



**Post COVID-19 recovery, renewal, and resilience strategies for township
taverns: a case study of selected taverns in Soweto**

by

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Date

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to establish the recovery, renewal, and resilience strategies that township taverns in Soweto Township in Johannesburg in South Africa could implement post-COVID 19. The growth and development of small-to-medium and micro enterprises such as township taverns are crucial for the development of the country as they contribute immensely to employment creation, poverty reduction and the eradication of inequality. This study used a social constructivist research design to collect and analyse data from 20 tavern owners and 10 managers who were purposively selected to participate in the study. The data revealed that the majority of the township taverns in Soweto were adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in both their businesses and their personal lives. The findings reveal that township taverns have implemented several recovery, renewal, and resilience strategies to stay afloat and continue operating. Some of the key strategies include efficient management of business and personal costs, the introduction of new products, diversification, and joint procurement. The study recommends that government should provide more support to the sector and that the operators of township taverns should find a way to procure in bulk as associations or buying teams.

Key words

Recovery, renewals, resilience, tavern, strategy

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And to God... be the glory!

Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my wife and children.

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ABBREVIATIONS

CPUT:	Cape Peninsula University of Technology
GDP:	Gross Domestic Product
DBSA:	Development Bank of Southern Africa
DTI:	Department of Trade and Industry
NDP:	National Development Plan
NLTA:	National Liquor Trades Association
OECD:	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SMMEs:	Small to Medium and Micro Enterprises
SAB:	South African Breweries
WB:	World Bank
FEMA:	Federal Emergency Management Agency

Clarification of Basic Terms and Concepts

Constructivism— is defined as the knowledge constructed by humans that becomes accepted as the way of life and knowledge as well as the standard of acceptable living in a particular society (Theys, 2017).

Social constructionism— is defined from the perspective that all knowledge, and therefore all meaningful reality, is contingent upon human practices being constructed in and out of the interaction between human beings and their world and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context (Crotty, 1998:42).

Recovery - the return of all systems to as normal a state as possible (FEMA, 2000). In the context of the study, the ability of the tavern to return to normal and full operations as known prior the advent of Covid-19.

Renewal – Renewal (in business) can be described as the process of refreshing the operations (competitiveness) of a business when it is experiencing harsh changes in the market or environment (BCG, 2022). In this context, the Covid-19 lockdown regulations which included liquor sale bans caused high profit losses amongst taverns.

Resilience - The ability of a system to maintain function when shocked (Rose and Krausmann, 2013). In this context, the ability for taverns to continue trading while enduring the devastating effects of Covid-19.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic across the world has brought about a humanitarian crisis of unprecedented proportions across the global business landscape (Mathivathanan and Sivakumar, 2021; Ivanov and Das Kumar, 2020; Van Hoek, 2020). Almost all businesses across the world have been shaken to the core by the pandemic and business owners are facing huge challenges brought about by this global catastrophe (Mathivathanan and Sivakumar, 2021).

According to Eicker and Cilliers (2019) small businesses, especially retailers, require sound business strategies to survive and remain competitive. The need to select the most appropriate and relevant business strategies, therefore, is cardinal (Eicker and Cilliers, 2019). Aldrich (2011) posits that in contemporary times, the issue of business recovery has become a growing area of interest and should focus on issues such as how businesses could renew and reinvent themselves and become resilient in the future (Battisti and Deakins, 2017). Renewal (in business) can be described as the process of refreshing the operations (competitiveness) of a business when it is experiencing harsh changes in the market or environment (BCG, 2022). Several studies have been conducted on business recovery after a disaster and a limited number of studies focusing on how businesses could operate in the post-COVID-19 environment.

The advent of COVID-19 in South Africa brought unprecedented challenges of enormous proportions to the liquor retailing industry in general and township taverns in particular. Taverns are small, medium and micro sized, liquor retailers where liquor is sold for consumption within the premises (Mrasi, 2017). Townships are areas that were dominated by (Africans, Coloureds and Indians) and were deliberately excluded from mainstream economic participation and services (Sibiya, 2012). The implementation of a national shutdown by the South African government in March 2020 meant that businesses such as taverns, which were not regarded as essential

services, had to close. From March 2020 until March 2022, there have been intermittent changes in the different lockdown levels leading to either the complete closure of township taverns or limitations in terms of their hours and days of operation.

Ultimately, the intermittent lockdown regulations have led to the closure of some township taverns, loss of market share and loss of revenue for others, while many have become heavily under-capitalised as they have not been included in the priority list of businesses that should benefit from support from the government (Anakpo and Mishi 2021). With the future seemingly unknown, health scientists predict that the immunisation of the majority of the country's citizens to achieve herd immunity may herald the return to normalcy for businesses (Azimi et al., 2021). This return to normalcy may not be "normal" in the sense of the way the taverns used to operate, as COVID-19 has fundamentally affected these businesses. It is, therefore, important for these businesses to be forward-looking and start planning for the post-COVID-19 business environment (Deloitte, 2021). The Covid-19 pandemic thus challenges businesses to come up with strategies to stabilise and to proactively prepare for an uncertain future (Deloitte, 2021) and many businesses do not have such plans. This research gap is what this study intended to fill. As such, the study sought to establish the recovery, renewal, and resilience strategies that township taverns in Soweto can implement in a post-COVID-19 environment.

1.2 Background

South Western Townships (Soweto) is the largest formerly-disadvantaged township in South Africa (Badenhorst-Weiss et al., 2014). The name "townships" in South Africa refer to those neighbourhoods that were previously reserved for the black population during the apartheid era.

Jürgens and Donaldson (2012) posit that the advent of democracy in 1994 brought about the prioritisation of the development of townships through the implementation of policies such as the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) and the Growth, Employment, and Redistribution (GEAR). Manley (2013) argues that this policy shift was meant to develop the townships and change their image as "informal settlements" and transform them into business hubs. These policies were successful

to some extent, as evidenced by the emergence of the black middle class in the townships (Donaldson et al., 2013)

In view of the fact that the majority of the population of South Africa is African, the “township market” is huge and contributes significantly to the country’s gross domestic product (GDP). Eicker and Cilliers (2019) highlight that the population of Soweto is about 1.2 million (current estimates indicate that it has grown to at least 1.9 million) and is, therefore, a key retail growth point. The township market possesses huge growth potential for the South African market (The World Bank, 2016) and this has led to the growth of the “township economy.” The Department of Trade and Industry (2018) reported that the township liquor industry contributes significantly to South Africa’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and is worth between R40 – R60 billion, which translates to about 43% of all liquor sales in the country. Furthermore, about 80 – 90% of all alcohol sold in the township is sold through township taverns (DTI, 2018) and as such, the township market makes the largest contribution to liquor sales in South Africa (Mrasi, Mason and Jere, 2018). South Africa’s National Development Plan (NDP) reflects an ambitious target of 90% of employment opportunities in the country to emanate from small businesses such as township taverns by 2030 (Eicker and Cilliers, 2019). These statistics highlight that township taverns are important role players in the national economy and thus their recovery, renewal, and resilience post-Covid-19 is critical for national economic development and the achievement of the goals of the NDP.

1.3 Statement of the Research Problem

The COVID-19 pandemic is an unprecedented global and national disaster that has fundamentally affected many businesses in South Africa and across the world. Current media reports point out that small to medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs), a category in which township taverns fall, has been the hardest hit by COVID-19 restrictions (Maeko, 2020). Generally, most township taverns are sole proprietorships that are operated for subsistence purposes and, as such the closure or curtailment of their operations may have a fundamental impact on their continued operations; and for many of them, even their existence. As the COVID-19 pandemic is novel to the whole country in general and to township taverns in particular, there is a need to establish strategies that can be implemented to guide the effective recovery, renewal,

and resilience of these businesses in the post-COVID-19 era. There is therefore a need for research to establish the strategies that township taverns can implement to recover and renew their operations after COVID-19. As part of creating learning organisations, it is imperative for the research to be carried out to establish the strategies that these taverns can implement in order to be resilient to any future pandemics and to be able to build sustainable liquor retailing businesses. Furthermore, the fact that the township liquor market is regarded as the “main market” by South African Breweries (SAB), which is the largest beer manufacturer in the country (Mrasi, Mason and Jere, 2018), means that research to establish the recovery, renewal and resilience strategies that township taverns can implement to sustain their businesses post-Covid-19 is critical and in the national interest in terms of national economic development and sustainability.

1.4 Rationale and Significance of the Study

The rationale of this study was to establish the strategies that township taverns can implement in order to be able to run their businesses successfully during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. The study, therefore, sought to establish the recovery, renewal and resilience strategies that the township taverns can implement in order to ensure the growth and sustainability of their business post-Covid19.

This study is significant to township taverns and other small businesses that seek to operate sustainably after the COVID-19 pandemic. The study, therefore, recommends the recovery, renewal and resilience strategies that the businesses could implement in order to overcome the challenges that were brought upon their businesses by the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to this, the study makes a valuable contribution to the retail business management body of knowledge by proposing recovery, renewal and resilience strategies that could be implemented by small retail businesses such as taverns, when their operations have been affected by a pandemic or disaster.

Furthermore, this study is significant to the researcher as it is a partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Retail Business Management degree at the CPUT.

1.5 Research Aim

The aim of the study was to establish strategies to enhance the operations, recovery, renewal and resilience of township taverns in Soweto after the COVID-19 pandemic.

1.6 Research Questions

- What strategies can township taverns implement to recover from the effects of COVID-19 on their businesses?
- What strategies can township taverns implement to renew their businesses post COVID-19?
- What strategies can township taverns implement in order to make their businesses resilient post COVID-19?
- What challenges could township taverns face when implementing recovery, renewal, and resilience strategies post-COVID-19?

1.7 Research Objectives

1. To establish the strategies that township taverns could implement to recover from the effects of COVID-19 on their businesses.
2. To identify the strategies that township taverns could implement to renew their businesses post COVID-19.
3. To investigate the strategies that township taverns could implement in order to make their businesses resilient post COVID-19.
4. To establish the challenges that township taverns could face when implementing recovery, renewal, and resilience strategies post-COVID-19.

1.8. Underpinning Theoretical Framework

The main purpose of this study was to establish the strategies that township taverns can implement to recover from the effects of COVID-19, renew their businesses and become resilient to future disasters. Since this is an exploratory qualitative study underpinned by an inductive research design, the study sought to consolidate and develop theory rather than test theory. As such, the study loosely followed a broad theoretical framework including theories such as the going concern concept, transformation theory, disaster recovery theory, business continuity theory, and business sustainability theory.

Generally, literature has it that businesses are established with the going concern principle in mind; that is, they are supposed to be entities that have perpetual existence if effectively and efficiently managed. KPMG (2020) reported that current events and conditions across the world may have a significant impact on businesses' ability to continue operating as going concerns. Current literature attests to the fact that about 80% of small businesses in South Africa cease to exist within five years of their establishment (Strydom, 2015). With this fact in mind, coupled with the additional challenges that COVID-19 has placed on small businesses such as township taverns, the need for these businesses to recover from the devastating effects of COVID-19 on their operations, renew themselves to be able to effectively operate again, and reinvent themselves to implement disaster resilience strategies to ensure that their businesses are resilient and sustainable in case of future risks, are indeed areas that require academic and practitioner attention.

Mathivathanan and Sivakumar (2021) conducted a study that focused on logistics and supply chain recovery post-COVID-19 and postulated that though many businesses have started planning for the post-COVID-19 era, their focus remains short-term. However, to build successful businesses, the focus of the post-COVID-19 environment should be on building capacity and resilience against such future shocks from a long-term perspective. Patel and Keerthana (2019) conducted a study on disaster recovery and business continuity management focusing on information technology infrastructure, and they posited that there is a need to find ways of remaining relevant and operational, leveraging the digital economy to maintain business operability.

Patel and Keerthana (2019) further noted that business recovery and continuity is vital for many organisations as a disruption of operations can negatively impact the business. Brown et al. (2019) conducted a study on business recovery after a disaster and they argued that effective leadership and planning are required for successful business recovery. Brown et al. (2019) further elucidated that recovery is not a sprint but a marathon and as such, businesses need to take a long-term view of their recovery initiatives. Providing leadership in a post-disaster recovery environment requires significant time and energy (Brown et al., 2019).

Business continuity and resilience continue to evoke the interest of researchers worldwide. Businesses, therefore, need to be ready to adapt to new environments and be ready to take advantage of the emerging opportunities in order to reinvent themselves for the future (Brown et al., 2019). Crowe (2021) points out that the need to adapt their operations and survive in a post- COVID-19 environment is the biggest challenge facing retailers in contemporary times. The post-COVID-19 environment requires retail businesses to implement new strategies and different operating models (Crowe, 2021).

Taverns are a significant part of the extensive socio-economic activity in South African townships, benefitting not only the business owners themselves but the communities in which they are situated. Most of these businesses are small to medium in size and therefore it can be argued that the restrictions imposed to curb COVID-19 affected businesses operating in poor communities more adversely than other businesses by virtue of factors. The central critique is that the social gathering in these social places and centres of liquor-based socio-economic activities are unregulated and therefore pose a danger of super-spreading COVID-19.

In this regard, recovery of the taverns from the devastating impact of COVID-19 must be central to the revival of local livelihoods and should be part of the development plan as many people are employed in the liquor industry in townships (Rehm et al., 2020). Therefore, any recovery process should be backed by a strategic process of building robust, resilient, inclusive, and sustainable economic tavern ecosystems that take into

consideration the pandemic's catastrophic impacts, and the tremendous stress it has put on the individuals as well as the social, cultural, economic and political systems.

The challenge that emerges is for the governmental authorities to recognise the role that taverns play in the economy and strike a balance between the pandemic management, ensuring business sustainability, and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. This requires a thorough consideration of how Soweto's taverns can be made inherently resilient to cope with mounting and emerging COVID-19 pandemic challenges and enable positive progress in Soweto as part of the broader township community in South Africa. This challenge evoked an interest in the researcher to interrogate these matters and address critical issues relating to the impact of the pandemic on these businesses and how a more resilient, inclusive, and sustainable tavern business industry can be built in Soweto. In this regard, there is a dearth in the literature pertaining to the post-COVID-19 recovery, renewal, and resilience strategies for small businesses such as township taverns in Soweto.

1.9 Research Methodology and Design

The research methodology and design are the most fundamental aspects of any study as they provide the direction of the research process, together with the fieldwork in terms of how the data will be collected from the participants. In this study, the data was collected through interviews with purposively selected tavern owners and managers. The research process had its challenges in terms of data gathering, largely resulting from the fact that the data collection for this study was conducted while the COVID-19 lockdown regulations remained in force to prevent the spread of the virus.

The deliberate move to use social constructivism as the philosophical paradigm for this study was based on the view that it is one of the most efficient tools that can potentially yield many benefits in research in the conduct of research in diverse fields of study (Adom et al., 2016). According to Pande and Bharathi (2020), and Bogna et al. (2020), a constructivism philosophical paradigm asserts that people construct their understanding and knowledge of the world, and this can be through their experiences and things that they are going through, or they have gone through in the past, as they reflect on those experiences and seek to make sense out of the reality of their life.

Fundamentally, Adom et al. (2016) argue that social constructivism is based on the view that people form or construct much of what they learn through experiences, while Cashman et al (2008) and Hein (1991) emphasised that the reality of life and business is built around these important experiences of the people. Consequently, the constructivist paradigm entails that people construct meaning about life through learning. Therefore, the application of the constructivist philosophy in the study of the operations of taverns aided the researcher in understanding the strategies that they could implement to recover, renew, and become resilient in a post-COVID-19 environment, portrays the idea that business operations can best be understood comprehensively from the perspective of the experience of the operators.

Ultimately, constructivists believe that knowledge derives through the spirit of experimentation and doing, which is the experience they go through (Fedyk and Xu, 2018). The constructivist philosophy enables researchers to understand the issues and processes in terms of what the people have been fully engaged in and the experiences they obtained in engaging in those activities that enable or hinder their operations; in which they discover personally, the knowledge or truth and the reality of issues that they would have gone through (Habersang and Reihlen 2018). It is evident that the adoption of constructivism as a research philosophy in this study has gone a long way in practically documenting the views and experiences of taverns owners, thus giving a true picture of the critical elements of economic activity in the tavern sector and enabling a prognosis of the strategies that they can employ in order to recover from the effects of COVID-19, renew their businesses and become resilient to future disasters.

The researcher adopted the qualitative research method in undertaking this study in order to understand the operations of taverns from the perspective of their recovery, renewal and resilience in a post- COVID-19 environment. In this case, the researcher used the Grounded Theory approach in which interviews were carried out with operators of township taverns, highlighting the relevance of the qualitative research approach. Furthermore, the researcher reinforced the Grounded Theory approach with document collection and analysis. One of the key advantages of using document analysis, as Hefferman (2013) noted is that in using sources like textbooks,

magazines, applicable business models, and so forth, the researcher gains critical insights regarding the phenomenon of interest.

It is a well-known fact that businesses have been affected by COVID-19, and the inclusion of the interview technique as one of the qualitative research data collection methods provided the researcher with extensive amounts of empirical contexts, not imagined but experienced by the people in operating their businesses. This was important in understanding and shedding more light on how the pandemic affected the operations of taverns and what needs to be done for these businesses to be resilient should such or a similar event occur. As such, the researcher was able to interpret the results based on the information collected from participants who have been affected by the pandemic.

Thus, the qualitative method was the most appropriate in this context as it integrates the interpretivist analysis aspects. The inclusion of documentary data in that perspective helps to uncover hidden meanings of the phenomena which can be decoded for public presentation in academic papers and the public comprehension of the operating environment (Ghauri et al., 2020). The well-considered decision to use interviews and review written materials using the qualitative method thus enabled the researcher to answer all the research questions and fulfil the research objectives. The interviews enriched the study by providing rich and insightful information about what the tavern owners experienced and documenting these experiences from their perspective, thereby enhancing the researcher's understanding of the phenomenon and its impact on township taverns.

1.9.1 Research Strategy

As has been highlighted, the constructivism philosophical paradigm is associated with the qualitative research approach (Johnson et al., 2020). In seeking to understand the phenomenon under study from the experiences or angles of the participants using different data collecting agents, an exploratory phenomenological research design was adopted for the simple reason that this design provided deep insights and scope to the researcher to construct meanings from the phenomena under study through the experiences of the participants who participated in the research study. Their views

were interpreted to attach meaning and construct reality from their views around which truth is objectively built (Smith and Shinebourne, 2012).

As a result, the researcher evaluated what was said during the interviews that were carried out with taverns owners to ascertain the real facts on the ground that related to the overall operations of taverns, particularly with regard to their recovery and renewal, as well as how, going forward, these enterprises can build resilience.

In the quest to find the true state of the business situation given the devastating COVID-19, the researcher considered it prudent to engage the operators of taverns in their natural settings so that their experiences could be shared in an environment that they are familiar with. Moreover, as mentioned above, the exploratory phenomenological research design using constructivism as the research philosophy asserts that reality is subjective because it is from the individual perspectives of the participants who are engaged in the study and can therefore be quite diverse and varied across different people within the same cluster of business. Therefore, this approach delved into the meanings of the events through interactions with the people in their social and cultural contexts in order to mitigate against misconceptions and thus enable the readers to ascertain the truth about COVID-19 in terms of its impact in relation to the operations of the township taverns.

Research studies such as this one, which use an exploratory phenomenological design that operates on a constructivism philosophical paradigm, in the majority of the cases, provide researchers with the opportunity to ask open-ended questions which provide responses on which valid conclusions can be decanted to formulate an opinion, recommendations and even develop a theory (Bhatt et al., 2020). As a result, the phenomenological design, underpinned by a qualitative research approach, was adopted in this study.

The use of phenomenological design helped the researcher to explore and understand tavern owners' perspectives and description of the COVID-19 events from their vast business lived experiences (Brinkmann and Kvale, 2015). It can be argued from this perspective that this approach was important as it was instrumental in identifying key thematic areas, which then guided in data collection and analysis process.

1.9.2 Sampling Considerations

The sample size for this study was thirty (30) participants targeting mainly tavern businesses that have been operating in Soweto. They formed the core sample group of people who were engaged to discuss the critical elements of post- COVID-19 recovery, renewal and resilience strategies for township taverns focusing on selected township taverns in Soweto. Historically, Soweto has always been a centre of diverse activities, from politics to entertainment and tourism. The tavern concept has been prominent throughout the years, hence the choice of Soweto as the location for this research.

The interviews were conducted only with tavern operators in Soweto, and these were selected purposively to participate in the study. For a participant to be included in the study, they needed to meet the following criteria:

- The participant must be a tavern owner or must be managing a tavern.
- The tavern must be in Soweto.
- The tavern must have been operating before the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The tavern must still be operating.

The researcher used his contacts through the National Liquor Trades Association to purposively select the participants for the study. One of the key aspects of purposive sampling, in this case, is that it helps to gather a chain of potential interviewees, which in other cases is referred to as snowball sampling. This approach involves attempting to locate key informants in the field by talking to well-placed people who can refer the interviewer to individuals and even documentary information, which can also be cited in the discussions and presentation of the results (Ames et al., 2019). This allows the researcher to explore pioneering ideas that are used to explain the phenomena.

1.9.3 Data Collection Instruments

The researcher conducted interviews with tavern owners to gain a deeper insight into their views on post COVID-19 recovery, renewal, and resilience strategies for township taverns, with a special focus on taverns operating in Soweto. According to Kvale (1996), an interview is regarded as a conversation whose purpose is to gather

descriptions of the life of the interviewee as well as their perceptions and understanding of a phenomenon. Ideally, the interviewee must elucidate the significance of the issues being questioned and should be able to describe phenomena and all the interrelated issues that affect the operations of a business in this instance.

An interview is essentially a dialogue between and among people who are both seeking to know and clarify the issues that are being questioned, with the main aim of acquiring in-depth information about certain topical matters or subjects. Through this process, the phenomenon can be interpreted in terms of its meanings and impact on society (Sampson and Johannessen, 2020). Johnson and Harris (2002) argue that interviews yield important information that would have been left out by other methods and given that they are interactive, follow up questions can be asked to elicit more comprehensive information (Zubiri- Esnaola, 2020). Struwing and Stead (2001) buttressed this by stressing that interviews with a limited number of questions can be conducted on small samples and still yield valuable information.

In this case, it was prudent that the interviews be conducted with targeted individuals who would be able to provide comprehensive data for the study through a purposive process, which creates a link between the technique used and the sampling method. The interviews in this case anchored this study. Brace (2018:5) posits that during interviews, respondents participate interactively, and they can give valuable information that is not covered in other forms of research such as surveys with closed questions. By engaging the respondents “face-to-face,” the researcher was able to obtain crucial information from key persons by seeking clarification on their perceptions regarding the post COVID-19 recovery, renewal, and resilience strategies for township taverns.

The interviews for this study were conducted face-to-face with all the participants. The researcher obtained the details of the participants through his contacts in the township liquor retailing industry.

1.9.4 Data Analysis

This study adopted a Grounded Theory-based analysis approach in which the researcher provided generalisations based on the analysis of the data that was obtained from the field. It is imperative to highlight that Grounded Theory is a qualitative method, and literature states that it enables researchers to study a particular phenomenon or process to discover new elements, including theories that are based on the collection and analysis of real-world data. In this case, this methodology was used to delve into the real effect of COVID-19 on the tavern business in terms of understanding their recovery, renewal and resilience post COVID-19 (Hadley, 2019).

Unlike other approaches to data analysis, such as deductive approaches, the Grounded Theory is inductive in the sense that the central issues are looked at in terms of the manifestation of the problem in terms of its outcomes and outputs and the researcher is then able to come up with a set of explanations and assumptions and then verify them inductively and possibly generate new theories from the data (Belgrave and Seide, 2019). Fundamentally, the process of data collection, data analysis, and theory development happens is an iterative process in which the participants are involved, and the information that is collected is cross-checked for validation until scientific conclusions are drawn based on the theoretical saturation of reality (Belgrave and Seide, 2019).

In terms of the data analysis, the researcher used Atlas.ti software, which has been rightly acknowledged as an important means of effectively facilitating researchers' ability to undertake well-organised, systematic, effective, and efficient data analysis in complex studies such as those that deal with critical elements of issues that are not very well-known (Lewis, 2004; Lu and Shulman, 2008; Rambaree and Faxelid, 2013).

There is no doubt that the Atlas ti. software renders qualitative data more visual and portable, and it also eases the process of analytical discussion and triangulation, where multiple datasets, methods and theories are used in order to address the research question. For example, Atlas.ti is not only a tool for supporting qualitative data analysis but also accompanies the central issues from conception to the end of

a project. Therefore, the reader understands the entire full cycle of issues (Shiyuti et al., 2021).

1.9.5 Delimitation of the Study

This study was conducted in Soweto in Gauteng Province. It involved interviews with 30 owners or managers of taverns in the township. The participants were purposively selected by the researcher. Figure 1.1 below shows a map of Soweto.

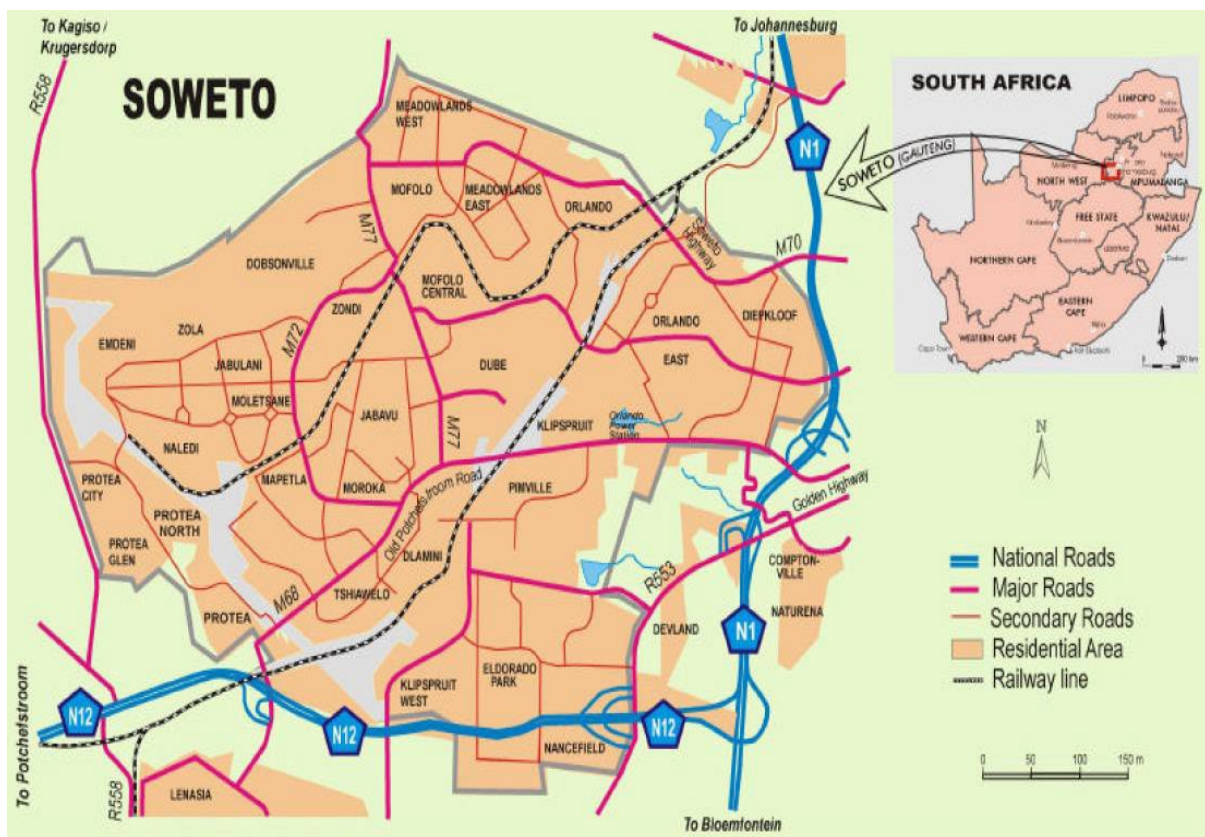


Figure 1.1 Map of Soweto (AfriGIS, 2019)

Soweto was developed as a township for black people under the apartheid system. It played a crucial role in the struggle against apartheid and many anti-apartheid demonstrations and activities occurred in and from Soweto. The name Soweto is an acronym, made up in apartheid days - from the first two letters of the words "South Western Township".

It is important to mention that Soweto became central to the liberation of South Africa, and as a result, it became one of the most active townships and a hotbed for the struggle to end apartheid. In terms of population, data obtained from the literature suggest that Soweto is currently inhabited by approximately 1.9 million people Eicker and Cilliers (2019). It resembles the true South African culture with some of the homes being extravagant mansions while others are makeshift shacks that have been built over time, making it a melting pot of South African cultures. Soweto as an old township has always been known for its enterprising majority of black residents, its rich cultural interaction and its heritage, which epitomise the life of indigenous people of South Africa. The home of the iconic Nelson Mandela is also found in Soweto, and this puts ice on the cake of Soweto as a vibrant social-cultural destination, with sites such as Kliptown (where the Freedom Charter was drawn up), the Hector Petersen Memorial site, restaurants, and shopping malls. This vibrant socio-cultural environment includes several taverns where people socialise and enjoy a few drinks (Schurink and Ndabandaba , 1990).

1.10 Outline of the dissertation

This dissertation is organised into five chapters as follows:

Chapter 1 highlights the objectives of the research study with regards to establishing implementable strategies to enhance the operations, recovery, renewal, and resilience of township taverns in Soweto after the COVID-19 pandemic. By way of a comprehensive introduction and contextual background, the chapter also highlights the critical role that taverns play as a sub-sector of the liquor industry in South Africa. The chapter covers the objectives, research questions, rationale, and delimitations of the study and provides an overview of the methods that were used for data collection and analysis.

Chapter 2 provides the literature review on business continuity, recovery, renewal, and resilience. In doing so, the literature review identified the gaps and the opportunities in as far as the recovery, renewal and resilience is concerned within the context of township taverns operations in Soweto after COVID-19. The literature review also brought to light the ideas and key aspects of the taverns economy to inform the implementation of interventions that can help the operations of taverns in Soweto and, by extension, the rest of South Africa

Chapter 3 provides essential information about the research design and methodology including an exposition of how this study's data was collected and analysed. The chapter also tackles in detail the prescribed inductive approach and interview method which were decided by the researcher as the most appropriate for gathering information regarding the phenomena under study.

Chapter 4 chapter presents and provides a detailed discussion of the study's findings and their interpretation. Data obtained through interviews is presented and discussed at the same time as one set of data in what is called concurrency (Creswell et al., 2007; Creswell 2014).

Chapter 5 chapter provides the conclusion to the study. The chapter also provides recommendations to address the gaps identified by the researcher. This chapter is important to the extent that it helps to fully appreciate the research gaps that exist, and it includes strategic recommendations that can be implemented to improve the recovery, renewal and resilience of taverns as an economic sector that can still perform well even in the midst of a pandemic. Finally, this chapter also suggests directions for future studies.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter provided an introduction and background to this study. This chapter provides a theoretical grounding for the study by placing it in the right context in terms of previous research and the available body of knowledge. The chapter starts with a provision of the contextual background of the study, followed by a review of the literature on business recovery, renewal, and resilience strategies.

2.2 Impact of Covid-19 on SMEs as the Lifeblood of South Africa's Economy

Taverns which are also regarded as SMMEs, have had their business activities depressed during the COVID-19 lockdown, not only in South Africa but in most countries around the world. In the world's second-largest economy, China, SMMEs almost came to a complete halt for a few months after the outbreak of COVID-19 in China around January 2020 (Dai et al., 2020). However, the SMMEs were rekindled in the area of the provision of Public Protective Clothing (Dai et al., 2020). In many developing economies, several SMMEs were shut down (Naidoo, 2021) simply because production could not take place as government authorities and private sector executives were attempting to figure out how to contain the COVID-19 pandemic.

Considering that the SMMEs generate over 39% of people employed in the country, their operations are of national economic significance (Mmbengeni et al., 2021). It has been further noted that the health of the SMME sector has been adversely affected by COVID-19 in terms of the contribution that it has to make to the economy by creating more employment opportunities (Mmbengeni et al., 2021). Many SMMEs were on a growth trajectory before the COVID-19 outbreak (Baporikar 2021). However, the gains were suddenly eroded with the advent of the pandemic and the predicted increase in service provision by SMMEs and exports from the sector dwindled, thus forestalling the introduction and growth of innovation and entrepreneurial skills in the sector (Mmbengeni et al., 2021).

In some instances, analysts are predicting that around 60 percent of SMMEs may close down before the COVID-19 crisis is over (McKinsey and Company, 2020). The real impact of the pandemic goes beyond economic consequences. It also mirrors how the pandemic presented an opportunity for confrontations among social groups. In the townships, the lockdown affected tavern workers, the taxi industry, and tavern owners in terms of the actual and anticipated income, as well as thousands of workers who lost their jobs and livelihood. This state of affairs points to a possible slowing down of economic growth, which the authorities still have to find ways to deal with at the policy level.

SMMEs across South Africa, including the taverns, fundamentally represent one of the most dynamic economic sectors. It is estimated that the SMME sector constitutes more than 98 percent of businesses in South Africa and employs about 39 percent of the country's workforce across all the nine provinces of the country (McKinsey & Company. 2020). It has also been established that SMMEs and consequently, the taverns, are responsible for a significant portion of the job growth in the economy – which was promising before the COVID-19 pandemic struck.

In as much as the GDP contribution by SMMEs seems to be lagging behind as compared to other regions of the developed world, standing at 39 percent for South Africa as compared to 57 percent in the European Union, there is no doubt nevertheless that the SMMEs sector in South Africa remains an important and critical engine of the economy, with prospects to contribute more to the development of society and the empowerment of people (Mmbengeni, et al., 2021).

A study done by Nhamo, Dube and Chikodzi (2020) revealed that in many parts of the South African economic ecosystem, social and dining places such as restaurants and taverns, were shut down for sit-ins, and customers were thus required to collect their meals and drink their beverages at home. This came about as governments the world over imposed stringent restrictions via the promulgation of strict regulations to manage the concentration of people in one place and also managing the aspects of social distancing; the net result of it was the introduction of strict lockdown (Nhamo, Dube and Chikodzi 2020). There is no doubt that throughout the world these

regulations adversely affected fine SMMEs such as restaurants, pubs, and taverns; South Africa and other countries within the region and beyond were not immune to the adverse impact of the lockdown regulations (Nhamo, Dube and Chikodzi, 2020). Consequently, it is further argued that the fast-food outlets and the taverns were adversely affected, with businesses mostly operating at less than 20% capacity in most parts of South Africa (Nhamo, et.al 2020).

Thus, this directly and indirectly culminated in substantial financial losses, impacted on family livelihoods, and affected directly and indirectly the continued employment of people who were employed by these SMMEs, as these businesses could not sustain the workers as they were not generating income. These losses thus raised many questions about whether the government had looked at the possible socio-economic impacts – such as increased suffering, poverty, and hunger among households – before passing and implementing such drastic regulations. To this end, Nhamo, et.al (2020) argue that South Africa is no exception in terms of the pandemic's impact. At its peak, the pandemic impacted heavily on the USA, with several millions employed in the restaurants, pubs, and other social places of relaxation akin to taverns, being laid off, some temporarily and others permanently.

2.3 Business Recovery Strategies

The business recovery strategies during pandemic times will require policymakers and SMMEs to find common ground between business operability and health protocol compliance. It is emphasised in the literature that social distancing-based public health interventions, such as mass quarantines, extensive travel bans, and transportation system disruptions, all have been seen to have shaken the social life and economic systems beyond measure, and the economy and shrinking of the markets all demand a paradigm shift. This research espouses the view that taverns are in the category of service sectors that are critical for many people as a source of employment and livelihood, which implies that there should be a consideration to lessen limitations on international and provincial travel to motivate local and international tourists and visitors to go to places such as Soweto.

One way of doing this is by relying on vaccination certificates that are genuine and based on that, allow visits to ensure the industry recovers from the negative effects of

the pandemic on SMEs. When considering using these interventions, the cost implications for SMMEs were not been looked at and the effect will be felt much later in terms of an increase in unemployment. The latest unemployment data released by Statistics South Africa in 2022 laid bare the dire state of the economy, with the unemployment rate rising to a record 35.3 %. This means that the increase in unemployment figures poses a threat to society's effort to create more employment. The hard-nosed approach to fighting the pandemic may prove to be costly, hence there is a need for policy makers to act with rationality to also consider training taverns operators – with a view to introduce them to online systems as a mechanism to ensure future pandemics will not affect them so much that they undergo liquidation. Thus, from a strategical perspective, the taverns owners should be innovative and consider incorporating technology in their business models to ensure that their services continue to be available and accessible to their clients.

It is a fact that in South Africa, the critical issue of SMMEs being financially broke during the COVID-19 due to their high degree of exposure and fragility, coupled with the lack of back-up cash-flow, means that they struggle to remain in business. Consequently, the issue of bailing them out is one of the strategies that have been considered (Rajagopaul et al., 2020) as a recovery strategy. The emergency funding programmes, such as bailouts, should not be seen as a privilege that is only available to the bigger corporates but should also benefit the small SMMEs, including the taverns.

Besides government-aided bailouts, the private sector is also a critical player in the South African economy during this COVID-19 era. Banks such as the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) could be among the important institutions that can play a role, together with other multilateral financial institutions, to assist SMMEs that have been affected by the pandemic. In addition, they should be offering lower interest rates, deferred or waived taxes and fees, or easier lending policies that can motivate the SMME sector, including tavern owners, to recapitalise their businesses for recovery and stay afloat during and beyond COVID-19.

From the perspective of ensuring that the business owners and the workers continue to enjoy mutually-beneficial relationships, it is also important from a strategical point

of view for the South African government to consider setting aside additional funding for unemployment insurance payments – and not concentrate on social grants, which are below R400. There is no doubt that SMEs were affected by the pandemic, and that COVID-19 will continue to be a challenge to humanity, hence some innovations are required to ensure that businesses start operating again.

2.4 Business Renewal Strategies

For sustainable SMMEs to exist and continue to operate, it is imperative that they receive substantial recognition and support from the government and private sector. Some of the literature reviewed in this study indicates that SMMEs that adopt sustainable business models in order to leverage their sustainable performance and increase their competitive advantage play a vital role in national economic development (Porter and Kramer, 2019). The number of scientific publications on COVID-19 has also noticeably increased, and proffer renewal of business models driven by connectivity, the internet of things, innovation and e-marketing, which underpin the contemporary ways of doing business by moving from relying entirely on traditional business models of physical contact to virtual business transactions, which have higher chances of sustainability (Schaltegger et al., 2011).

Essentially, the literature review seems to suggest that there is a need to build resilience among SMMEs, and this entails adapting to a new type of clients who require a better service, including home deliveries. COVID-19 has transformed and dramatically changed consumption patterns from the usual places people used to frequent to home-eateries, which means that the renewal thrust should take into account the emerging consumption patterns of home-hospitality. That is why some authors argue that there is a need to focus on what clients need in their space and mechanisms must then be devised to ensure clients get what they want and where they want the service (Bradley et al., 2020).

One other important aspect of the renewal of businesses during and after COVID-19 relates to racial patterns. There are indications that the number of businesses that have managed to remain active despite the pandemic are primarily among the white communities – whereas, in black communities in South Africa, most SMMEs

plummeted after February 2020 (Fairlie, 2020). The world has witnessed a drop in black business owners actively working in their businesses during COVID-19 as they lack the adaptability to cope with the impact of the pandemic. This calls for a relook into how most black business owners can remain in business, through some form of broad-based support in order to reduce the impact of lost income from having businesses that closed or scaled down during COVID-19 (Fairlie, 2020).

2.6 Business Resilience and Business Sustainability Strategies

The COVID-19-driven shutdowns have had many challenges and they have undermined the ability of the SMMEs to continue operating sustainably. The world was caught unaware by the pandemic, and there was little time to respond and set robust and resilient business systems, including putting measures in place for business sustainability. One of the key aspects and learning curves in this process is that there was a massive decline in the level of output across businesses in many countries' economies, with consumer expenditure potentially dropping by around one-third, and this meant that industries and the consumers were all affected (Ramos, 2020). If the shutdowns continue to be implemented from time to time, the probability of continuous undermining of the SMMEs will remain, unless there is a deliberate move to put measures in place to promote the SMEs (Hyness et al., 2020).

Thus, from a business resilience perspective, the COVID-19 crisis demonstrates the importance of developing universal health protocols for businesses to come together and provide high hygiene standards in their operations as a key element of their health and safety systems and practices (Linkov et al., 2021). The basic protocol of washing one's hands should be a standard practice – which if adhered to, can provide scope to curb the spreading of viruses (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development OECD, 2020).

Rebuilding SMMEs should thus come with sizeable measures to ensure that the systems that are put in place contribute to better prevention rather than treatment – hence the requirement that compliance is enforced based on mutual understanding and concern for saving humanity (Cummings and Miller, 2021). Ideally, business resilience must be built around proper planning for healthcare services for both

workers and visitors to any business establishment and this means that everyone should take responsibility. COVID-19 prevention measures were introduced in several countries, including South Africa; however, not everyone is complying, even though this pandemic has taught many that adhering to health protocols goes a long way in curbing infections and lowering the cases and morbidity caused by the pandemic, which again helps businesses to inspire confidence in the marketplace.

In addition, some of the key aspects relating to building business resilience and sustainability should focus on human capital training which has proven to be very useful to provide additional support to regular health interventions. The focus on the workforce allows for a more flexible management of human resources to be responsibly responsive to the pandemic and take preventive measures at every workstation of their daily operations to alleviate the impact of the outbreak (Carmody, 2020). The idea is to ensure that prevention is at the top of the priority list; without it, the potential risks become considerably high.

Furthermore, crisis situations like the coronavirus provide opportunities to change the traditional roles of different healthcare providers and expand the roles of some providers like nurses and pharmacists – and ensure that the medical services can be provided at most business facilities. This would reduce pressure on medical doctors by reducing the burden of diseases so that they spend their time more effectively on the most complex cases (Hyness et al., 2020).

A study by McKinsey and Company (2020) found that several SMMEs highlighted an on-going struggle to connect with potential buyers in the marketplace due to the change in the dynamics of the pattern of shopping, which directly and indirectly affected the SMMEs' revenue performance. As it has been argued in this study, many SMMEs, such as taverns, are usually family-run businesses, which are largely dependent on a small number of workers, and the clients are not conversant with new technologies of online purchases. In some cases, the entire business can be dependent on the local client who personally come to enjoy the services and purchase the products in the neighbourhood – which is typical of most tavern businesses in Soweto.

The emergence of online marketing means that the SMMEs have to transform as a way of resilience modelling. Building e-platforms enhances sustainability and connectivity to the clients to allow access to products as a way of helping to alleviate the collapse of the businesses. For example, Thola Africa was developed primarily to help African artisans and designers, who mostly have a limited or regional customer base, access to a wider and even global market looking for the products that they provide.

To date, this platform is reported to have 17 suppliers and more than 225 products listed (McKinsey and Company, 2020). McKinsey and Company (2020) argue that slowing demand across the board has led to SMMEs having to limit expansion plans and has prompted the need to identify alternative channels to sell products as part of the resilience approach to keep the SMMEs operating. The same study pointed out that between 40 to 60 percent of small business respondents to the survey that was conducted, indicated that they expect to make a loss, and this was predictably going to increase as a consequence of COVID-19. Furthermore, the pandemic has forced them to scale back and look for new ways to get their products to the market (McKinsey & Company, 2020). Therefore, the critical issue of e-marketing is highly recommended as part of building business resilience and sustainability in a market that requires innovation in order to remain in the market.

2.7 Chapter Summary

The literature review herein has provided new evidence on how small business owners in South Africa have been impacted by COVID-19 and how these effects have evolved since the advent of the pandemic. In fact, in as much as the challenges appear to be massive, they are surmountable with proper planning and support from the government to make rational decisions. However, such decisions, which may come in the form of new policies, relaxing the hard and fast control of businesses and introducing greater flexibility by allowing businesses that comply with health protocols to re-open, would open new opportunities for the shebeens or taverns economy in South Africa. The rationale for doing this is very simple; many black South Africans operate in this line of business, and it is seen as a source of employment, empowerment, and livelihoods in their neighbourhoods. Essentially, the literature has

shown that the impact of COVID-19 on SMMEs has been felt globally, and the most appropriate solutions may differ from area to area. New innovations that are sensitive to the impact of COVID-19, including information and communication technology, have been cited as key to transforming the operability of the SMMEs. Additionally, the layoffs can be mitigated if the governments act swiftly to provide stimulus packages for SMEs such as taverns as a way of helping them get out of the deep hole and enabling them to develop new prospects. Part of the strategy would involve raising awareness of innovative platforms such as the internet of things and e-marketing, coupled, with home deliveries as the news business model. The SMEs have already been severely impacted by COVID-19 and the disruptions require the business owners and the employees to have common expectations about the future. The relationship between labour and industry requires sound collaboration and generally working together to reduce the risk of further losses across the board. This chapter provided a detailed review of the literature on business recovery, renewal, and resilience, primarily focussing on SMMES. The next chapter details the research methodology and design that was followed in this study.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter provided a comprehensive literature review on business recovery, renewal, and resilience. The chapter reviewed previous research on these concepts and revealed the gaps in the literature. This chapter starts by revisiting the research objectives followed by an explanation and justification of the research methodology and design that was adopted by the researcher to ensure that this study's research questions were answered and that the research objectives were fulfilled. Secondly, the chapter will highlight the research philosophy that guided the researcher in conducting the study, followed by an explanation of the approaches to theory development that the researcher adopted. Furthermore, the chapter will explain the research strategy that the study adopted, followed by a discussion of the time horizon and finally an explanation of the approaches to sampling, data collection and data analysis that were adopted in this study.

3.2 Research Objectives Revisited

As stated in Chapter 1, this study sought to fulfill the following research objectives:

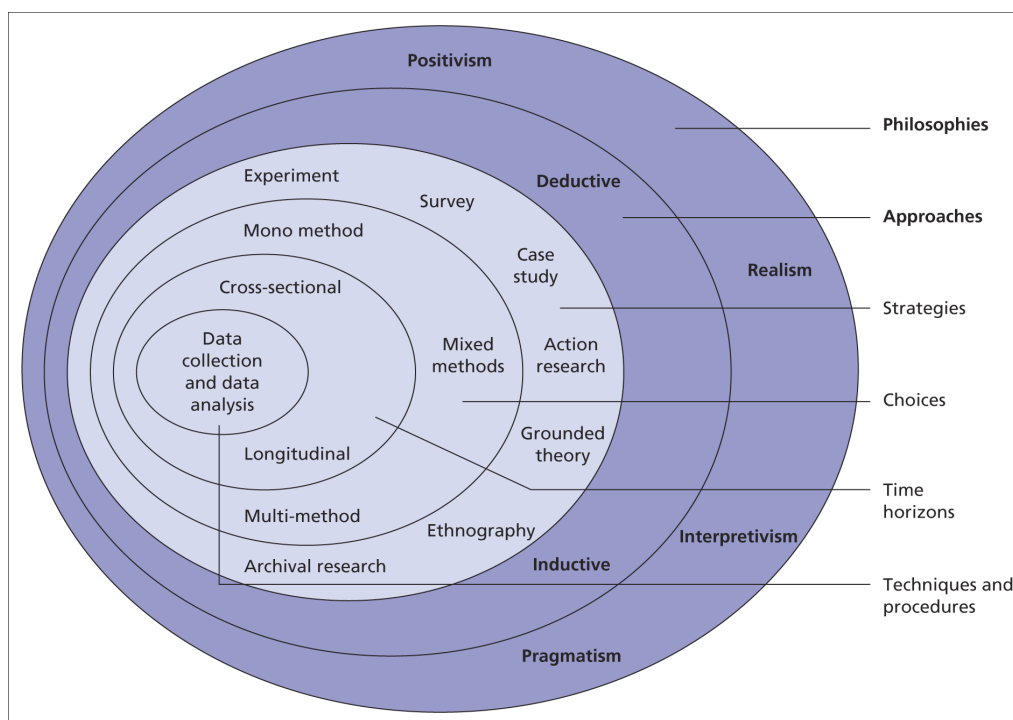
- To **establish** the strategies that township taverns could implement to recover from the effects of COVID-19 on their businesses.
- To **identify** the strategies that township taverns could implement to renew their businesses post COVID-19.
- To **investigate** the strategies that township taverns could implement in order to make their businesses resilient post COVID-19; and
- To **determine** the challenges that township taverns could face when implementing recovery, renewal and resilience strategies post-COVID-19.

3.3 The Research Framework

Research methodology and design for this study were critical as they provided the direction of the research process, together with the fieldwork in terms of how the data was collected from the participants and how it was analysed to ensure the fulfillment of the research objectives.

To provide structure to the research process and also in order to be able to clearly articulate the research methodology and design that guided this study, the research followed the research onion framework highlighted in Figure 3.1 below.

Figure 3.1 Research Onion



Source: Saunders et al. (2015)

The research onion metaphor was proposed by Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill in 2007 and has been revised thereafter. Using the onion metaphor, the framework explains the different stages that one can follow when conducting research. As a widely used framework, the researcher found it prudent to adopt it to guide the execution of this study. The research onion framework also helped the researcher to demonstrate how this study was conducted in a reasonable, coherent and credible manner that a reader could easily follow. As highlighted in figure 3.1 above, the

research onion consists of six distinct but integrated layers and these are the research philosophy, approaches to theory development, research strategies, time horizons, data collection and data analysis.

3.3.1 The Research Philosophy

According to Saunders and Tosey (2013), the research philosophy represents a researcher's view of the world by establishing the epistemological, ontological, and axiological foundations of the study. Epistemology is concerned with establishing the nature of knowledge and how that knowledge is generated and distributed (Tennis, 2008). Ontology is concerned with the nature of reality, whether reality is objective or subjective (Saunders et al., 2015) whilst axiology is concerned with the personal values and beliefs that the researcher brings into the research process.

According to Saunders et al. (2011) and Creswell (2014), there are various philosophies that can guide a researcher when conducting a research study and these include positivism, interpretivism, constructivism and pragmatism. The research philosophy that a researcher adopts will influence how the rest of the research process unfolds, including data collection, analysis, and interpretation.

This study adopted the social constructivist research philosophy. The decision to use the social constructivism philosophical paradigm is based on what Adom et al. (2016) point out to be an ideal and flexible research philosophy that should be used in studies that are meant to understand social phenomena, including human behaviour. According to Pande and Bharathi (2020), and Bogna et al (2020), a constructivism philosophical paradigm asserts that people construct their own understanding and knowledge of the world, and this can be through their experiences with things that they are going through, or they have gone through, reflecting on those experiences and making sense out of the reality of their life.

Fundamentally, Adom et al. (2016) argues that the basis for social constructivism is the understanding that people form or construct much of what they learn through experiences, while Cashman et al. (2008) and Hein (1991) underscore that the reality of life and business is built around these important experiences of the people.

Therefore, the constructivist paradigm entails that constructing meanings about life happens through learning. In this regard, the researcher found it ideal to adopt the social constructivist philosophy in this study that sought to understand the operations of township taverns with regards to the strategies that they could implement to recover, renew and become resilient in a post-COVID-19 environment. From a social constructivist philosophical perspective, the understanding for this study is that business operations can be affected and best understood comprehensively from the perspective of the experience of the operators.

From an ontological perspective, social constructivism is a philosophy that assumes that reality is subjective and thus the ontological standpoint is the result of the social participants, in the case of this study, township tavern owners' and managers' construction of their own reality. Crowther and Lancaster (2008) advocate for the use of the constructivist approach and they underscore that it is one of the best philosophical approaches to adopt in studies that seek to understand complex and multi-dimensional phenomena. In this regard, the researcher posits that the need to investigate and determine the recovery, renewal, and resilience strategies that township taverns could adopt in a post-COVID-19 environment is indeed complex and multi-dimensional.

However, Nairn (2019) elucidates that much as constructivism is a flexible and robust philosophy in qualitative studies, it has its inherent weaknesses such as its subjective nature, as a result of researcher bias. Furthermore, since the conclusions emanating from constructivist studies are based on the personal viewpoint, values and subjective interpretations by the researcher, the findings of such studies cannot be generalised to the wider population. Despite these disadvantages, the researcher was of the view that social constructivism remained the most appropriate philosophy to answer the research questions and solve the research problem.

3.3.2 Approaches to Theory Development

The next layer in the research onion framework pertains to the approaches to theory development. Saunders et al. (2016) postulate that there are three approaches to theory development, and these are induction, deduction, and abduction. Deductive

approaches are associated with positivist philosophies whilst abductive approaches are largely associated with mixed-method approaches that may include both positivism and interpretivism. This study, which was based on the social constructivist philosophy, followed the inductive approach to theory development. Saunders et al. (2015) posit that in an inductive study, theory follows data in that the reasoning that emerges from such a study is based on the findings that emerge from the data, hence the use of the Grounded Theory approach in analysing the data that was collected in this study.

3.3.3 Research Methods and Approaches

Saunders et al. (2011) postulate that when conducting a study, a researcher must choose the appropriate method to follow and these methods include the mono-method qualitative, mono-method quantitative, multi-method quantitative, multi-method qualitative and simple mixed methods. For this study, due to limited time and budgetary constraints and also because of its ability to answer the research question, the researcher adopted the qualitative approach (mono-method qualitative). This is supported by Snape and Spencer's (2003) view that qualitative research approaches afford the researcher the opportunity to answer the research questions from the participants' perspective.

3.3.4 Research Strategy

According to Saunders and Tosey (2013), every research project must have a strategy that reflects the overarching plan that the researcher will adopt in order to answer the research questions and fulfill the research objectives. Saunders et al. (2011), in their research onion, note that the research strategy explains how the research objectives will be fulfilled and they identify case studies, surveys, archival research, ethnography, action research, experiments and grounded theory as some of the strategies that a researcher could adopt. As this study was qualitative in nature and was underpinned by the social constructivist research philosophy, the researcher adopted Grounded Theory as the research strategy.

3.3.5 Time Horizons

Every research project has timelines that determine and highlight the start and end dates of the project as well as timelines for important milestones in the research process. In terms of time horizons, Saunders et al. (2011) avow that a research study could either be longitudinal or cross-sectional in nature. Bryman (2012) explains that a longitudinal study seeks to investigate a phenomenon at multiple points in time whilst a cross-sectional study takes “a snapshot” of the population at a specific point in time. The purpose of this study was to establish the recovery, renewal and resilience strategies that township taverns could adopt post-Covid-19 and as such, it was cross-sectional in nature.

3.3.6 Data Collection

In order to answer the research questions and fulfill the research objectives, it was imperative for the researcher to collect primary data from the target population. The primary data was collected using semi-structured interviews with purposively selected participants, namely tavern owners and managers in Soweto Township. A total of 30 interviews were conducted with tavern owners that the researcher thought could provide pertinent information relevant to this study. According to Jensen and Laurie (2016), semi-structured interviews are effective in qualitative studies as they afford the participants the opportunity to share their own lived experiences in response to questions posed by the interviewer. In addition to that, semi-structured interviews allow the researcher to ask probing questions to ensure that relevant and adequate information is provided during the interviews.

The data for this study was collected during November 2021. The interviews were conducted face-to-face in a manner that observed COVID-19 protocols such as the wearing of masks and the maintenance of social distance.

3.3.7 Sampling Considerations

As this study was qualitative in nature, it used non-probability sampling techniques to determine the individuals who participated in the study. As one of the players in the industry, the researcher knew the best people to contact very well and also knew

where to find them. As such, purposive sampling was the strategy that the researcher used to determine the study's participants. The principal population for the study was composed of all tavern owners in Soweto and as alluded to in the previous section, the researcher managed to conduct one-on-one interviews with 30 participants who were owners (20) and managers (10) of taverns in Soweto. These participants were purposively selected by the researcher based on his knowledge that they could provide the required information to answer the research questions and fulfill the research objectives. Table 3.1 below provides summarised information about the participants:

Table 3.1: Number of Participants

Participant	Total Interviewed
Tavern Owner	20
Tavern Manager	10
Total Participants	30

All interviews began with a brief introduction by the researcher in which he explained the purpose of the study and how the interview was going to be conducted. During the introductions, the researcher also explained to the participants that their participation was voluntary; that the information they were providing would be kept confidential; that they were free to answer or not answer all the questions; that their identity would remain anonymous and that they were free to withdraw from the interview at any time during the process.

3.3.8 Data Analysis

Saunders et al. (2011) note that data collection and analysis are the innermost (core) components of the research onion. As the data that was collected for this study was qualitative in nature, it was analysed using the Grounded Theory approach and thematic analysis. Neuman (2011) is of the view that Grounded Theory is a flexible approach to data analysis as it allows iterative interaction between the theory and data, allowing the researcher to identify similarities and differences and then be able to build, organize and analyse the data in a way that enables the development of concepts, theories, and models.

3.4 Pilot Study

Before the researcher embarked on data collection, he conducted a pilot study to test the validity of the data collection instrument (semi-structured interview guide) in order to test whether the instrument collected the relevant data that would enable the researcher to answer all the research questions and fulfill the research objectives. The pilot study was also meant to check and ensure that the data collection instrument was understandable to the participants and that it did not have any errors. A total of seven pilot interviews were conducted with five participants from the target population and two participants who are specialists in qualitative research that uses interviews as a data collection method. Several corrections were suggested, mainly by the qualitative research specialists, and these were taken into consideration and the data collection instrument was amended accordingly. The data collected from the pilot study was discarded and thus it did not form part of the data that was analysed in this study.

3.5 Reliability and Validity

When conducting research, especially scientific studies, it is imperative to ensure that there is reliability and validity in the study. Unlike quantitative research, the measure of reliability and validity is often questionable in qualitative study, however, Guba and Lincoln's constructs (1985) as cited in Amankwaa (2016) have been widely accepted by researchers in ensuring rigor in qualitative research. These constructs address credibility, transferability, dependability as well as confirmability. In the context of this study, these constructs were addressed as followed:

Credibility: the researcher made sure that the research instrument went through pilot testing; that the research questions were clear and straightforward and that the correct data collection and data analysis procedures were followed. Furthermore, participants signed consents letters to ensure that all responded participated in the research in their free will.

Transferability: Though the issue of transferability in qualitative research is usually questionable, since the nature of such studies generally deal uniquely with small groups, Denscombe (1998) suggest that transferability should not be rejected automatically since even that unique group still forms part of a broader group. In this

case, recovery, renewal and resilience strategies for taverns can be applied to other SMMEs operating in the township environment.

Dependability: This concept examines the level at which findings can be dependable, in other words, it seeks to establish whether the outcome would remain the same if data collection would be repeated under the same conditions (Amankwaa, 2016). As described earlier, a pilot was conducted to ensure the credibility of the data collection instrument. This was to ensure both credibility as well as dependability of the findings.

Confirmability: This aspect of trustworthiness is concerned with ensuring that the findings are the ideas and responses of the participants, free of any influence by the researcher (Amankwaa, 2016). In this context, to ensure confirmability, the questions were informed by an extensive literature review as well as the pilot.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

According to Van der Wal (2006), researchers are advised to protect the physical, social and psychological welfare of research respondents and participants. This study was conducted following generally accepted ethical norms and protocols including but not limited to the following:

3.6.1 Ethical Clearance

Before the researcher embarked on the data collection exercise, he was required to obtain ethical clearance from the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Business and Management Sciences at the CPUT. The researcher duly complied with this requirement.

3.6.2 Informed Consent

All the participants in the study were not compelled to participate and as such, informed consent was obtained prior to each interview.

3.6.3 Anonymity

Anonymity was also guaranteed to all the participants in that their identity was not disclosed in any way and numbers were allocated to each participant in such a way that none of the responses could be linked to particular participants.

3.6.4 Confidentiality

This study observed the highest level of confidentiality in that the information that the researcher collected for this study was not disclosed or shared with any third party.

3.6.5 Voluntary Withdrawal

The participants in this study were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any point during the interviewing process. Furthermore, the participants also had the right to answer or not to answer all the questions that were posed to them by the researcher.

3.6.6 Plagiarism, Honesty and Integrity

In terms of plagiarism, the researcher observed the highest level of academic integrity and honesty by ensuring that any information that he used that was the intellectual property of other authors was properly cited and referenced. Furthermore, the researcher was honest in his dealings with the research participants and the research process in general. Correct information was always provided, and no information was falsified or exaggerated at any point during the research process.

3.7 Limitations of the Study

Limitations of the study refer to the possible weaknesses of the study that are largely outside the control of the researcher (Simon, 2011). Limitations may include challenges with regards to data collection, data analysis, sampling, questions not answered by the study's participants and so on (Creswell, 2012). One of the limitations of this study was that there were only 30 participants and as such the findings, conclusions and recommendations emanating from this study reflect the views of these participants and cannot therefore be generalised to the wider population.

Secondly, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, though some participants agreed to the one-on-one interviews, they felt uncomfortable during the process (though COVID-19 protocols were observed) and could possibly have given answers in haste to ensure that the process was completed within the shortest possible time. However, the

researcher made sure that all the set questions that were scheduled were asked during all the interviews.

Lastly, as the researcher is a key stakeholder in the liquor industry fighting for the rights of tavern owners, his views could have in some way contributed to some level of bias in the analysis and interpretation of the data though. As a professional, however, the researcher tried, by all means, to ensure that his personal opinions and views do not influence the data collection and data analysis process.

3.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter provided a detailed explanation of the research methodology and design that was adopted for this study. The chapter provided detailed information on the study's research philosophy, approaches to theory development, methodological choices, research strategies, sampling considerations, and how the data was collected and analysed. The next chapter reports on the analysis and interpretation of the data including a discussion of the key findings.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter provided a detailed account of the research methodology and design that was used in this research study. The chapter highlighted the research philosophy, approach to theory development, research methods, research strategies, time horizons and the data collection and data analysis methods that this study used. This chapter provides a detailed analysis of the data that was collected during the 30 in-depth interviews. The analysis was an iterative process and as such, it includes the researcher's interpretation of the data as and when it was being collected and analysed. The chapter also includes the findings that emerged from the analysis and interpretation of the data.

4.2 Research Questions Revisited

As mentioned in Chapter 1, this study sought to answer the following research questions:

- What strategies can township taverns implement to recover from the effects of Covid-19 on their businesses?
- What strategies can township taverns implement to renew their businesses post Covid-19?
- What strategies can township taverns implement to make their businesses resilient post Covid-19?
- What are the challenges that township taverns could face when implementing recovery, renewal, and resilience strategies post-Covid-19?

4.3 The Data Collection Process

A total of 30 in-depth interviews were conducted by the researcher in Soweto Township in Johannesburg. The interviews were conducted by the researcher himself and on average each interview lasted for about 25 minutes. The interviews were conducted during November 2022 and took a total of three weeks to complete.

4.4 The Target Population

The target population for this study was composed of all tavern owners and or managers in Soweto Township in Gauteng. Table 4.1 below summarises the demographic profiles of the individuals who participated in the study.

Table 4.1: Study Participants' Profiles

PARTICIPANT	GENDER	POSITION	YEARS OPERATING A TAVERN
1	Female	Owner	12
2	Female	Owner	8
3	Female	Manager	7
4	Male	Owner	19
5	Female	Manager	15
6	Female	Manager	12
7	Male	Owner	14
8	Female	Owner	10
9	Male	Owner	7
10	Male	Owner	20
11	Female	Manager	9
12	Male	Owner	6
13	Female	Manager	4
14	Male	Owner	9
15	Female	Manager	4
16	Male	Owner	5
17	Female	Owner	11
18	Male	Owner	22
19	Male	Owner	25
20	Male	Owner	22
21	Male	Owner	20
22	Female	Manager	14

23	Male	Owner	12
24	Male	Manager	11
25	Male	Owner	7
26	Female	Manager	4
27	Male	Owner	27
28	Male	Owner	24
29	Female	Owner	8
30	Male	Manager	13

As indicated in Table 4.1 above, there were 30 individuals who participated in the in-depth interviews. 12 of the participants were females, whilst 18 were males. Of the 12 females, only 4 owned the taverns they were operating, whilst the rest were employed as managers and oversaw the day-to-day operations of their respective taverns. In terms of the 18 male participants, 15 own the taverns that they are operating, whilst only three were employed as managers. The data in Table 4.1 reveals that the township taverns businesses are male dominated as most of the owners are males. In terms of experience in the liquor retailing industry, the participants' experience ranged from 4 to 27 years, and this highlights that all the participants had considerable experience in the industry.

4.5 The Data Analysis Process

As explained in the introduction to this chapter, the data analysis and interpretation process was iterative in nature as the researcher analysed and interpreted the data on an on-going basis.

Each of the 30 interviews commenced with an introduction to the research in which the researcher outlined the objectives of the research study. Thereafter, the researcher requested the participants to consent to the interview. Once the participants provided their informed consent and the researcher had explained all the ethical considerations, then the interview commenced.

The data that was collected for this study was analysed using qualitative data analysis software called Atlas ti.

4.6 Data Interpretation Process and Findings

The data was analysed and interpreted in line with the interview questions in the interview guide. The following section therefore provides the analysis and interpretation of the data in line with the research questions.

4.6.1 What do you understand by the term “recover”?

This question was answered by all participants, and this highlights that the participants understood what the question was all about. Participant 5 pointed out that recovery means “... *to slowly gain strength from your battle*” and this highlights the fact that for her, operating a business during the COVID-19 pandemic was tantamount to a battle. All the participants fully understood the meaning of the word “recovery” in the business sense. Some of the responses that were given in terms of contextualising their understanding of the term “recovery” included the following:

“... *getting better after being affected by COVID-19...*” (Participant 6)

“... *repeating the same thing but in a much better way...*” Participant 5)

“... *restoration from negative impact...*” (Participant 7)

“... *to come back again much better...*” (Participant 8)

“... *dealing with damage...*” (Participant 9)

“... *act or process of returning to a normal state after a period of difficulty...*” (Participant 13)

“... *return to a normal condition after negative impact...*” (Participant 14)

“... *my business to return to normal status before covid-19 pandemic affect us as liquor traders...*” (Participant 15)

“... *to come back for the second time after hard times...*” (Participant 19)

“... *is a long process of healing in a slow process...*” (Participant 24)

“... *is a long process of healing and coming back...*” (Participant 27)

“... *to gain strength and ability to do things like before...*” (Participant 29)

From the responses above, it is more than apparent that most of the participants understood the concept of recovery as regaining what was lost or getting back to a previous business condition or situation. In this regard, the tavern owners were all looking forward to the recovery of their businesses after the COVID-19 pandemic.

4.6.2 How was your business affected by the COVID-19 pandemic?

This was an emotive question for most of the participants based on their verbal and non-verbal cues such as facial expressions. Table 4.2 below summarises the responses from the 30 participants and are categorised into common themes.

Table 4.2: The Effect of COVID-19 on Township Taverns

EFFECT	NUMBER OF RESPONSES
Reduction of the number of employees	8
Business closed during lockdowns	4
Reduced employee salaries	1
Expired stock	12
Loss of sales	5
Emotional stress and personal health	15
Shortage of funds to pay business bills	17
Failure to take care of family	22
Changing family lifestyle	14
Customers losing their jobs	3
Reduced operating hours	1

There were varied responses to the question of how the participants were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. 22 participants noted that the pandemic affected their businesses to the extent that they found it challenging to take care of themselves and their families.

15 participants stated that COVID-19 affected them health-wise as it caused a multitude of health problems such as depression, stress, heart condition, blood pressure and so on. In addition to the effect of the pandemic on their health, several participants also highlighted that the negative effect of the pandemic on their businesses forced them to change their families' lifestyles. Stressing the effect of COVID-19, Participant 11 complained that *"...my health condition got worse because I was always thinking..."* Echoing the same sentiments, Participant 29 noted that *"... I was not in good health for some time. My business was falling apart without any positive action..."* According to Participant 27, COVID-19 was life-threatening; he said that *"...I nearly lost my life, my diabetes would get high and be uncontrollable..."* It is evident from these sentiments that the pandemic not only affected the taverns as businesses but also affected the personal lives and health of the owners, their staff members, their employees, and their customers.

It is also apparent from the responses that the pandemic affected the participants' ability to pay their personal and business bills. Responding to the question of how the pandemic impacted him, Participant 4 said that *"... I had many liabilities that I couldn't pay. I was always stressed with the debts I had to pay with no income..."*

One key effect of the pandemic on the township taverns was the expiration of stock during the lockdowns when their businesses were closed. A total of 12 participants were of the view that the pandemic caused huge losses to them as some stock expired whilst their businesses were closed. Participant 22 note that *"... I lost R13 000.00 due to expired stock..."* Participant 27 indicated that he had *"... expired stock that cost me R9 000.00..."* It is therefore evident that the issue of expired stock was one of the negative effects of the pandemic on township taverns in Soweto.

In addition to the stock loss, several participants also noted challenges such as the retrenchment of their staff, loss of sales and profits, reduced employee salaries, customers losing their jobs and reduced operating hours as some of the major effects of the pandemic on their businesses. For example, referring to the need to retrench staff, Participant 1 said that *"... I had to cut 14 people to 7 employees because I could not manage to pay salaries..."* Participant 5 echoed Participant 1 when she said *"... like all businesses in our country, I had to cut staff to a small number..."* From these

statements, it is apparent that COVID-19 led to job losses for people employed in the township taverns market.

4.6.3 What did you do or what will you do for your business to recover from the effects of the pandemic?

This question pertained to the actions that the participants took in order to recover from the effects of the pandemic. Several participants noted that they received financial support from stokvels and other institutions such as the SAB and commercial banks. Others, such as Participant 4 and Participant 6 indicated that they used their savings to support their businesses. Participant 5 stated that she used her savings to buy stock. Participant 10 said, “... *because I was always saving for emergencies, I used that money to buy the stock and some of the money I used to pay my bills...*” Participant 20 said “... *we used our savings from the bank to buy stock and we also applied for loans to pay bills and to add stock...*” Other participants such as Participant 24 stated that they got loan stock from SAB.

In terms of financing their businesses, some participants, including Participant 19, Participant 24 and Participant 30, had to dispose of assets such as their cars and household furniture in order to re-capitalise their businesses. Emphasising the need to capitalise his business, Participant 30 declared that “... *I had to sell one of my cars to get money to buy new stock. I bought the stock and I made at least 18% profit, I paid my debts and bills...*” Others resorted to borrowing from friends and family.

Other participants such as Participant 7 had to seek other investors. Participant 7 said that “... *My wife had to invest in my business. She was my new partner in order to come up with more ideas on how to save my business...*” Participant 6 indicated that their businesses had to start from scratch “... *to buy one case that will add another case...*”

Other participants ventured into other businesses. Participant 3 noted that “... *I have to come up with ideas or strategies to sustain or keep my business running. I have added a takeaways shop...*” Emphasising diversification as a strategy, Participant 8 noted that she had added African food to her business. Participant 17 indicated that

her tavern added other products such as electricity, airtime, soft drinks, and artchar in order to generate more profit. Participant 11, said that “... *recycling of glass is adding profit, so I decided not to give all recycling material like before...*”

Some participants implemented austerity measures such as cutting down on staff costs, reducing business expenses and so on. Participant 3 noted that “... *I did cut some of the things like clothing accounts...*” Participant 8 posited that “... *I’m currently doing everything for myself; I cannot afford to pay someone.*” Participant 26 echoed the same sentiment as Participant 8 when she underscored that “... *for the restaurant, my husband and I had to work full time at least not to pay employees for a while...*”

Participant 13 noted that “... *I had to stop DSTV. Cut off two insurance covers...*” In order to recover from the effects of the pandemic, Participant 19 noted that “... *cutting of expenses at home; my children had to change schools from private to public schools...*”

During the time when operating hours were limited or when the lockdown was partially lifted, some participants, such as Participant 9, implemented a just-in-time strategy in which they bought stock as and when they needed it to avoid the risk of holding too much stock. In emphasising this point, he said that “...*in order not to lose profit I buy the stock after every two/three days; avoiding unexpected lockdowns and long hours of curfew.*” Participant 14 concurred with Participant 9 when he elucidated that he had to buy less stock that could only last a few days.

Other unique recovery strategies that emerged included the tavern owners coming together to procure in bulk. Reinforcing this strategy, Participant 27 highlighted that “... *we formed a group of liquor traders. We are five members, each member contributed R2 000.00 and we bought a stock that cost R10 000.00 and we shared the stock...*”

4.6.4 Why do you think the recovery strategies that you explained will be effective?

Several participants were of the view that the recovery strategies that they were proposing will be effective. Participant 2 noted that the fact that they had managed to

sustain their businesses thus far meant that they can be sustainable even under very difficult circumstances. Participant 6 was of the view that the recovery strategies will be effective as long as the COVID-19 pandemic does not worsen. Participant 12 noted that his business will be able to recover slowly and that he is getting back on his feet again.

However, other participants were of the view that their businesses will not recover in the short-to-medium term. Participant 9 highlighted that his business was still struggling to recover and had a backlog of bills to clear. Participant 14 was more pessimistic saying that “... *I’m not sure if these strategies are more effective to sustain my business during COVID-19 if we have another lockdown coming our way...*”

4.6.5 What challenges do you think your business will face when implementing these recovery strategies?

This question focused on the challenges that the participants could face when implementing their recovery strategies. Most of the participants noted that competition from liquor retailers such as Boxer, Shoprite, Tops and Pick n Pay was a major challenge for township taverns.

Other participants such as Participant 2 brought up challenges such as high cost of fuel, not having adequate stock, limited trading hours, and increased workloads as a result of the reduced number of employees as the factors that could hamper the implementation of the recovery strategies.

Participant 4 was adamant that future lockdowns could potentially be challenging to their businesses. In emphasising his point, he noted that “... *the lockdown is also a challenge for my business. It’s difficult to recover or to make my business recover at this time and during this COVID-19 pandemic...*” This point was also echoed by Participant 6 who said that “... *if the lockdown moves to a higher level, that could be another challenge...*”

Other participants such as Participant 7 viewed loadshedding as a potential challenge to the implementation of recovery strategies for township taverns noting that “... *the*

issue of loadshedding in the township is a problem to small business. Not everyone can afford to buy and maintain a generator...

Other challenges that came out during the interviews included the lack of government support for township taverns, unavailability of stock such as Savanna, Castle and Hunters, the need to do stock-taking every week, curfew hours, the presence of illegal liquor traders who did not need to comply with COVID-19 regulations, the need to continue servicing debts, competition from other township taverns, absence of entertainment in township taverns and so on.

4.6.6 What do you understand by the term “renewal”?

When asked to explain their understanding of the term “renewal”, most of the participants showed a clear understanding of the term. The responses to the questions included the following, inter alia:

“... rework on something more than once...” (Participant 2)

“... to regain strength again...” (Participant 5)

“... to re-do but in a different way...” (Participant 9)

“... means to give something new in the place of the old...” (Participant 11)

“... means to do something again but with a different plan or mission or goals...”
(Participant 17)

“... to replace old ways of doing things...” (Participant 18)

From this feedback from the participants, it is evident that they understood that renewing a business was all about introducing something new and doing things differently than before.

4.6.7 What did you do or what will you do for your business to renew itself during and after the Covid-19 pandemic?

This question sought to establish the strategies that the township taverns would implement in order to renew their businesses during and post Covid-19.

Participant 2 was of the view that his business needed to be more flexible to be able to adapt to changes in the market.

For Participant 3, the solution lies in more marketing and promotions for the business. Participant 12 was also of the view that having specials during the weekends was a good strategy to use as part of renewing his business. Participant 27 also concurred with Participant 3 and participant 12 when he noted that “...*sometimes on weekends we have specials, you buy three beers you get free small fries...*”

Other participants such as Participant 5 had to diversify into other business activities such as introducing a car wash service to attract new customers to the business. For Participant 4, one way to renew his business post-COVID-19 is through extending his business' operating hours and providing Wi-Fi inside the tavern. The issue of Wi-Fi was also raised by Participant 27 who pointed out that “...*during COVID-19 I am using Wi-Fi to attract customers...*”

Participant 6 was of the view that cutting business costs by reducing the number of employees and reducing personal expenses would help him in renewing his business.

For Participant 7, in order to renew his business during and post-COVID-19, he will provide additional services such as a pool table inside his tavern and offer additional services such as electricity and other small food items such as snacks. Participant 25 was also of the view that adding a pool table was a way of renewing his business. Participant 8 highlighted that introducing entertainment by having guest DJs during the weekend will be one of the promotion strategies that he will implement as part of renewing his business. According to Participant 17, renewing a business is almost like starting from scratch. As such, she decided to buy a delivery van to cut down on vehicle hiring costs. In addition to that, she is now selling African food as a way to add more profit to the business. Participant 28 shared the same sentiments as Participant 17 when he avowed that “...*selling fast food during the week and African Food on weekends; this is a new implementation plan in my business...*”

For Participant 25, one way of renewing his business was going to be through implementing cost-cutting measures such as replacing a DJ with a music box.

Participant 9 was of the view that it was not possible to renew his business now because the business was still recovering from the effects of COVID-19. Participant 11 also concurred with Participant 9 when she posited that “... *I don't have renewal plan. I am starting my business from scratch because I have lost stock and profit. The only difference is that the same structure and other work equipment is in place...*”

Several participants also indicated that it was not possible to renew their businesses as they had lost stock and their customers had lost their jobs. These statements were boldly captured by Participant 15 who intimated that “...*during this pandemic it's so difficult to renew the business because most of our customers lost their jobs, to renew business will also need money and new business plan before I used to call different DJs for different types of music and that plan used to bring more customers to my business. In addition to that trading hours were good for business but in the current situation, hiring a DJ for a liquor business is not an option...*” Other participants such as Participant 29 and 30 noted that they were interested in renewing their business although they do not have plans in place to do so as yet.

4.6.8 Why do you think the renewal strategies will be effective?

This question required the participants to justify why the renewal strategies that they were proposing will be effective.

Participant 1 was of the view that her renewal strategies would be effective because she was now offering additional services such as selling frozen fries to small businesses in her community.

Several participants indicated that they were not sure if their renewal strategies would work as they were yet to recover from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Other participants were of the view that they needed guidance and support during this time so that they could sustain their businesses. For other participants, they were not sure if their planned strategies would work as the pandemic was still around.

4.6.9 What challenges do you think your business will face when implementing these renewal strategies?

In terms of the challenges that the liquor retailers could face when implementing their renewal strategies, the participants cited many possible challenges. For instance, Participant 1 was of the view that the country was still facing the COVID-19 pandemic and business was still low. Participant 11 was pessimistic about the future when he noted that “... *there is a high possibility of another lockdown and I do not want to waste my money...*”

Other participants such as Participant 1 highlighted the rising fuel cost as a major challenge.

For Participant 3, competition is one challenge that his business faced as they were many other taverns in his community. Participant 9 concurred with Participant 3 when he said that “...*competition in the township is very high everyone or almost everybody is in the liquor industry and to start this business you only need 2-5 cases...*”

For other participants, the implementation of their renewal strategies could potentially be derailed by stock shortages. Other challenges that were noted by the participants included reduced customer buying or spending power as a result of the high unemployment rate in the community, customers spending less on liquor, the issue of crime as township taverns were regarded as an easy target and the issue of loadshedding. Additionally, other issues that emerged included illegal liquor traders and some traders' non-compliance with the COVID-19 regulations.

4.6.10 What do you understand by the term “resilience”?

This question sought to establish the participants' understanding of business resilience. Most of the participants were not aware of the term and confused it with recovery. For several the participants, this was a new term that they had never used or applied in their businesses and as such they associated it with business recovery. For instance, Participant 11 noted that resilience is all about being able to recover quickly from difficult circumstances. The same sentiments were echoed by other

participants such as Participant 27 who noted that resilience is all about “... *recovering quickly from difficulties, toughness...*”

4.6.11 What did you do or what will you do for your business to become resilient during and after the Covid-19 pandemic?

The participants highlighted several activities that they have implemented in order to ensure that their businesses were resilient.

Participant 2 indicated that her business offered affordable prices to their customers as a way of remaining viable and maintaining their market share. Participant 4 expressed similar sentiments when he pointed out that reducing his prices was one way that he was implementing for his business to be resilient.

For Participant 3, treating her employees and customers well was a strategy that she was using to remain viable in business.

For other participants such as Participant 7, one strategy that he implemented to make his business resilient was to offer additional services such as “shisanyama” (braai) in order to offer additional service to his customers.

Participant 10 was of the view that resilience could be achieved by cutting down on his business expenses. Participant 19 also shared similar sentiments as Participant 10 when he pointed out that he was now working full-time in his business and doing everything by himself as a way of reducing staff costs. For Participant 22, she reduced staff costs by bringing in her children to support her in running the business.

4.6.12 Additional comments from the participants

The last question during the interviews requested the participants to indicate any other questions or issues that they may have, and several issues emerged from these discussions. Participant 6 noted that the liquor trading industry was very risky, especially for women because of the high crime rate in the country. Participant 15 concurred with this viewpoint when she posited that most liquor traders were women and government needed to protect and support them.

Participant 11 was of view that the government was not consulting them as key players in the liquor industry when decisions were made with regards to the industry. Participant 17 indicated that the government agencies such as the South African Police Services (SAPS) need to be educated on the activities of township taverns so that they do not always treat them as illegal businesses.

Participant 13 bemoaned the skills shortage in the industry, noting that most of the people working in the industry lacked the appropriate skills and qualifications.

4.7 Summary of the Key Findings

Based on the data that was collected and analysed in this chapter, the following are the key findings that emerged from this study:

- Most of the taverns in Soweto were adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Several taverns relied on external funding to restart their operations.
- The township tavern market is male dominated although there are several female players in the industry.
- Many taverns introduced additional services such as car washes, as well as restaurants to mention a few, as a way of staying afloat whilst others diversified into new business.
- Several businesses will not be able to operate post-COVID-19 and as such they have closed permanently.
- COVID-19 led to employment losses in the township taverns market and the owners had to cut down on employees as a way of managing their business costs to remain viable.

4.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter provided a comprehensive analysis and interpretation of the data that was collected during the 30 in-depth interviews. The chapter also provided a summary of the key findings that emerged from the study. The next chapter will provide the conclusion, recommendations, and potential directions for future studies as the study wraps up.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter, being the last one for this study, provides a conclusion to the study. The previous chapter provided a comprehensive analysis and interpretation of the data that was collected for the study. This chapter provides answers to the research questions that guided the study. The chapter also provides a summary of the key findings. Furthermore, the chapter will present the study's recommendations for future research.

5.2 Summary of the Study

This dissertation is structured into five chapters. This section provides a summary of this study.

5.2.1 Chapter 1

Chapter 1 of this study provided an introduction and general background of the study. The chapter presented the purpose of the study, which was to establish the recovery, renewal and resilience strategies that township taverns could adopt during and post-Covid-19. Furthermore, Chapter 1 presented the research problem, the research questions, and the research objectives. Additionally, the chapter provided a clarification of the basic terms and concepts that were used in the study.

5.2.2 Chapter 2

Chapter 2 of this study provided a comprehensive review of the literature focusing on business recovery, renewal, resilience, and continuity. The chapter also presented the theoretical framework of the study.

5.2.3 Chapter 3

Chapter 3 of this study presented the research methodology and design that was adopted for this study. The first section of the study discussed the research philosophy of the study, followed by the approach that was adopted for theory development.

Furthermore, the chapter presented the research strategy, the time horizon, the data collection and data analysis techniques that were used in the study. Lastly, the chapter presented the ethical considerations that guided the conduct of this study.

5.2.4 Chapter 4

Chapter 4 of this study presented an analysis and interpretation of the data that was collected for this study. The chapter also included a discussion and summary of the key findings.

5.3 Evaluation of the Study

The main aim of the study was to establish the business recovery, renewal and resilience strategies that township taverns could possibly adopt during and post-COVID 19. In order to achieve this aim, the study had four questions that needed to be answered. These four questions and how they were answered by the data analysis are presented below:

5.3.1 What strategies can township taverns implement to recover from the effects of Covid-19 on their businesses?

This question was comprehensively answered through the analysis that was conducted in Chapter 4. Several strategies that township taverns could implement to recover from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on their businesses were suggested by the participants. Firstly, most of the participants regarded ensuring the liquidity of their businesses as paramount. As such, they suggested that one way to ensure recovery was to ensure that their businesses had adequate financial resources to continue operating. In this regard, the required working capital could be obtained from family and friends, from societies such as stokvels and investments. Funding for the township taverns could potentially be obtained from financial institutions such as banks and other business development agencies.

The other strategy that came out of the data analysis was that of creating joint ventures with other individuals who have the capital.

Product development also came up as one of the strategies that the township taverns have implemented to recover from the effects of the pandemic. Product development is a market growth strategy that entails introducing new products and services to the market that a business is currently serving. For instance, several township taverns have introduced additional services such as car washes, pool tables, food services, conveniences products such as snacks, takeaways, airtime, soft drinks, water and electricity. All these products and services are not traditionally found in a tavern, which is principally a business that sells liquor products. In this regard, product development ensured that the township taverns *“do not put all their eggs in one basket”* and as such widened their product and service offerings to generate more revenue for their businesses. Furthermore, the expanded product and service mix serves to attract more customers to the taverns.

Another strategy that also emerged from the data analysis in Chapter 4 was that of cost management through the implementation of cost-cutting measures. Several cost-cutting measures such as retrenching staff, the avoidance of holding too much stock at a time and implementing just-in-time procurement were implemented by some of the township taverns as strategies to recover from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Finally, the need to pool their resources together and buy in bulk was one strategy that some of the township taverns implemented as a recovery strategy. As most of them faced severe cash flow problems as a result of their inability to trade during the times the country was on lockdowns, one strategy that some of the township taverns used in order to re-stock was through pooling their resources together to buy in bulk. This enabled them to get bulk purchase discounts and cut down on their transport costs.

5.3.2 What strategies can township taverns implement to renew their businesses post Covid-19?

This question was also answered from the analysis that was conducted in the preceding chapter. The data revealed several renewal strategies that the township taverns had implemented in order to renew their businesses. Intensified marketing and promotions were identified as a key renewal strategy. Several township taverns

introduced mid-week and weekend promotions in order to attract clients to their businesses. This was an effective strategy to bring customers back to the taverns, especially after prolonged periods of restrictions where people were required to stay at home. The introduction of additional services such as car washes, Wi-Fi and food items in the taverns also emerged as an effective strategy that was used by the township taverns in order to renew their businesses.

However, several of the participants were of the view that the pandemic is still ravaging their businesses and as such it was not possible to renew their businesses in the current circumstances.

5.3.3 What strategies can township taverns implement in order to make their businesses resilient post Covid-19?

The answers to this question were also provided by the data that was analysed in Chapter 4. Although all the township taverns were severely affected by the Covid-19 pandemic and some of them had to permanently shut down, some of them remained resilient and managed to survive the pandemic. In this regard, the township taverns provided evidence of several resilience strategies that they implemented during the pandemic in order to ensure the survival of their businesses. Firstly, one strategy that the township taverns implemented was flexible pricing, which entailed offering affordable prices to their customers as a way of remaining viable and maintaining their market share.

Secondly, customer retention was another resilience strategy that was implemented by some of the businesses. The taverns emphasised the need to treat their customers with respect and deliver excellent customer service so that the customers would continue to patronise their taverns.

Cost management was also another resilience strategy that was implemented by the township taverns. Many of the businesses had to scale down their operations, retrench some employees, and reduce some business and personal expenses to ensure the sustainability of their businesses. After retrenching some employees, some of the

tavern owners decided to do the work themselves, whilst others sought the assistance of their families in running the businesses.

5.3.4 What are the challenges that township taverns could face when implementing recovery, renewal and resilience strategies post-COVID-19?

The data that was analysed in Chapter 4 provided answers to this question. There are several challenges that the participants thought that they could face when implementing recovery, renewal and resilience strategies. One challenge that was noted was the lack of consultation by the government when putting the country under lockdown. The participants were of the view that the future of their businesses was uncertain, as the government could wake up one morning and place the country under lockdown once again.

Linked to the challenge above was the challenge of lack of support from the government and its agencies that are supposed to be supporting small businesses. The participants complained that their industry did not get the requisite support from the government and hence they are always struggling to make ends meet.

Women who either manage or own township taverns also pointed out that the issue of crime, including gender-based violence, was a major challenge at taverns. As the taverns are located in townships, which traditionally have high crime rates, the taverns are regarded as easy targets by criminal gangs.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the data analysed in Chapter 4 and the key findings from this study, several recommendations emerged and are presented below.

5.4.1 Government Support

There is a need for the government and its agencies to provide business support services to township taverns as they are a key component of the township economy.

5.4.2 Bulk Procurement

Due to the fact that a number of the township taverns are facing cash flow problems, it is recommended that the township taverns should organise themselves into collaborative buying organisations so that they can pool their resources in order to buy in bulk and thereby enjoy bulk purchase discounts. This could be implemented through a representative structure or local forum for taverns, where those who are subscribed as members are able to structure the order days. The primary object of this exercise would be discounted cost of sales, which is applicable according to the quantity of stock ordered from manufactures.

5.4.3 Product Development

One strategy that enabled some of the taverns to be able to recover from the effects of the pandemic was their ability to introduce additional products and services that they have not traditionally offered. It is recommended that township taverns should embrace this strategy and pursue it vigorously as it has the advantage of broadening their revenue base. Due to the uniqueness of the environment for each tavern, prior to introduction of additional and innovative services (product offering), a thorough examination of the market should be conducted.

5.5 Directions for Further studies

This study established a few potential areas for research in the future. Firstly, further research should be conducted to establish the nature of business development services and the support the township taverns require from the government. Secondly, there is a need for research to determine how township taverns can organise themselves into viable bulk procurement units in order to take advantage of the economies of scale that accrue as a result of bulk-buying.

5.6 Conclusion

The study sought to establish the recovery, renewal, and resilience strategies that township taverns could implement during and post-COVID-19. The study comprehensively uncovered these strategies and managed to answer all the research questions and fulfilled the research objectives.

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APPENDIX A: CONSENT FORM

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

Category of Participants (tick as appropriate):

Staff/Workers		Teachers		Parents		Lecturers		Students	
Other (specify)	X	Township tavern owners							

You are kindly invited to participate in a research study being conducted by Lucky Jabu Ntimane from the Cape Peninsula University of Technology. The findings of this study will contribute towards (tick as appropriate):

An undergraduate project		A conference paper	
An Honours project		A published journal article	X
A Masters/doctoral thesis	X	A published report	

Selection criteria

You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you are:

- (a) Own or manage a tavern in the township.
- (b) A public official working with township taverns.

The information below gives details about the study to help you decide whether you would want to participate.

Title of the research:

Post Covid-19 recovery, renewal and resilience strategies for township taverns: case studies of selected township taverns in Soweto

A brief explanation of what the research involves:

The aim of the study is to establish strategies to enhance the operations, the recovery, renewal and resilience of township taverns in Soweto after Covid -19.

The objectives of the study are as follows:

- To establish the strategies that township taverns can implement to recovery from the effects of Covid-19 on their businesses.
- To identify the strategies that township taverns can implement to renew their businesses post Covid-19.

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW GUIDE



Post Covid-19 recovery, renewal, and resilience strategies for township taverns: case studies of selected township taverns in Soweto

By

Lucky Jabu Ntimane

221060847

Interview Guide for Tavern Owners

Cape Peninsula University of Technology
Faculty of Business & Management Sciences
September 2021

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE

Introduction

My name is Lucky Ntimane. I am a Master of Retail Business Management student at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT). As part of the requirements of my degree, I am conducting a research study to establish the **post Covid-19 recovery, renewal and resilience strategies for township taverns: case study of selected township taverns in Soweto**. I have selected you to participate in this study because you either own or manage a tavern in Soweto.

The objectives of the study are as follows:

- To establish the strategies that township taverns can implement to recovery from the effects of Covid-19 on their businesses.
- To identify the strategies that township taverns can implement to renew their businesses post Covid-19.
- To investigate the strategies that township taverns can implement in order to make their businesses resilient post Covid-19.
- To establish the challenges that township taverns could face when implementing recovery, renewal, and resilience strategies post-Covid-19.

Your participation in this study is voluntary and you can also withdraw at any time. Furthermore, you are participating in this study anonymously and your information will be kept in confidence.

1. General questions

- 1.1 Note the gender of the participant
- 1.2. Briefly tell me about your business. (Probe for information about when the business was started, how many employees etc.

2. Covid-19 Recovery Strategies

- 2.1. What do you understand by the term “recovery”?
- 2.2. How was your business affected by the Covid-19 pandemic?
- 2.3. What did you do or what will you do for your business to recover from the effects of the pandemic?
- 2.4. Why do you think the recovery strategies that you explained in question 2.3 above will be effective?
- 2.5. What challenges do you think your business will face when implementing these recovery strategies?

3. Covid-19 Renewal Strategies

- 3.1 What do you understand by the term “renewal”?
- 3.2 What did you do or what will you do for your business to renew itself during and after the Covid-19 pandemic?
- 3.3 Why do you think the strategies that you gave in question 3.2 above will be effective?
- 3.4 What challenges do you think your business will face when implementing these renewal strategies?

4. Covid-19 Resilience Strategies

- 4.1 What do you understand by the term “resilience”?
 - 4.2 What did you do or what will you do for your business to become resilient during and after the Covid-19 pandemic?
 - 4.3 Why do you think the strategies that you gave in question 4.2 above will be effective?
 - 4.4 What challenges do you think your business will face when implementing these resilience strategies?
5. Ask the participant if he or she has any questions.
 6. Thank the participant for their participation.

APPENDIX C: ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE



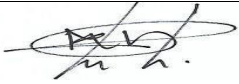
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Office of the Chairperson Research Ethics Committee	FACULTY: BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCES
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The Faculty's Research Ethics Committee (FREC) on **16 November 2021**, ethics **APPROVAL** was granted to **Lucky Ntimane (221060847)** for a research activity for **Master of Retail Business Management** at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology.

Title of project:	Post Covid-19 recovery, renewal and resilience strategies for township taverns: case studies of selected township taverns in Soweto Researcher (s): Dr V Mugobo / Ms. A P Mrasi
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Decision: APPROVED

 Signed: Chairperson: Research Ethics Committee	23 November 2021 Date
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The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:

1. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the CPUT Policy on Research Ethics.
2. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study requires that the researcher stops the study and immediately informs the chairperson of the relevant Faculty Ethics Committee.
3. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.
4. Any changes that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and the confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the Committee in writing accompanied by a progress report.
5. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines, and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study. Adherence to the following South African legislation is important, notably compliance with the Bill of Rights as provided for in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (the Constitution) and where applicable: Protection of Personal Information Act, no 4 of 2013; Children's act no 38 of 2005 and the National Health Act, no 61 of 2003 and/or other legislations that is relevant.
6. Only de-identified research data may be used for secondary research purposes in future on condition that the research objectives are similar to those of the original research. Secondary use of identifiable human research data requires additional ethics clearance.
7. No field work activities may continue after two (2) years for Masters and Doctorate research project from the date of issue of the Ethics Certificate. Submission of a completed research ethics progress report (REC 6) will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.

Clearance Certificate No | 2021_FBMSREC 092

APPENDIX D: CONFIRMATION OF PROFESSIONAL EDITING

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CONFIRMATION OF PROFESSIONAL EDITING

Date: 22 May 2022

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Konibo Communications hereby confirms that the dissertation titled *Post COVID-19 Recovery, Renewal and Resilience Strategies for Township Taverns: a case study of selected township taverns in Soweto*, which has been submitted by Mr. Lucky J Ntimane (Student Number – 22106084) in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Retail Business Management in the Faculty of Business and Management Sciences at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology has been professionally edited.

The Editor – Ms Kefilwe Makhanya - is a former Lecturer in the Department of Communication at the University of Fort Hare and an Applied Linguistics specialist with extensive, senior-level writing and editing experience in a broad spectrum of disciplines, including editing of academic work.

Kind Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kefilwe Makhanya".

Kefilwe Makhanya
Editor