this is the heterogeneity evident among street traders, who are made up of those who are registered, and others who are not- with the latter having to navigate the insecurities that come with being unregistered. Another example is that of the state pursuing different interests, which vary from using the informal economy for individual accumulation or as a way of securing votes (Lindell, 2010). In addition to identifying the various actors, the relationships among them are also considered, in line with the assertion made by Pezzano (2016) who notes that to understand the politics of informality,

one must understand the relationships among the actors involved, in terms of the way they collaborate or compete with each other.

2.4.1. The State

a. The heterogeneity of the state

Haid and Hilbrandt (2019) mention the importance of recognising the state's heterogeneous nature and the various interests that it may be representing when formulating policy and related responses. Pezzano (2016) adds that the state is responsible for defining what is formal and legal in sub-Saharan Africa and does so to the benefit of urban elites. To further highlight the heterogeneity of the state, Skinner (2019) states that the government represents a contested landscape comprising of varying interests between bureaucrats, politicians, and different departments. It is therefore clear that the state is not set up in a uniform way but is instead made up of various horizontal and vertical structures. Similarly, Haid and Hilbrandt (2019) outline the different parts of the state, as comprising of various departments and spheres of government, and mentions that each represents actors holding conflicting interests and assuming various positions and levels of authority. They indicate that due to this myriad of actors, the state's actions may be marked by contradictions and inconsistencies, and in some cases- create loopholes (*ibid*). As it relates to their assessment of the state, they mention that although it is based on cities of the global North, the findings they make contribute to the overall body of knowledge on urban informality and its relationship with the state (Haid and Hilbrandt, 2019). Banks et al. (2020) also highlight the different levels of the state as comprising of the local, municipal and national levels; and indicate the importance of considering the political aspects of urban informality to illuminate the political and social exchanges that take place between these different levels of the state.

b. Approaches employed by the state to managing informal street trading

As it relates to street trading, Pezzano (2016) mentions how it has always been an area of contention for authorities concerned with adhering to modernist planning transcripts, during colonial and post-colonial times. In their quest to control street trading taking place in key public areas, they developed punitive measures towards controlling it- which denied street traders access to such spaces (*ibid*). Pezzano (2016) mentions how the modernist approach to planning continues in modern African cities, which are preoccupied with either eliminating or formalising informal activities. He points to some of the ways local authorities respond to street traders, which include harassing them or evicting them from the spaces they occupy (*ibid*). Kamete (2013) mentions other examples which include the state temporarily allowing informality to continue in spaces that are considered not to be strategic or collaborating with street traders by nudging them towards taking on the characteristics of formal businesses, so that the vision of a modern city can be gradually achieved. In terms of evolution, Benit-Gbaffou (2018) highlights that there has been a shift in international thinking on how some basic needs ought to be managed and addressed- an example being in-situ upgrading in the case of informal settlements. However, street trading remains behind as it relates to being managed progressively (*ibid*). Rogerson (2016) adds that policies concerned with managing

street trading in urban Africa remain unchanged and outdated- and continue to be embedded in modernist planning principles.

Based on the above, it is clear that the approaches employed by city authorities to address informal street trading vary from repressing it- to accommodating it with the aim of ultimately formalising it; in line with modernist planning prescripts, which continue to be the dominant mode to planning in cities of the global South.

c. The production of informality and legitimacy by the state

Banks et al. (2020) mention that the state's ability to remain relevant is brought about by the continued pursuit to create formal modern cities. They mention that the quest to formalize cities helps the state maintain its role of setting the rules that enable markets to function (*ibid*). Roy (2005) adds that the ability for the state to set the rules places it in a position of power, as it can make decisions on what is considered as legitimate and apply rules differently to the various actors involved in urban informality. As a result, Haid and Hilbrandt (2019) cautions against viewing informality as a survival strategy adopted by the poor and calls for the recognition of the state's involvement in creating informality and subscribing to some informal activities in some cases. These insights demonstrate the plurality of the state and its entanglement with informality. Similarly, Lindell (2019) mentions that the state is responsible for producing informality in some instances, and highlights that this goes against the prescripts of modernist planning- which hinge on the assumption that informality emanates from a failure to plan. She mentions that the state produces informality to create an opportunity for the elite to take part in informal processes, an activity that Kamete (2013: 28) coins as the 'informalisation of formality'. Another way the state is found to create a conducive environment for informality to thrive, is by formulating policy that is not easy to enforce, leaving room for abuse and thus failing to protect actors in marginalized positions- operating in the informal economy (Yusuff, 2011).

As it relates to the legitimacy of informal street traders, Haid and Hilbrandt (2019) indicate that legitimacy is socially produced, through tension between the state and citizens; with the latter challenging the legitimacy of the state on the one hand and the state determining which practices and activities are deemed as legitimate on the other hand. Pezzano (2016) echoes similar sentiments by discussing how the state's idea of legitimacy functions to suit its interests, as it can either elect to legitimise informal street trading by formulating policy concerned with formalising it into the formal sector; or intentionally create uncertainty on what is deemed legal, to maintain power over informal street traders.

The state's ability to determine what is deemed permissible or not and create inequality by allowing some informal activities to persist over others can be viewed as creating room for 'gray space'. Yiftachel (2015) defines gray space as the space between what is regulated and

accepted and that which is not allowed nor eradicated and considers it to be helpful in getting us to understand the struggles of the marginalised, who do not enjoy full access to urban resources (*ibid*). In the case of informal street trading, gray space can be seen in how the state's decision on what is legal or not, relegates some informal street traders to an illegal status. Additionally, based on the state's policies- informal street traders are often denied full access to prime urban space as seen in the City's approach to confining traders to formal markets. The state's ability to determine the rules on development to the detriment of others echoes Yiftachel (2009), who states that planning has tools that can be used to perpetuate and maintain inequality.

It is clear from the above that the state can produce informality for its benefit and formulate rules that support this end. In addition, it can use its position to determine what is legitimate and formulate policy that would support its stance at the detriment of denying some residents access to resources and thus relegating them to operating within gray space.

2.4.2. Informal street traders

As captured in her work on 'street work in the global South', Lindell (2019) highlights the fact that cities in this part of the world are made up of diverse street economies, comprising of people who have occupied spaces with high levels of foot traffic- such as sidewalks and transport hubs to pursue street work due to having limited options to generating an income. She further discusses the way these actors- often marginalised groups, have transformed these spaces to suit their needs, in terms of their livelihood practices and social interactions (*ibid*). However, their activities are regarded as chaotic and in conflict with orderly development (*ibid*). As a result, efforts have been made by powerful actors- such as the state or political elite, to repossess these spaces through the enforcement of regulations or spatial interventions (*ibid*).

As it relates to the relationship between the state and informal street traders, Pezzano (2016) mentions that the latter capitalise on the plurality of the state and the different actors occupying the different spheres of government, to pursue their interests and claim their right to the city.

a. The heterogeneity of informal street traders

Like the state, informal street traders are also heterogeneous, and they range from those who are registered and find themselves having to navigate both the unjust laws enacted by the state and strained relations with unregistered informal street traders, to the latter who are not registered and must navigate the insecurity that comes with their status (Lindell, 2019). Lindell (2019) highlights that unregistered traders make use of movable infrastructure to be mobile and flexible in their operations.

The tension between registered and unregistered street traders can be referred to as defensive urban citizenship, which Yiftachel (2015) coins as politics among the marginalised which translate into tensions rising over limited resources- such as urban space. In the case of informal street trading, tensions rise between registered and unregistered traders because the former operate in an environment wherein they have to contend with the rules and laws enacted by the state- some of which limit their access to prime urban space and confine them to markets. The tension arises when unregistered street traders, as insecure their as their operations are- can be mobile (Lindell, 2019) and operate in prime areas without being constrained to an immobile market. This creates unfair competition and results in defensive urban citizenship, where registered traders fight over limited access to prime urban space by calling for more stricter measures against unregistered traders.

The above indicates differences in the identities and access to space faced by street traders and the value of understanding this heterogeneity, to ensure that policy responses aimed at addressing informal street trading, are appropriate and respond to the various dynamics that have been outlined.

2.4.3. Street trader organisations

Lindell (2010) discusses the prevalence of street trader organisations in the South, that are responsible for representing informal workers and advocating for the recognition of the economic contribution they make, using various channels- including the courts. She highlights how these organisations are different, as they represent diverse actors in the informal economy, who are organised based on various aspects- such as the income they generate or their gender (*ibid*). Lindell (2010) further mentions how these organisations are forging alliances with other entities such as social movements and non- governmental bodies- to form powerful networks. However, she cautions against viewing these networks of informal actors as representing a unified entity with common interests (*ibid*). Instead, she highlights that the establishment of organised efforts can deepen inequality or differences, as they represent members exhibiting varying characteristics (*ibid*).

a. Heterogeneity of informal street trader organisations

Lindell (2019) discusses the various roles that street trader organisations can assume, depending on the interests they are serving. In some instances, these organisations can be instrumental in protecting street workers and advancing their rights against repressive policies; whilst in other cases their efforts can fail to bring about the desired outcomes of spatial inclusion (*ibid*). Lindell (2019) also mentions how these organisations can be used as a tool by the state, to advance the latter's policies.

It is therefore clear that street trader organisations play an important role in representing informal street traders, however it is important to note that their efforts are driven by the interests they are representing.

2.4.4. Formal Business

In addition to recognising the prevalence of various actors, Banks et al. (2020) mention that a continuum exists between the formal and informal sector, and Yusuff (2011) affirms this assertion by referring to the prevalence of distributive linkages between formal businesses and informal street traders; with the former benefiting from the foot traffic generated by informal activities. However, Banks et al. (2020) highlight that although efforts have been made to advance the understanding of informality beyond the 'formal and informal dichotomy' in theory, not much change has been realised through policy and practice. In addition, as much as a mutually beneficial relationship exists between the operations of the formal and informal sector, Yusuff (2011) cautions against the assumption that formalisation would result in the formal sector imparting knowledge and experience to the informal sector. He substantiates this by highlighting the exploitative ways in which the formal sector uses informal workers to supply their goods to wider markets in an effort to cut costs (*ibid*). This highlights the importance of recognising both ends of the scale when it comes to the relationship between the formal and informal sector, as the two can either have a mutually beneficial relationship- or one that is exploitative. Holness, Nel and Binns (1999) mention other types of relationships between the formal and informal sector, which include parasitism and mutualism. Parasitism is however beyond the scope of this research, as it is concerned with how a sector such as informal street trading makes use of the city's facilities without contributing towards its upkeep- in the form of or paying for rent or rates (*ibid*). Rather, this study concerns itself with the opportunities presented by informal street trading- that must be recognised and supported, which are evident in the mutual relationships held between formal business and informal street traders.

2.5. Conceptual Framework

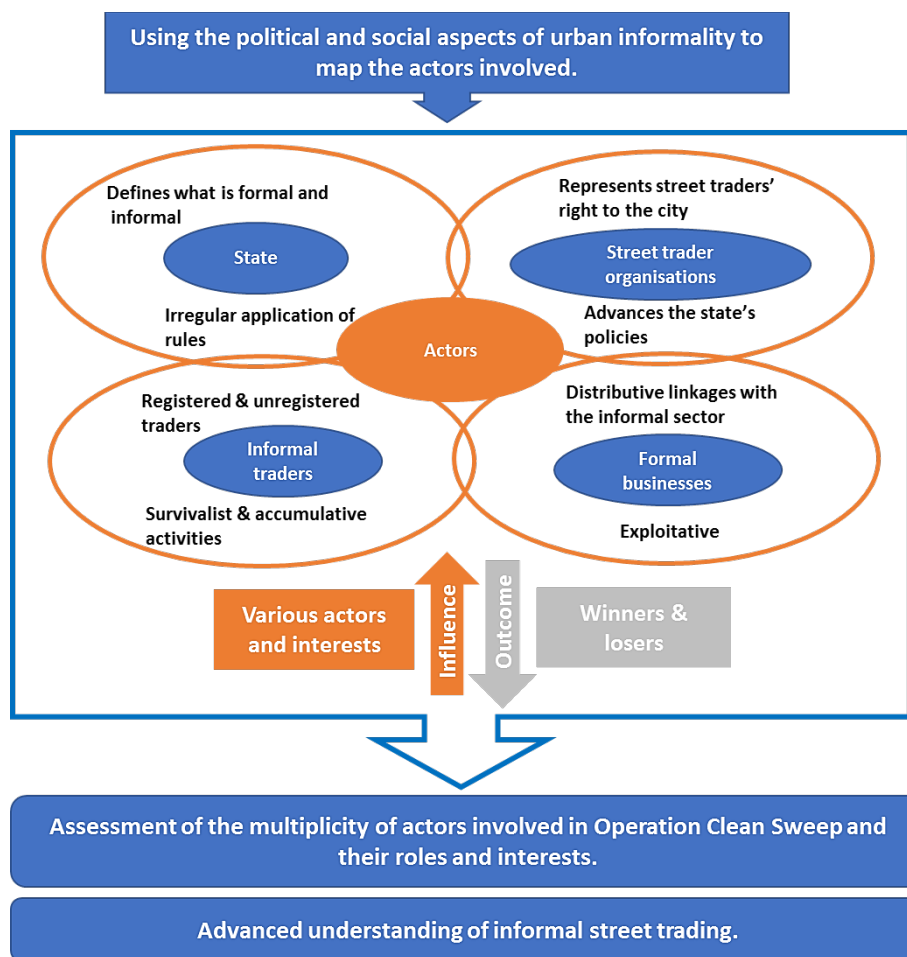


Figure 1: Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework indicated above is informed by the political and social aspects of urban informality- that Banks et al. (2020) state as being key in revealing the various actors involved in urban informality- beyond the poor. Establishing the universe of actors involved in urban informality allows the analysis to move on to identifying their characteristics, conditions under which they operate, the interests that they are pursuing and the ways in which they are connected to one another.

The conceptual framework further illustrates how the various actors involved in urban informality are heterogeneous as the categories of actors identified can be further divided into sub- categories. Furthermore, the type of informal activities that they pursue vary among them, both within and outside their categories. This highlights the multiplicity of actors involved in urban informality and the fluidity of their relationships- based on the various interests they are pursuing.

Having sight of the multifaceted nature of urban informality and the multiplicity of actors operating within it- pursuing particular interests and relating to another in various ways, is useful in highlighting the complexity of urban informality. Furthermore, these insights serve as a useful tool for analysing the City of Johannesburg's response to informal street trading- in the form of Operation Clean Sweep, to reveal the actors involved, their interests and relationships among them. The outcomes from the analysis will advance our understanding of informal street trading and ensure that future policy responses are appropriate.

The following chapter will be providing an overview of informal street trading in the City of Johannesburg and delve deeper into Operation Clean Sweep- in terms of how it came about and its outcomes. The actors involved in the operation- and its aftermath, will also be discussed.

Chapter 3: Informal street trading and Operation Clean Sweep

3.1. Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of informal street trading in the City of Johannesburg, which is referred to as the 'City' in this report, while recognising that it represents various actors and interests. This is carried out by providing a brief history on the emergence of informal street trading, the size of the sector and the various tools that the City has devised in responding to it. The remainder of the chapter provides background on Operation Clean Sweep, which is a policy response implemented by the City to address informal street trading; and its objectives and outcomes are discussed. This is followed by a detailed analysis of the various actors involved in Operation Clean Sweep, and their respective roles and interests. The chapter concludes with an outline of the aftermath of the operation.

3.2. A brief history on informal street trading in the City of Johannesburg

The City of Johannesburg has been marked by informal trade for many years, dating back to the 1950s, when this activity took place in the form of 'coffee cart vendors' who had to have licences to operate (Beavon and Rogerson, 1986; Arias, 2019). Arias (2019) attributes the subsequent decline in the number of these vendors to the fact that some of them were migrant workers who were not awarded licenses to operate and could therefore not continue with the trade. As a result, the migrant workers resorted to less regulated work, in the form of street hawking of other goods (*ibid*). SERI (2015) notes that this approach of partially accommodating street trading, based on the awarding of a limited number of permits and trading spaces continues to be a prevalent mode used by the City to manage informal street trading. It has been found to reproduce informality by creating scarcity of legal trading environments to a majority of informal street traders (*ibid*). Bénit- Gbaffou (2020) echoes similar sentiments by highlighting how the state can either expand or reduce the size of informality, by determining the number of authorised street traders- which renders the rest unauthorised.

In 1993, 15 000 people were recorded to generate an income on the streets of greater Johannesburg through survivalist activities, with 4 000 of them operating in the inner- city and 45% of them being foreign nationals (Bremner, 2000). This was followed by a marked increase in the number of inner- city traders in 1999, which more than doubled to 10 000 people (*ibid*). This increase in informal street traders post-apartheid, is attributed to reasons that include changes in policy- which migrated from being repressive to tolerating or promoting informal trading, a shrinking formal economy and increased migration (*ibid*).

3.3. Informal street traders operating in the City of Johannesburg

According to a report concerned with unpacking the South African informal economy- using data from the Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) and the Survey of Employers and the Self-Employed (SESE) for the years 2013 and 2019 respectively, it is reported that the majority of employment in South Africa falls within the formal sector, at 71.2 % and 68.5% respectively

for the years under review (Statistics South Africa, 2020). The informal sector was found to be the second highest employer trailing in at 15.5% and 18.3% respectively (*ibid*). These sectors are followed by private households and the agricultural sector (*ibid*). It is therefore clear that on a country level, the informal sector plays a material role in employment creation. As it relates to Johannesburg, which is the capital of Gauteng- housing 4.5 million people, a range of 12 000 to 15 000 street traders are found to be operating there (Arias, 2019). Their countries of origin include Zimbabwe, Malawi and Mozambique; whilst others come from provinces within South Africa, which include Limpopo, Mpumalanga and KwaZulu Natal (*ibid*).

When it comes to the reliability or visibility of the total number of street traders operating in the inner- city of Johannesburg, Bénit- Gbaffou (2020) states that this information, and supporting maps are hard to come by. She highlights how the outcomes from a census conducted by the City's Department of Economic Development (DED) and the Metropolitan Trading Company (MTC) in 2008 does not reveal figures on street traders operating in the inner- city, while in some instances provides high- level percentages. As it relates to the number of registered versus unregistered informal street traders operating in the inner- city of Johannesburg, Bénit- Gbaffou (2020) mentions that City officials are more interested in the number of registered traders operating legally- and include them in their plans. The rest of the street traders are left to be addressed through law enforcement (*ibid*). Bénit- Gbaffou (2020: 15) refers to the hesitancy of taking stock of the number of unregistered street traders as the 'politics of un- mapping' and attributes it to the state wanting to avoid acknowledging illegal street traders, in an effort to evade having to be accountable for them. Mitullah (2004) shares a similar sentiment on the difficulty of estimating the number of street traders operating either in a country or city; however she attributes it to the constantly changing number of street traders operating at a given time- which is influenced by the time of the day or a particular season during which they operate. Rogan and Skinner (2019) on the other hand, highlight that it is easy to become preoccupied with the 'numbers' associated with the size of- and the tax contribution that the informal sector should be making. They highlight that the fixation with the numbers clouds the important role the informal sector plays in poverty alleviation and moves attention away from the need to support it, through measures such as the provision of infrastructure- in the form of toilets and storage facilities (*ibid*).

3.4. Promoting an environment conducive to creating a world class city

3.4.1. City Improvement Districts

Arias (2019) discusses the establishment of the Central Johannesburg Partnership (CJP) in the 1990s, which was responsible for supporting formal businesses and the establishment of City Improvement Districts (CID) in the inner city of Johannesburg. Didier et al. (2012) discuss how the need for CIDs was elevated by the showcasing of images of urban centres in decay- such as the portrayal of the Johannesburg city centre during the 1990s (*ibid*). CIDs are public spaces within the inner city- where businesses are located and are privately managed through a private partnership with the City, with the intention of creating aesthetically pleasing business districts (Arias, 2019). They are concerned with the provision of added services, aimed at

regenerating commercial and residential parts of the city considered to be in a poor state (Didier et al., 2012). They were lauded as having the ability to address urban problems-presented in the form of decay, informal trade and crime (*ibid*). Their upkeep was maintained through the payment of an additional tax by a majority of property owners- 51% or more, in addition to payments made towards municipal rates and taxes (Bénit- Gbaffou, 2020).

As it relates to informal street trading, Pezzano (2016) saw the emergence of CIDs as a tool used to transform urban space and influence decisions on the limited number of traders that could be accommodated. Kamete (2013) criticises this fixation with creating world class cities, based on planning approaches imported from the global North and applying them to the global South, at the expense of informal street trading. In response to this, both Kamete (2013) and Roy (2005) call for context specific approaches to planning cities, taking the role that the informal sector plays in job creation into account. Rubin (2018) shares the sentiment on developing context specific approaches to addressing urban informality, and states that policy and legislation that does not take the lived realities of the marginalised into account becomes difficult to implement, because they are not responsive to the fluid needs of the intended beneficiaries.

3.4.2. Bringing order to the streets by confining informal street trading to designated areas

In line with the establishment of City Improvement Districts (CID), aimed at creating aesthetically pleasing world class cities, the City of Johannesburg established the Johannesburg Development Agency (JDA) in early 2000 (Arias, 2019). The JDA was responsible for identifying mayoral priority areas for the development of precinct- based planning (*ibid*). To achieve this, the Inner- City Management strategy was developed, which was concerned with removing informal street trading taking place in the identified priority areas (*ibid*). Like CIDs, the objectives of the Inner- City Management strategy was to restrict the places where informal street trading could take place, and confine it to designated trading places (Arias, 2019). However, Bénit- Gbaffou (2020) mentions that the importance of street trading as a means of livelihood and poverty alleviation became recognised in the mid- 2000s, and this was evidenced through public policy documents developed at the time- which included the 2007 Inner City Regeneration Charter. The latter was formulated through a consultative process, spanning from November 2006 to June 2007, held among a range of inner- city stakeholders (Inner City Regeneration Charter, 2007). However, a closer look at the charter reveals that although informal street trading is recognised for its ability to create employment, it is also presented as an impediment to pedestrian movement, vehicular traffic and waste management (*ibid*); all of which appear to build a case towards the management and confinement of street trading to designated areas- in line with the suggestions put forward in the charter. SERI (2015) criticises the Inner City Regeneration charter as being preoccupied with improving the aesthetics of the city of Johannesburg as opposed to livelihoods. It further highlights how the charter associates the poor management of informal street trading with the inability to manage waste, and that this assumption served as one of the key issues that Operation Clean Sweep was intended to address (*ibid*). The association of

street trading with litter and the need to remove it as a result, is reminiscent of the justification provided for efforts to eradicate the coffee- cart trade, which was premised on the fact that it was unhygienic and had the potential to result in public health crises- such as tuberculosis (Beavon and Rogerson, 1986). However, SERI (2015) refutes the association made between informal street trading and the inability to manage waste by clarifying that informal street traders in the inner- city of Johannesburg could not maintain cleanliness within their workspaces because they were not provided with the infrastructure required to do so- such as sanitation, refuse removal services and litter bins.

3.5. City of Johannesburg Street trading by- laws and the Business Act

The street trading by- laws for the City of Johannesburg (CoJ) came into effect in May 2004, and they were informed by the Business Act 1991, which grants the local authority power to determine where and how trading can take place (SERI, 2015). Therefore, respective municipalities are responsible for formulating and implementing informal street trading by- laws, however on condition that they do not prohibit the activity completely (Arias, 2019). The main focus of the by- laws has been on managing the way informal street trading takes place- with the aim of eventually incorporating it into the formal economy (*ibid*). However, Yusuff (2011) highlights that incorporation into the formal economy is not always beneficial, as it may lead to exploitation of the informal sector- which includes the use of cheap labour by formal businesses as a cost saving method. He further highlights that the plan to incorporate the informal sector into the formal one assumes that the two are mutually exclusive and highlights the limitations to this, by pointing out the prevalence of distributive linkages between formal businesses and informal street traders (*ibid*). Additionally, SERI (2015) emphasises the limitation with basing policy on the assumption that the informal and formal sectors operate separately from each other, by referring to some of the lived realities of street traders. One of which pertains to the link that exists between the formal and informal sectors, evidenced through farmers facilitating the registration of street traders, prior to setting up a distribution relationship with them- for the sale of their produce (*ibid*). Rather, Anyidoho and Steel (2016) discuss the opportunity presented by the links existing between the two sectors, which can be proactively supported by the government and other relevant actors through the provision of supporting infrastructure and access to trading space.

3.6. Operation Clean Sweep

3.6.1. How Operation Clean Sweep came about

The City of Johannesburg embarked on a Mayoral campaign referred to as Operation Clean Sweep in 2013 (Pieterse, 2017), and it was marked by the forced removal of more than 6000 street traders operating in the city centre (Arias, 2019). The operation was said to be concerned with addressing the state of lawlessness in the inner city- attributed to illegal trading and the invasion of buildings (Pezzano, 2016). The City also associated the poor management of informal street trading with the inability to manage waste (Inner City Regeneration Charter, 2007) and therefore believed that the execution of Operation Clean Sweep would also address the waste issue (SERI, 2015).

In addition to addressing grime and crime in the city, the operation was regarded as a way to bring order to the city, by removing some street trader stalls that were in violation of the municipal by- laws- including those on pavements or in proximity to government buildings (Social Law Project, 2014). The clearing of trading areas regarded as being in violation with street trader by- laws was viewed as a way to bring order to the city and enable access to facilities, which could be enjoyed by its inhabitants (*ibid*). However, Arias (2019) questions 'who' the inhabitants are that get to benefit from an orderly city- and to whose exclusion. Furthermore, SERI (2015) highlights that the inception of the operation was inspired by a desire to improve the appearance of the inner city, and this indicates the City's attachment to modernist planning precepts- concerned with creating orderly world class cities. According to SERI (2015), it is this fixation with creating world class cities that led to the removal of informal traders from the central business district- irrespective of their trading status and in contravention of the City's by- laws and Business Act.

According to Pieterse (2017), the operation initially had support from a range of stakeholders which included inner- city businesses and trader organisations, as it came with the promise of removing illegal street trading from the inner- city streets. Social Law Project (2014) mentions that prior the execution of the operation in October 2013, the City held discussions with informal street trader organisations, wherein it assured the latter that registered street traders will not be affected. However, what ensued was the removal of street traders operating in the central business district by the Johannesburg Metro Police Department (JMPD)- which was responsible for enforcing the City's by- laws (SERI, 2015). All traders were removed irrespective of their operating status (Pezzano, 2016). Bénit- Gbaffou (2020) highlights how the act of relegating the management of informal street trading to the police- which manifests in the form of violence and corruption, is not unique to South Africa but is also prevalent in other cities around the world. In addition to being evicted, the street traders' goods were confiscated and out of the over 6000 street traders removed, more than 2000 were affiliated with street trading organisations- namely the South African Informal Trading Forum (SAITF) and the South African National Retail Alliance (SANRA) (Social Law Project, 2014).

The operation received media coverage and criticism, with one of the prominent media houses branding it as a '*Dirty Affair*' and sharing an account of a street trader who had to sell his computer in order to continue to send his children to creche and buy food for his family (Tolsi, 2013). The extended impact of the operation on the families supported by the informal street traders is further elaborated on in an article that classified it as not only being concerned with cleaning up the city- but also wanting to rid it of the poor (Nicolson and Lekgowa, 2013). As far as formal businesses are concerned, an owner of a pie shop reported that prior to their removal, street traders and their customers purchased pies from his shop and the removal of the former resulted in a decline in his sales (Tolsi, 2013). Similarly, Social Law Project (2014) refers to the formal businesses that were impacted by the operation and cites that they were affected because they benefited from the foot traffic generated by street

trading activities, and the purchases made by the traders themselves. Therefore, although on the face of it- the operation appeared to have achieved its goal of making the city's streets less congested, the formal and informal sectors suffered a loss in terms of generating an income (*ibid*).

3.7. Actors involved Operation Clean Sweep, and their roles and interests

This section maps the actors involved in Operation Clean Sweep- which is referred to as the 'operation' from here onwards and outlines the roles that they played and their interests. The nature of the relationships among these actors are also noted. Lastly, the impact of the operation on the actors identified becomes evident and is important to note- as it highlights the significance of recognising the multiplicity of actors involved in informal street trading, the different ways policy and related approaches affect them and the limitations of applying policy approaches in a linear fashion.

3.7.1. The state

a. The Role played by the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality and its entities in managing informal street trading

The Business Act of 1991 grants the local authority the power to determine when and how street trading can take place, and this is translated into street trading by- laws which must be developed and implemented by the local authority (SERI, 2015). In the case of the inner- city of Johannesburg, the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality- hereon referred to as the 'City', is responsible for managing informal street trading. To fulfil this role, the City established the Metropolitan Trading Company (MTC) in the late 1990s, which at the time served as the operational arm of the Department of Economic Development (Bénit- Gbaffou, 2015). The MTC was tasked with managing markets- wherein street traders were housed and taxi ranks, with the intention of generating an income from rentals charged for the use of these spaces, by traders and taxi owners respectively (*ibid*). However, the MTC's functions were transferred to the Johannesburg Property Company (JPC) in 2013, which was mandated to manage the City's assets, in the form of its land and property- including trader markets (*ibid*). This move maintained the management of street trading to confining it within markets, at the exclusion of those operating on the street and pavements (*ibid*). Pezzano (2016) highlights that this approach to confining street trading to linear markets renders traders operating outside of these spaces as illegal, thus making them vulnerable to abusive and repressive treatment. As it relates to the enforcement of by- laws, Bénit- Gbaffou (2020) mentions that it was carried out by the Johannesburg Metropolitan Police Department (JMPD) and that the approach to managing street trading using law enforcement further entrenches a restrictive approach towards it. The Gauteng Department of Economic Development (GDED) also appeared to play a role in informing how street trading should be managed, and it achieved this by formulating and workshopping the Gauteng Employment Growth and Development strategy (Pezzano, 2016). What was refreshing about this strategy was the fact that it recognised the income generating role that informal street trading played and called for the creation of a conducive environment and supporting legislation for informal

street trading (*ibid*). The GDED criticised the City for the repressive approach it was taking to manage informal street trading and these sentiments were shared by the street trader organisations (*ibid*). It will later become clear how the street trader organisations capitalised on the differences in opinion that the province and City held on managing informal street trading and the true intentions behind the GDED's drive to supporting the street trader organisations.

The execution of Operation Clean Sweep in the inner- city of Johannesburg provides a practical demonstration of both a restrictive approach towards street trading and abuse by law enforcement, and SERI (2015) provides an account of this in the words of a middle- aged street trader, by the name of Sizani. She is a mother of two, who witnessed the execution of the operation and saw the confiscation of stock by the JMPD- which was ultimately not returned, and the police becoming physical with young male traders.

Notwithstanding the City's mandated role to managing informal street trading, the inception of Operation Clean Sweep was by the City's political leadership represented by Ross Greef- who was a Member of the Mayoral Committee (MMC) at the time, responsible for development planning (Pezzano, 2016). It is mentioned that two reports were released in October 2012, from the office of the MMC, outlining the operation within the City's strategy (*ibid*). The operation was presented as being concerned with restoring order and addressing lawlessness in the inner- city, which was attributed to illegal trading and dumping- to mention a few (*ibid*). Prior to the implementation of the operation, City officials attempted to get into an agreement with street trader leaders- to remove traders considered illegal (unregistered) (*ibid*) and it is not clear whether the City was successful in these efforts. However, it is stated that opposition by street traders against the operation became pronounced following its implementation- which saw the JMPD remove all traders irrespective of their operating status (*ibid*).

b. The heterogeneity of the City

Considering the above, it is clear that the management of informal street trading in the City of Johannesburg included various actors who performed different roles. The City was involved in formulating the informal trading policy and related by- laws, while the implementation and enforcement thereof was undertaken by several actors representing the municipality- who included the MTC, JPC and the JMPD. Additionally, the political leadership of the city had an influence on the way the City was to address informal street trading, and this is evidenced through the inception of Operation Clean Sweep, which served as a mayoral campaign aimed at restoring the inner- city (Pieterse, 2017). Another political actor that was found to be involved is the GDED. All these actors operated at different levels of government, which included the political level in the case of the MMC, the local city level- represented by the City's Department of Economic Development (DED) responsible for overseeing the MTC and at an entity level in the form of the JMPD- which was commissioned by the municipality to

assist with enforcing street trading by- laws (Bénit- Gbaffou, 2020). The prevalence of a myriad of actors representing the state is therefore apparent and is in line with Haid and Hilbrandt (2019), who discuss the heterogeneity of the state in the form of different departments and spheres of government. Furthermore, Pezzano (2016: 498) coins this collection of actors, who include 'different spheres of government, political and administrative municipal authorities and corporatised municipal- owned entities' as the plural state.

c. The interests of the City and its entities

As it relates to the City's interests, the fact that the execution of Operation Clean Sweep was in contravention of its own policy and regulations, indicates that the City may have been pursuing other motives. According to the City, the objective of the operation was to address crime and grime and to apprehend traders selling fake goods (Arias, 2019). However, what ensued was an indiscriminate removal of all street traders irrespective of the 'legal status of their goods and activities' (Arias, 2019: 5). This was followed by the City committing to allowing traders to return to their places of work, once verification efforts aimed at re-registering all traders operating in the inner- city were concluded (Social Law Project, 2014). The South African National Traders' Retail Association (SANTRA) regarded the verification process as being chaotic and slow, while the City on the other hand had not anticipated the high number of street traders that showed up (SAPA, 2013). However, it is mentioned that the traders were not allowed to return to their trading spaces following the City's efforts to verify the street traders (Social Law Project, 2014). The City instead moved on to declare the spaces that the traders were removed from as areas where trading was no longer permitted, and it is at this point- on the 13th of November, that the City's true intentions became clear (SERI, 2015). Following the execution of the operation, authorities from the City justified their actions by highlighting that the streets were no longer congested and in an unmanageable state (Arias, 2019). Furthermore, the JMPD spokesperson at the time lauded the operation as being successful in clearing the city's streets (SERI, 2015). However, as much as the operation appeared to be a success in clearing the inner- city streets at the face of it, it did so to the detriment of the livelihoods of both street traders and formal businesses. Arias (2019: 6) echoes these sentiments by highlighting how the success of the operation was achieved at the expense of both 'formal and informal economies'. Regarding the interests of the City's political leadership, it is mentioned that efforts to creating an inclusive and conducive environment for traders by the Member of the Executive Council (MEC) of the GDED were geared towards securing political support in the province, in preparation of the looming elections (*ibid*).

As it relates to transparency on the total number of registered and unregistered street traders operating in the inner- city, Bénit- Gbaffou (2020) mentions that these figures are not easy to obtain and that the City concerns itself with registered traders. Additionally, details on the areas where street trading is permitted and prohibited- as it relates to MTC and CJP managed

areas are not available, and these gaps in information are attributed to the City's continued efforts to evade becoming accountable for unregistered street traders (Béni- Gbaffou, 2020).

It is therefore clear from the above, that the City's approach to managing informal street trading was concerned with both confinement- which further produces informality; and turning a blind eye on unregistered street traders operating on the streets and pavements and leaving them to be managed by the JMPD. A mode to managing street trading which Pezzano (2016: 503) mentions is responsible for 'creating a vicious circle of mismanagement'. Furthermore, it has become clear that the City's true intentions behind the operation, was to rid the inner- city of informal street trading- by prohibiting it from the streets and confining it to markets. Whilst the political leadership's interests were concerned with securing votes in the province for the upcoming elections.

3.7.2. The private sector

a. The role assumed by the Private sector in managing informal street trading

Pezzano (2016) mentions that the most prevalent approach to managing informality in the case of Johannesburg remains that of controlling or confining the space in which trading can take place. This mode to managing street trading is presented in the form of privately managed City Improvement Districts (CIDs), wherein a limited number of traders is accommodated (*ibid*). Pezzano (2016) mentions that the emergence of CIDs allowed the private sector to have influence over the use of public space, resulting in its privatisation. He refers to this as the emergence of entrepreneurial approaches to managing informal street trading by the private sector, which entail the partial inclusion of street traders into the CIDs (*ibid*). A restricted amount of street trading was permitted within the City Improvement Districts (CIDs) in the inner- city of Johannesburg, however there were cases where trading was completely prohibited by private developers in some CIDs- who achieved this by pressuring the City to grant them permission to do so (Béni- Gbaffou, 2015). It is therefore clear that the establishment of CIDs gave the private sector power to make decisions over the use of public urban space and that the decisions made were not always in favour of the most vulnerable users of the space.

b. The heterogeneity of the private sector

As previously mentioned, the Metropolitan Trading Company (MTC) was established in the late 1990s and was tasked with managing trading markets and taxi ranks (Béni- Gbaffou, 2015). At the end of 2004, a joint venture agreement was passed between the MTC and Central Johannesburg Partnership (CJP)- which represented an inner- city business coalition (*ibid*). The decision for the CJP to enter a joint venture with the MTC- which was an arm of the City, was brought about by the need to manage informal street trading taking place within privately run CIDs (Béni- Gbaffou, 2015). Once the role to managing street trading taking place within CIDs was delegated to the CJP- it decided to outsource it to a private service provider called Urban Genesis Management, in 2009 (*ibid*). This indicates the prevalence of

multiple private entities being involved in the management of informal street traders within CIDs.

c. The interests of the private sector

It is reported that street traders operating in areas managed by the CJP were happier with their working environment- which offered increased security, in contrast to traders operating within MTC managed markets (Bénit- Gbaffou, 2015). This resulted in the privately managed CIDs becoming the pinnacle of what successful street trading management could look like (*ibid*). However, although CIDs were lauded for effectively managing informal street trading in the inner city- albeit at a local scale, the harmony between the private sector and informal street trading developed over time (*ibid*). It is reported that the members of the CJP and the inner- city business community initially had mixed reactions towards accommodating street trading within CIDs (*ibid*). Furthermore, in the early 2000s- the CJP appeared to be aligned to the City's approach to prohibiting informal street trading from CIDs and pavements, and confining it to markets (Bénit- Gbaffou, 2015). Views held on CIDs therefore varied, with one side regarding them as being good due to their access to a pool of private funding, which made the management and upkeep of the inner- city possible (*ibid*). On the other hand, critics of CIDs stated that they represent the outsourcing of the City's responsibility of managing the inner- city and finding democratic solutions on access to urban space, to the private sector (*ibid*). However, notwithstanding these mixed reactions, the management of street trading within CIDs ultimately proved to be successful.

Bénit- Gbaffou (2015) mentions that since the management of street trading by the CJP, the private sector performed better than the City. Additionally, collaborative efforts between the CJP and the South African National Retail Alliance (SANTRA) continue, with the goal of finding inclusive solutions to managing informal street trading- even post- Operation Clean Sweep; and this is as a result of a relationship of trust that has developed between the CJP and SANTRA (*ibid*). This indicates how CIDs have the potential to form part of the solution towards the management of informal street trading in the inner- city, as the City's efforts have not been successful.

3.7.3. Informal street traders

a. The impact of Operation Clean Sweep on informal street traders

Although Yusuff (2011) mentions that not all street trading is survivalist in nature, it is reported that most of the street traders impacted by Operation Clean Sweep came from this segment of trading (Arias, 2019). SERI (2015) documents accounts of some street traders stating that their inability to generate an income following the operation, resulted in them having to tap into their savings, and in other cases- traders who did not have savings resorted to borrowing money. However, notwithstanding the negative impacts of the operation on the street traders, SERI (2015) notes that street trading continues to remain resilient in the face of the City's attempts at abolishing it.

b. Heterogeneity of street traders

As it relates to the street traders affected by the operation, it is mentioned that prior to its execution, most registered traders had been operating at the same location for over 10 years- whilst unregistered traders had been in the same location for over 5 years (*ibid*). Trading in the same space over a long period is said to be useful in enabling traders to establish loyal customers (*ibid*). However, the removal of traders from their places of work during the operation- and subsequent plans to relocate them to markets, had a negative impact on their ability to access their customers and thus generate an income (*ibid*). The negative impact of the operation was felt by all street traders irrespective of their trading status and resulted in them joining forces in the fight against the City.

c. Interests of informal street traders

Bénit- Gbaffou (2020) mentions that most informal street traders are constantly fighting to be recognised by the City and for better management of their work, and this was evidenced through the traders' collective efforts in challenging the City's execution of Operation Clean Sweep. Pezzano (2016) highlights how street traders demonstrated their ability to engage with different levels of the state as seen in their efforts towards filing an appeal at the Constitutional Court against the City and its operation. This is also evidenced in the way the traders- represented by their organisations, by- passed the City prior to the execution of the operation, by electing to work with the Gauteng Department of Economic Development (GDED) in advancing their interests (*ibid*). This move by the street traders' organisations is further expanded upon under the section detailing the interests they were pursuing.

Furthermore, Bénit- Gbaffou (2020: 16) mentions that street traders are concerned with the 'politics of recognition rather than the politics of resistance' and this was evidenced through interviews that SERI (2015) had with street traders post Operation Clean Sweep. These interviews revealed that street traders require access to infrastructure such as running water and sanitation, a frustration that led some to question the value of being registered and paying rent- if it does not translate into having access to infrastructure. Bénit- Gbaffou (2020) also points out that the ungovernability of street trading must not solely be pinned on street traders, but that the City's management of street trading- which is often limited to restriction and enforcement, must also be considered.

The above indicates how street traders' interests are concerned with achieving a certain degree of legibility in the city and ensuring that a conducive environment is created for their work. In effort to achieve this, informal street traders have to date drawn on their relationships with influential entities- such as SERI, which has been successful in advancing their interests, whether by representing the street traders at court or advocating for the City to provide access to infrastructure required for their trade.

3.7.4. Informal street trader organisations

a. The role performed by street trader organisations

Over 2000 of the street traders removed from the inner- city streets during Operation Clean Sweep were affiliated with two prominent street trader organisations namely the South African Informal Trading Forum (SAITF) and the South African National Retail Alliance (SANRA) (Social Law Project, 2014). Although these trader organisations represent a similar cause- which is advancing the interests of street traders operating in the inner- city of Johannesburg, it is mentioned that tensions existed between them (*ibid*). However, following the execution of Operation Clean Sweep, the two organisations put their differences aside and joined forces in challenging the City on the unlawful removal of street traders from the inner- city of Johannesburg (*ibid*). This was a move that benefited all street traders, irrespective of their operating status (*ibid*). However, although the street trader organisations' efforts in challenging the City were triumphant, Social Law Project (2014) cautions that once- off collaborative efforts towards challenging the City on its plans is not sufficient to achieve material change.

b. The heterogeneity of street trader organisations

The tensions that existed between the two trader organisations were brought about by the fact that the South African Informal Trading Forum (SAITF) had a historical relationship with the Gauteng Department of Economic Development. These ties resulted in the trader organisation in question receiving preferential treatment from the provincial department, and the details on the nature of this relationship and the tension that it resulted in- are captured under the interests pursued by the street trader organisations.

c. The interests pursued by street trader organisations

Pezzano (2016) discusses the informal traders' ability to engage with different authorities, ranging from the Gauteng Provincial government to the Constitutional Court- and what is of particular interest is how the street trader organisations opted to engage the provincial government when discussions with the City, on informal trading by- laws and enforcement did not yield desired outcomes. Discussions between the informal trader organisations and the City's Department of Economic Development (DED), concerned with the review of street trading by- laws, took place on the 11th of May 2012 (*ibid*). It is reported these discussions ended with one of the trader organisations- by the name of the South African National Retail Traders Association (SANTRA) being taken out of the meeting due to being vocal. However, in a continued effort to influence the management of street trading, the street trader organisations established a rapport with the Gauteng provincial government- particularly the Gauteng Department of Economic Development (GDED) (*ibid*). The GDED had formulated the Gauteng Employment Growth and Development strategy, which recognised the role that informal street trading played in income generation (Pezzano, 2016). During the end of 2012 and early 2013, the GDED established a platform for engaging the informal traders and this commenced with the latter attending several workshops organised by the GDED- between November 2012 and June 2013. At these workshops, the GDED shared its strategy on

managing informal street trading, which hinged on legalising informal traders and establishing a united platform for them, and this message was supported by the trader representatives in attendance (*ibid*). Pezzano (2016) mentions that the move by street trader representatives, to bypass the City and create competition between it and the provincial government, was strategic in advancing their interests. As it relates to the interests of the GDED- which was led by MEC Nkosipendule Kolisile, Pezzano (2016) mentions that the provincial leadership was concerned with securing support for the upcoming elections, scheduled to take place in 2014. While the two actors, namely the street trader organisations and the provincial department were pursuing their individual interests, they were unified in that they were not in support of the City's restrictive approach towards managing informal street trading (*ibid*).

However, tensions arose between the trader organisations when one of them- referred to as South African Informal Traders Forum (SAITF) was selected by the provincial government to lead the cause on 'regulation and unity' due to a historical relationship that existed between the trader organisation and the provincial government (*ibid*). Benit- Gbaffou (2016) mentions that the prevalence of differences among street trader organisations is often used by the state to de- legitimise their representation of street traders- and further warns that the state can use these differences as a reason behind its lack of effective communication with street traders. In the case of SAITF and SANRA, Pezzano (2016) indicates that the lack of cohesion among them- brought about by tensions emerging from an unequal reach to decision making processes, hindered progress on the pursuit of common causes and attaining desired outcomes. Furthermore, the fragility of the relationship between the two trader organisations was also attributed to the questionable behaviour of public authorities and the prevalence of relationships of patronage with informal street trader leaders (*ibid*). Instances of officials from the City convincing trader organisation leaders to support plans, which had not been workshopped with street traders, had been reported (*ibid*). In some cases, leaders of informal trader organisations reported that some City officials intentionally discouraged them from convening regular meetings (*ibid*), which reveals the City's concerted efforts at eroding collective representation of street traders.

Nevertheless, the differences between the two trader organisations were set aside following the execution of Operation Clean Sweep and they managed to claim victory for all street traders, through collective effort. However, it has been emphasised that short- lived collaborative efforts are not sufficient in achieving substantial change (Pezzano, 2016).

3.7.5. Formal businesses

a. Formal and informal continuum

Another actor impacted by Operation Clean Sweep is the formal businesses located in the inner- city, which Yusuff (2011) mentions had distributive linkages with the street traders, as they benefited from the foot traffic generated by informal trading activity. SERI (2015) also mentions informal agreements that were in place between the street traders and shop

owners- and in some cases big supermarkets, for the provision of storage space for the trader's stock. This demonstrates how formal businesses filled the gap created by the City in not providing the infrastructure that the traders required. Arias (2019) mentions other links between street traders and formal businesses in Johannesburg, in the form of street traders purchasing stock from local formal shops. SERI (2015) further expands on these links, by pointing to the sale of international branded merchandise by street traders, to local customers. Other ways in which the two sectors work together is in the form of formal shop owners offering loans to informal traders (Arias, 2019), or in some cases- farmers securing stalls for traders for the sale of their farm produce (SERI, 2015).

The above has illustrated that intricate dependencies between street traders and formal business exist- a continuum that is sometimes overlooked. Similarly, SERI (2015) highlights that policy advocating for the shift of the informal economy into the formal economy, fails to recognise the links between the two. As a result, it advocates for the formal and informal sectors to be viewed as representing different parts of a single economy (*ibid*).

3.8. The aftermath of Operation Clean Sweep

Some accounts provided by City officials on Operation Clean Sweep legitimise it as a process that was concerned with screening all street traders with the aim of only allowing those that had been verified and captured accordingly on a database, to return to their places of trade (Bénit- Gbaffou, 2020). From a street traders' perspective, Emmanuel- who is an informal street trader originating from Zimbabwe and was impacted by the removal of traders in the inner- city, likened returning to work after the operation to returning to a normal life. However, he expressed the insecurity that came with knowing that there were impending plans to relocate street traders from the inner- city, without having details on '*where and when*' this was going to happen (SERI, 2015).

The following timeline (figure 2) provides a high- level overview of the key events, spanning from the execution of Operation Clean Sweep and the activities that followed. The timeline ends with street traders becoming vindicated by the Constitutional Court's ruling, passed in their favour. The details pertaining to the key events are outlined in the sections below.

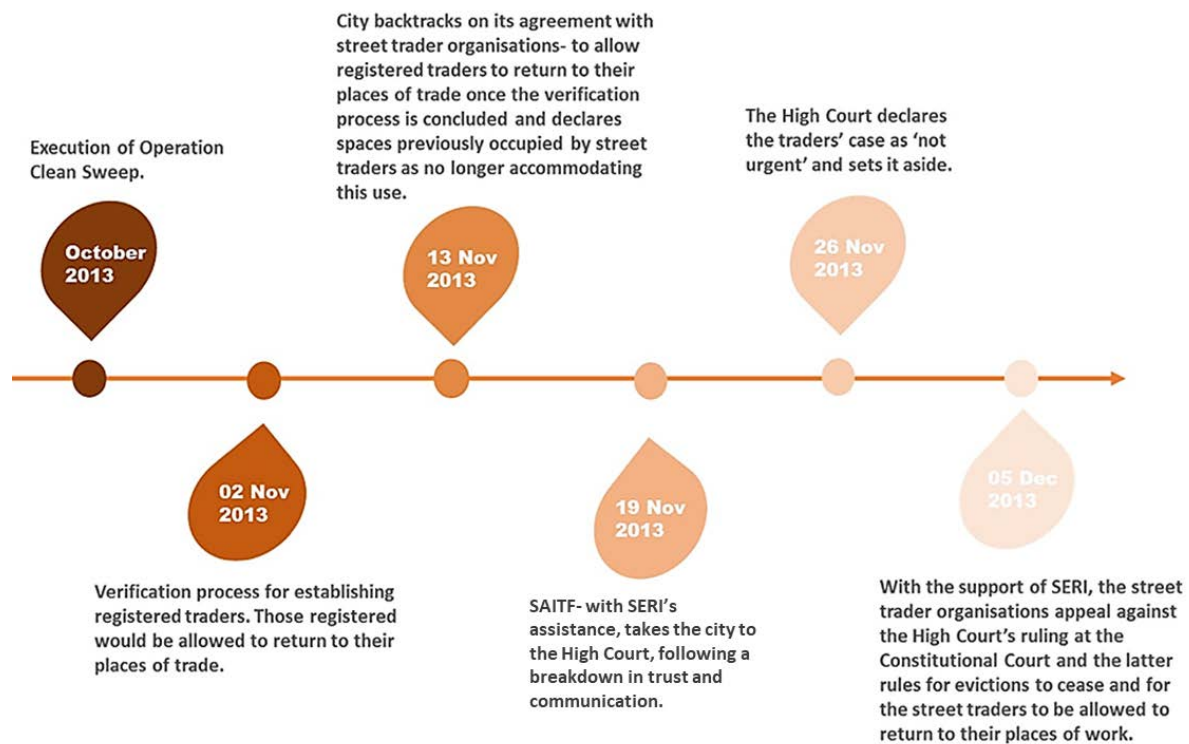


Figure 2: Key events of Operation Clean Sweep

Due to the underhanded way in which the operation was rolled out, there was an air of mistrust and tension between the City and street trader organisations, however the latter elected to approach the City in hopes of restoring the livelihoods of its members (SERI, 2015). On the 2nd of November 2013 the street traders' organisations agreed to a verification process proposed by the City- aimed at establishing who the registered street traders were, prior to allowing them to return to their stalls (*ibid*). However, once the verification process was concluded and the registered traders returned to their stalls, they were removed again by the City, and this cast suspicion on the latter's intentions behind the operation (*ibid*). This was followed by the City declaring areas that were initially taken up by trading, as no longer accommodating this use (*ibid*). The City had therefore elected to go against its agreement with the street trader organisations- which was to allow traders to return to their original trading spaces (SERI, 2015). At this point, it became evident that the objective of the operation was not to remove informal street traders operating unlawfully in the inner city; but rather served other interests concerned with the management of informal street trading- in its entirety and clearing it from this part of the city (*ibid*). This revelation inspired SAITF and its members to challenge the City's actions and on the 19th of November 2013, the Socio-Economic Rights Institute of South Africa (SERI) represented the street trader organisation at the High Court in the South of Gauteng (*ibid*). It did this by submitting an urgent interdict that would compel the City to reinstate the traders operating legally, back to their original trading spaces (*ibid*). However, on the 26th of November the case was deemed not to be urgent, and this outcome led to the lodging of an urgent appeal against the High Court's decision at the

Constitutional Court, on the 5th of December 2013. The appeal was met with success, as the Constitutional Court granted the traders' permission to return to their stalls (*ibid*).

3.9. Contravention of the Business Act

The City revealed, in some of the court papers it submitted, that the indiscriminate removal of street traders from their trading spaces was pursued out of convenience (Social Law Project, 2014). This revelation was not received well, given the impact that the operation had on the street traders' ability to generate an income (*ibid*). In addition, the actions of the City were found to be in contravention of the procedure outlined in the Business Act 1991, which talks of a consultative approach that the City must pursue prior to resorting to restricting or inhibiting street trading (*ibid*). This procedure ensures that other avenues- such as supervision or control, which may have a less adverse impact on the traders' ability to generate an income, are explored (SERI, 2015). The execution of Operation Clean Sweep was therefore marked by several contradictions, including the City's contravention of its own laws.

3.10. Conclusion

Considering the above, it is clear that informal street trading is comprised of a myriad of actors, who range from those involved in devising plans to manage it- to others who are impacted by the practical ways in which this activity is managed. Operation Clean Sweep emanated amidst ongoing efforts by the City to manage informal street trading- which were largely based on either restricting or confining it to markets. In contrast, the provincial government appeared to be interested in unifying trader organisations and creating an environment conducive to their trade, by devising regulations to achieve this end and soliciting their buy-in. This demonstrates the heterogeneity of the state- presented in the form of different levels of government pursuing different approaches to addressing informal street trading and it is worthy to note that the street trader organisations capitalised on this '*difference*' to advance their interests. As it relates to the role performed by street trader organisations, it has become clear that it varies depending on the interests being pursued, which include the interests of establishing a relationship of patronage with City officials or representing the needs of street traders.

The following chapter will be outlining the key findings made on the actors involved in urban informality- as identified through literature and those who were involved in Operation Clean Sweep, in order to identify similarities and areas of difference. The outcomes of this comparison will either confirm what is contained in literature or provide new insights on the actors involved in urban informality- represented in the form of informal street trading.

Chapter 4: A comparative analysis of the actors identified in literature on urban informality and those involved in Operation Clean Sweep

This chapter will be juxtaposing what literature on urban informality has revealed about the actors involved in informal street trading, with those identified in literature on informal street trading in Johannesburg and Operation Clean Sweep. The aim is to compare what theory says about the actors involved in informal street trading and the practical translation of informal street trading on the ground. This approach is in line with Rubin (2018), who highlights the importance of developing context specific approaches to addressing urban informality, that take the lived realities of the marginalised into account. The outcomes from the analysis will indicate the similarities and differences between the two sets of actors, and either confirm or supplement what is already known about informal street trading.

The following figure 3, is adapted from the conceptual framework presented in chapter 2, which is based on literature on urban informality. It includes an overview of the findings made from analysing the management of informal street trading in the City of Johannesburg and Operation Clean Sweep, circled in red. The aim for juxtaposing these two sets of information is to draw parallels between them or reveal differences, in an effort to advance our understanding of informal street trading.

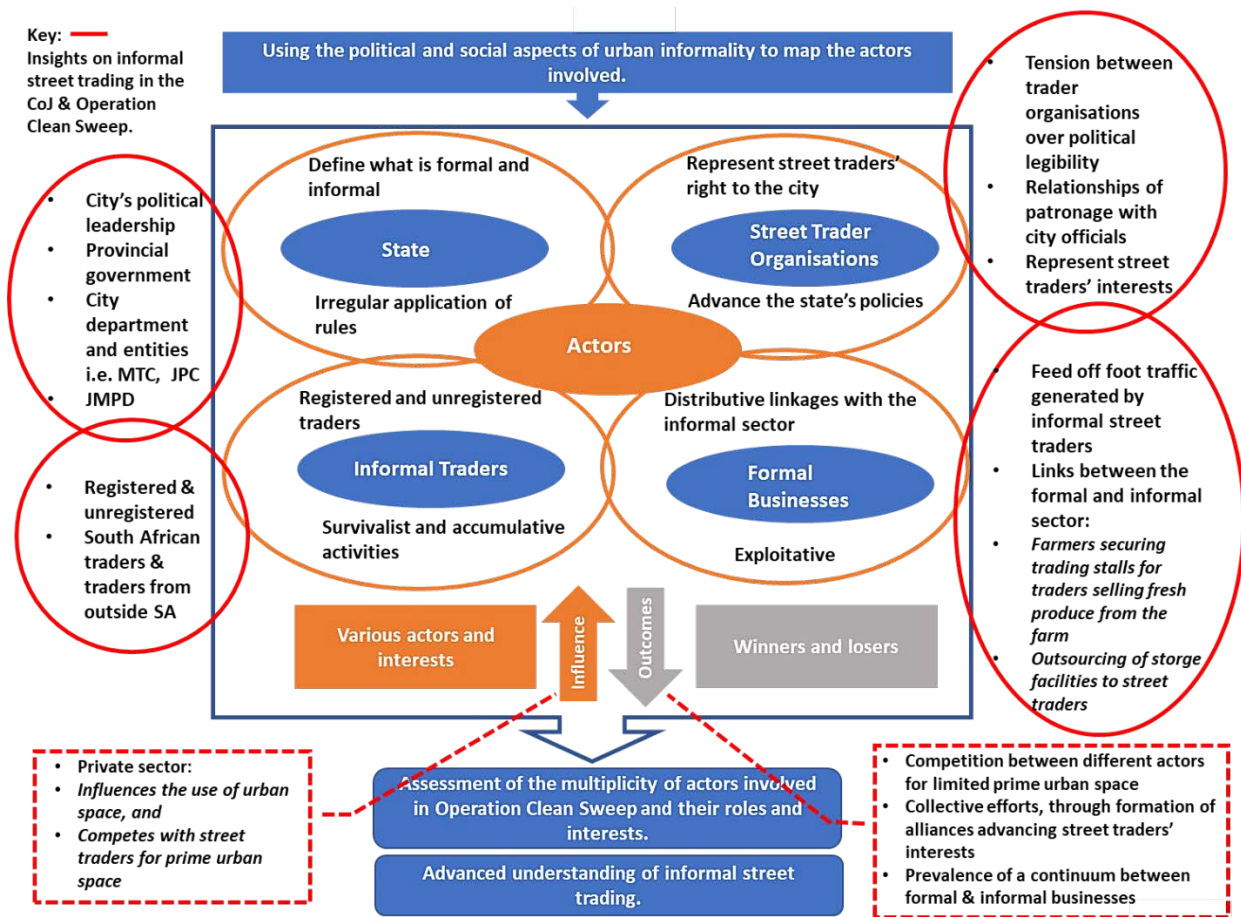


Figure 3: An overview of insights on urban informality and the management of informal street trading in the inner-city of Johannesburg and Operation Clean Sweep

a. The State

4.1. The different entities of the state as captured in literature

Literature discusses the heterogeneity of the state, evidenced in the form of the various positions held by bureaucrats and politicians, and the prevalence of various departments—each pursuing different interests (Skinner, 2019). Haid and Hilbrandt (2019) echo similar sentiments, by highlighting how the state represents different departments and spheres of government, made up of actors holding conflicting interests and assuming various positions and levels of authority.

a. The different entities of the state operating in the City of Johannesburg and involved in Operation Clean Sweep

In line with literature, the prevalence of different actors representing the state is also demonstrated in how informal street trading is managed in the City of Johannesburg. The City is responsible for formulating and enforcing informal street trading by-laws, the City's Department of Economic Development (DED) was responsible for the management of

informal street trading markets through the Metropolitan Trading Company (MTC) and later the Johannesburg Property Company (JPC). As it relates to the enforcement of by-laws, the Johannesburg Metropolitan Police Department (JMPD) is responsible for this. Lastly, the Gauteng Department of Economic Development (GDED) also featured in the management of informal street trading.

Following the execution of Operation Clan Sweep, the limitations to having different actors representing the state and managing informal street trading became apparent. Haid and Hilbrandt (2019) indicate that due to a myriad of actors representing the state, its actions may be marked by contradictions and inconsistencies, and this was the case with Operation Clean Sweep. The City held engagements with street trader organisations and assured them that only unregistered traders will be removed from the inner-city streets during the operation (Pezzano, 2016). However, what transpired was the removal of all traders by the JMPD, irrespective of their operating status (*ibid*). This illustrates how the state represents a multiplicity of actors who do not operate as a cohesive unit, and how this results in informal street trading being managed in an inconsistent manner.

4.2. The private sector and the advent of City Improvement Districts (CIDs)

a. The private sector and the emergence of CIDs as captured in literature

Arias (2019) discusses the establishment of the Central Johannesburg Partnership (CJP) in the 1990s, which was responsible for supporting formal businesses and the establishment of privately managed City Improvement Districts (CID). The latter were meant to address the urban decay that had become associated with the inner-city of Johannesburg during the 1990s (Didier et al., 2012).

CIDs were seen as a tool to influence the use of urban space, by partially accommodating a limited number of informal street traders at the exclusion of others (Pezzano, 2016). Furthermore, they were seen as representing a tool that can be used by the private sector to influence the use of urban space, a move that is referred to as the 'privatization of public space' Pezzano (2016: 503).

a. The private sector and the emergence of CIDs in the City of Johannesburg

In line with the move for private actors to shape the use of urban space as discussed in literature, Bénit-Gbaffou (2015) mentions that in the case of the inner-city of Johannesburg a limited amount of informal street trading was permitted within some CIDs and prohibited in others, and that as a result mixed feelings were held on CIDs. One side regarded them as representing a good urban development model due to the access they had to a pool of private funding, while critics of CIDs cited that the state was in a better position to manage public space for everyone's benefit- including the marginalised (*ibid*). However, CIDs ultimately

came to represent a viable mode to managing a portion of the city's informal street traders- and successes in this regard were noted.

It is therefore clear from the above that CIDs can function to serve the needs of a private minority and have been used to influence the use of urban space- at the exclusion of other users. However, Bénit- Gbaffou (2015) shares some successes- in the case of the inner- city of Johannesburg, that have been reported by informal street traders operating within CIDs and relationships of trust that have emerged as a result.

4.3. Informal street traders

a. Informal street traders as captured in literature

Lindell (2019) discusses street traders and their ability to transform urban space to suit their need of pursuing a livelihood. She achieves this by highlighting the way informal street traders use infrastructure that can be easily moved, which allows them to be flexible in their operation (*ibid*). As it relates to the heterogeneity of informal street traders, Lindell (2019) discusses it by referring to the differences in the traders' operating status; with those that are registered being subjected to rules that unregistered traders are not compelled to abide by, and as a result- having strained relations with the latter (*ibid*).

The tension between registered and unregistered informal street traders can be attributed the fact that registered street traders operate within gray space, where they have limited access to prime urban space. As a result, they become defensive over the limited access they have to space and the competition they face from unregistered street traders who are not confined to markets.

b. Informal street traders operating in the inner- city of Johannesburg

Similar to literature, informal street traders operating in the City of Johannesburg are heterogeneous in nature, in terms of their registration status and country of origin. These differences led to competing interests between the street trader organisations- especially in terms of influencing the City's approach to managing informal street trading (Pieterse, 2017). Trader organisations representing registered traders advocated for stricter measures against unregistered traders, as the latter were found not to be subjected to the costs and restrictions that come with being registered- which resulted in unfair competition (*ibid*). Furthermore, some tension existed between South African born street traders and their organisations and traders originating from other parts of Africa (*ibid*). The former called for preferential treatment in the allocation of stalls and the way by- laws were applied to them, because they were local traders (*ibid*). The tensions between registered and unregistered street traders in the case of the City of Johannesburg are akin to those discussed by Lindell (2019) and the prevalence of gray space as discussed by Yitachel (2015). Local (South African) registered street traders operating in the city did so within gray space, where they had limited access to

prime urban space. They had to compete with unregistered traders for business, which resulted in tensions between the two. Additionally, local traders wanted preferential treatment from the state over foreign street traders, and it may be tempting to label the local traders as being xenophobic, however Yiftachel (2015) calls for a deeper analysis of this tension, by considering the inequalities that are characteristic of urban cities, which result in the marginalised competing over meagre resources with anyone that represents competition.

It is therefore clear that informal street traders operating in the City of Johannesburg are not homogeneous, and this is also echoed in literature. The major difference among them is their registration status. Additionally, their country of origin also set them apart and led to some tension, with local traders wanting special treatment.

4.4. Street trader organisations

a. Street trader organisations as captured in literature

Lindell (2010) mentions that street trader organisations vary in terms of the interests that they represent, with some genuinely representing the interests of its members whilst others are used by the state to advance its plans. Furthermore, she warns that given the diversity among street traders, in terms of their income, gender and nationality- trader organisations can deepen divisions (*ibid*).

b. Street trader organisations operating in the inner- city of Johannesburg

Pezzano (2016) mentions that following unsuccessful discussions with the City's Department of Economic Development- on the street trading by- laws, the street traders established a relationship with the Gauteng Department of Economic Development (GDED). They attended workshops arranged by the latter, which were concerned with presenting the province's plans on managing informal street trading (*ibid*). This demonstrates efforts by street trader organisations, to engage other actors who could potentially assist them in advancing their members' interests. It is however reported that tensions between the street trader organisations heightened during these workshops, due to a historical relationship that one of the organisations had with the GDED (Pezzano, 2016). Furthermore, some trader organisation leaders were found to have relationships of patronage with City officials. However, despite their differences, the implementation of Operation Clean Sweep brought the trader organisations together in pursuit of justice for informal street trading in the city.

The above indicates that the street trader organisations, representing informal street traders in the inner- city of Johannesburg- wore many hats, which included representing the interests of their members or pursuing political legitimacy with the different levels of government. This illustrates the heterogeneity of street trader organisations and the fluidity of the relationships they held with different actors, based on the interests they are pursuing.

4.5. Formal businesses

a. The formal and informal continuum as captured in literature

Formal businesses are found to have a relationship with informal street trading and Yusuff (2011) refers to this in the form of distributive linkages between the two. Additionally, he cautions against notions romanticising the formalisation of informal businesses and warns that formalisation can lead to exploitation by the formal sector (*ibid*). Due to the relationship that exists between the two sectors, SERI (2015) suggests that they should not be viewed as separate- but rather as different parts of a single economy.

b. The formal and informal continuum between businesses in the inner- city of Johannesburg

As captured in literature, SERI (2015) cites various cases of mutually beneficial relationships between formal established businesses and informal street trading, which include farmers who assisted street traders with gaining access to a stall, for the trade of fresh produce grown at their farms. In the case of the inner- city of Johannesburg, the continuum between formal and informal businesses was prevalent, but was however disrupted following the execution of Operation Clean Sweep. This is evidenced by an account provided by a pie shop owner, who experienced a reduction in sales following the removal of informal street traders due to the operation (Tolsi, 2013).

The above illustrates the implications of applying policy approaches without understanding the extent of the problem being addressed. In the case of informal street trading, the operation was meant to address informal street trading in the inner- city, however ended up negatively impacting formal businesses as well- which was an unintended consequence.

4.6. Conclusion

The above analysis has served to outline the key findings on the actors involved in informal street trading, as discussed in literature and additional insights, gleaned from the management of informal street trading in the inner- city of Johannesburg and Operation Clean Sweep. As a result, it has become clear that parallels exist between literature on urban informality and insights emerging from informal street trading in the inner- city of Johannesburg and the case of Operation Clean Sweep.

The following chapter will be presenting the overall themes that have emanated from the study and attempt to connect the dots on informal street trading and the various actors involved in it- to demonstrate the usefulness of such an analysis.

Chapter 5: Lessons gleaned from applying a multi- actor perspective on urban informality

The following section will be presenting the overall themes that have emerged from the analysis on the multiplicity of actors involved in informal street trading. Additionally, it will provide a summary of the insights gained, in an effort to advance our understanding of this activity.

5.1. The multiplicity of actors involved in informal street trading and the way they relate to each other

A review of literature on urban informality- specifically informal street trading, has confirmed that there is a multiplicity of actors involved in this activity. These actors can be divided into four main groups, namely the state, informal street traders, street trader organisations and formal businesses. It must be noted that there are other actors that emerged following an analysis of Operation Clean Sweep- such as the courts and block leaders, who are not included in the study. This is because the study focussed on the actors that featured prominently in the sources considered. However, the additional actors can be considered in future research endeavours to add more texture to the analysis.

The actors identified in literature on urban informality were also identified when analysing informal street trading in the inner- city of Johannesburg and Operation Clean Sweep. However, an additional actor that was included in the study because they featured dominantly in the inner- city of Johannesburg, is the private sector. The prevalence of a multiplicity of actors involved in Operation Clean Sweep- assuming different roles and pursuing varying interests, led to the emergence of tension and conflict between them. For instance, in the case of the state inconsistencies in the management of informal street trading in the city emerged - including how the operation was executed, and this was as a result of there being a myriad of actors involved.

As it relates to how the actors relate to one another, the relationship that street trader organisations had with the state was fluid and ranged between confrontation and cooperation, depending on the interests and outcomes they were pursuing. Additionally, fluidity was seen in the nature of the relationship between street trader organisations representing different constituencies. Their relationship had initially been marked by tension, however this was set aside in an effort to form a strong alliance and fight against the execution of Operation Clean Sweep. Lastly, the relationship between some of the actors was symbiotic- evidenced by formal businesses renting out storage space to informal street traders and farmers securing stalls for street traders in exchange for the sale of their farm produce by the traders. This demonstrates the value of recognising the multiplicity of actors involved in informal street trading and how they relate to each other, which varies based on the interests and outcomes being pursued. Adding the above- mentioned facets to the conceptualisation of informal street trading can inspire the development of policy approaches that speak to how

the different actors involved navigate the space they operate in and draw on the fluid nature of their relationships with others to pursue their interests

5.2. Competition over prime urban space

As it relates to access to urban space, Arias (2019) highlights how urban space represents contested terrain between various actors, including those pursuing informal livelihoods and others involved in formal businesses. Lindell (2019) points to the fact that both these formal and informal actors are involved in influencing and shaping the way urban space is used. Additionally, Yiftachel (2015) highlights how the limited access that some urban residents have to resources such as urban space results in the creation of gray space, which leads to tension mounting between the marginalised who have partial or limited access to urban resources, and new entrants who represents competition over the limited resources available. This was seen in the tension between registered and unregistered informal street traders.

Lastly, Operation Clean Sweep has shed light on some of the competing interests, ideas and views on how urban space should be used and how the city should look. In addition, it has illuminated the City's inability to manage the conflicting interests held by various actors (Arias, 2019), including itself. As such, balancing the different needs for urban space and ensuring that it is enjoyed by all urban dwellers may have to be carried out by all the users of the space. This is due to the fact that the state has been found to represent diverse interests and is therefore not impartial.

5.3. The power of collective effort

The power of collective effort was demonstrated by informal street trader organisations working together to represent their members against the unlawful execution of Operation Clean Sweep. This collective effort required the street trader organisations to set their differences aside and the positive outcome that was granted by the Constitutional Court, was enjoyed by all the street traders- registered or not; including those that were not affiliated with the street trader organisations (Benit- Gbaffou, 2016).

However, Pezzano (2016) mentions that short lived collective efforts do not result in material changes, and this suggests that more sustained approaches to advancing the interests of informal street traders are required. Lindell (2010) mentions that such efforts are already underway, with street trader organisations aspiring to operate at a national level, establishing alliances with social movements and non- governmental bodies; and forming international networks to advance the rights of informal workers. However, she cautions that such networks may not always represent the common interests of informal actors and have the potential to deepen inequality (*ibid*).

5.4. The usefulness of applying a multi-actor perspective to urban informality

It has become clear that informal street trading is not only concerned with informal street traders pursuing a livelihood and the state devising ways to manage this activity. It is rather comprised of many other actors, who include the private sector and street trader organisations, to mention a few. The common thread among the actors involved in this activity is that they are all competing for access to prime urban space- which is a limited resource. The difference among them is marked by the fact that they are involved in informal street trading for different reasons and thus the interests they are pursuing are not the same. Another difference is the power that some actors have in influencing the use of limited prime urban space, which in the case of informal street trading in the inner-city, was the private sector. Additionally, the state's ability to determine how informal street trading must be managed and which urban actors can have access to urban space at the exclusion of some creates gray space, wherein urban residents who have limited access to space resort to fighting any competition that threatens their limited access to it.

As it relates to the relationship between the different actors involved in informal street trading, they have been demonstrated as being fluid- ranging from being cooperative, confrontational, competitive or symbiotic. What determines the nature of the relationship is the envisaged outcomes or interests being pursued. This demonstrates how actors involved in informal street trading are political in nature and are pursuing different interests. It is therefore important to recognise the different dynamics of their relationships, to ensure that policy responses capitalise on the positive aspects of them (symbiotic relationship between formal and informal businesses) and responds to the contentious aspects (competition over limited access to urban space and the prevalence of gray space resulting in defensive urban citizenship).

Considering the above, it has become clear that analysing the political and social aspects of informal street trading- using the case of Operation Clean Sweep is helpful in highlighting the multifaceted nature of this activity, in terms of the multiplicity of actors involved and the nature of their relationships. As it relates to the actors involved, the varying characteristics they exhibit have demonstrated the limitations of applying policy and related approaches in a way that does not consider their differences. This is in line with Rogan (2018) who states that it is important for policy makers to recognise the diversity of the informal sector, presented in the form of the different characteristics that informal workers exhibit and the varied structure of informal businesses, in order for policy to support the contribution this sector makes towards job creation. It is therefore evident that a tailored approach to addressing informal street trading- which is context specific, is required. One that could possibly have the added benefit of inspiring a departure from modernist planning approaches, which appear to persist in cities of the South. In conclusion, the outcomes of the study have been valuable in expanding the conceptualisation of urban informality, beyond predominant spatial and economic views, to include the socio-political aspects of it. Additionally, they have demonstrated the value of devising policy and related approaches to managing urban

informality, in a way that recognises the prevalence, heterogeneity of and the interpersonal relationships among the actors involved; whilst noting their common struggle over gaining access to limited prime urban space.

Appendices

A- Ethics Certificate



24 February 2022

Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment:

Ethics clearance letter:

Dear Puleleng Makhetha

Student number (07010456), this letter confirms that your ethics application has been cleared. Your clearance/protocol number SOAP120/06/2021

Yours sincerely

Lerato Nkosi

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lerato Nkosi', is written over the printed name.

B- Plagiarism declaration

Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment

Private Bag 3, Wits 2050, South Africa * Telephone (011) 717 – 7007 * Fax: (011) 717 7008 * Email: fab@wits.ac.za



PLAGIARISM DECLARATION TO BE SIGNED BY ALL HIGHER DEGREE STUDENTS

SENATE PLAGIARISM POLICY: APPENDIX ONE

I Puleng Makhetha (Student number: 07010451) am a student
registered for the degree of Msc Development Planning in the academic year 2022.

I hereby declare the following:

- I am aware that plagiarism (the use of someone else's work without their permission and/or without acknowledging the original source) is wrong.
- I confirm that the work submitted for assessment for the above degree is my own unaided work except where I have explicitly indicated otherwise.
- I have followed the required conventions in referencing the thoughts and ideas of others.
- I understand that the University of the Witwatersrand may take disciplinary action against me if there is a belief that this is not my own unaided work or that I have failed to acknowledge the source of the ideas or words in my writing.

Signature: *P Makhetha* Date: 28 November 2022

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