

Social Reproductive Labour: Exploring Experiences of Women in the Taxi Industry



A minor dissertation in partial fulfilment for requirements in Master of Philosophy (MPhil)
in Theories of Justice and Inequality in Sociology Department.

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Dedication

I dedicate this research to all *omama* who are kitchen owners, cooking and selling cooked food at different taxi-ranks in South Africa.

Abstract

The taxi- industry in South Africa is one of the most significant public modes of transport that employs a variety of workers, unskilled, under-skilled, and semi-skilled, and transport the majority of workers every day. The growth of the taxi-industry in South Africa is informed by the history of colonialism which ensued in the forced removal of black peoples from city vicinities, to the peripheries of the city which subsequently created transportation needs to and from work. Nonetheless, post-colonialism, the nationalist elite government ensued transformation endeavours and attempts to formalise the taxi-industry. However, the history of the taxi -industry in South Africa and post-colonial nationalist elites' government endeavours to transform the taxi-industry women are providing social reproductive labour in the taxi-industry are silenced. Therefore, the aim of this study was to uncover the experiences of women who produce social reproductive labour in the taxi-industry, and the gendered power dynamics in the taxi-industry by using semi-structured interviews.

Semi-structured interviews are a dialogue between the interviewer and the interviewee and they were conducted at the Cape Town Deck Station taxi-rank. Semi-structured interviews were guided by qualitative research method largely because it enables the researcher to critically study the nature of phenomena, the phenomena qualities in their varying manifestations, and the context in which they manifest themselves or from the perspectives from which they can be perceived in their natural environment. This research found that the work provided by *omama* is integral for the functioning of the taxi industry as it provides them with labour power although it subject *omama* to precarious working conditions.

Acronyms

African National Congress (ANC)

KwaZulu Natal (KZN)

National Taxi Task Team (NTTT)

Public Utility Transport Corporation (PUTCO)

South African Black Taxi Association (SABTA)

Central Business District (CBD)

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Chapter One

General Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This research endeavours to explore the experiences of women who cook and sell food in the Cape Town Central Business District (CBD) minibus taxi rank. This research views the women who cook and sell food in the taxi rank as an extension of the taxi industry. There is not adequate literature done in the social reproductive labour feeding the taxi industry. Therefore, this thesis relies on the taxi industry literature and the informal business literature in general. The significance of this minibus taxi rank space is that it represents and facilitates the local economy in various ways (Transaction Capital, 2018; WWF South Africa, 2021). This space has gone through a lot of transformation in the past decades and part of this change includes the role and positioning of women in the taxi industry. Nonetheless, the transformation of the industry has not significantly altered gender relations. Women continue to be on the lower rung in the hierarchy of stakeholders in the industry. This study seeks to explore the gendered nature of the work they do and the gendered role-play at the taxi rank.

In most taxi ranks, there are various forms of informal kitchens, which are mostly run by Black women. These informal kitchens are normally housed within the taxi-rank space and sometimes they are in a small container (*i.e.*, park homes). Inside the kitchens there is a small freezer to freeze various types of meat to be cooked and sold. There are also small gas stoves, a microwave to warm up the food, crates to store the plates for the clients who order in and takeaway packaging for the customers who do not order and sit down to eat. Portable dishwashers' and containers to wash the dishes can also be found in these kitchens. *Omama* leave their appliances and the uncooked food and cooking equipment in their respective kitchens. Outside the kitchens there are 3-5 chairs and a table and small tent (gazebo) owned

by *omama* kitchen owners for clients to sit under. In *isiZulu* and *isiXhosa*, which are two of the eleven official South African languages, women are known as *omama*. *Omama* prepare freshly cooked meals every day at the minibus taxi rank. The primary aim of these women is to run informal businesses by providing cooked food at affordable prices, to the people who work at the taxi rank. The food is, however, bought and consumed by a larger population than just the people who work in the taxi industry, *i.e.*, the commuters.

This research sees these informal kitchens as an extension of a social reproductive service provided by women. This service provided by *omama* is pertinent to the functioning and smooth running of the industry. For instance, the minibus taxi drivers start their working day as early as 05h00 in the morning, therefore, *omama* sell the breakfast to have the labour power to transport passengers to and from work (Sauti, 2006).

The minibus taxi industry is the dominant public transport form in South Africa estimated to be transporting the majority of commuters to and from work every day (Transaction Capital, 2018; WWF South Africa, 2021). Therefore, the minibus taxi industry in South Africa, contributes to the creation of mostly informal employment, ranging from the employment of taxi-drivers, queue marshals, car wash, and the establishment of many informal businesses; the selling of food and beverages, maintenance and repair services, and many small medium enterprises (Transaction Capital, 2018; WWF South Africa, 2021).

The public transport and in particular the taxi-industry is male dominated and women presence in the taxi-industry is largely that of the provision of social reproductive labour (see Sauti, 2006), although not exclusively. Nonetheless, the public transport and the taxi-industry is a male dominated industry, with few women who have made their entrance into public transport either as minibus taxi-drivers (Nkete, 2015; Matiwane, 2019) or bus drivers (Komane, 2013).

Martin (2013) gave empirical research about the challenges women face in a male dominated industry that are fundamentally influenced by patriarchy and traditional construction of gender (Komane, 2013). The patriarchal and traditional construction of gender presupposes that women are inherently meant to be the providers of social reproductive labour and reduces women to mere sexual objects (Martin, 2013). Furthermore, Martin (2013) argued that women in male dominated industries are struggling for acceptance by their male colleagues, and experience sexual harassment. Martins' (2013) arguments are in congruent with Nkete (2015), Matiwane (2019) and to a greater extent Sauti (2006) on the experiences of women who are working in the taxi industry. Nkete (2015) and Matiwane (2019) argued that women struggle to be accepted by their male colleagues and find the taxi-rank not to be conducive enough for them to effectively do their work as there is a lack of proper and clean sanitation in the taxi-ranks.

Potgieter et al., (2012) and Mchunu et al., (2020) report on the experiences of women who are having transactional sex with the minibus taxi-drivers and confirms the patriarchal attitude, hegemonic, and performative masculinity behaviour of minibus taxi-drivers reducing women largely to mere sex objects. Moreover, women who are working in the taxi-industry further suffer from toxic patriarchy and rude behaviour from the male minibus taxi- drivers (Sauti, 2006; Matiwane, 2019; Nkete, 2015).

The working hours in the taxi-industry are long, starting as early as 05h00 in the morning and sometimes ending as late as 20h00. Although women who cook at the rank do not necessarily spend the same amount of time at work as the taxi drivers, women are also deprived adequate time to provide social reproductive labour to their families especially their children (Nkete, 2015).

The lack of government support is an additional source of the challenges women who work in the taxi-industry confront. Government fails to support women's entrepreneurial activities in the taxi-industry (Matiwane, 2019; Mkhize, 2013). The Coronavirus exacerbated the challenges women entrepreneurs' face, such as getting permits and selling cooked food at the taxi rank (Khunou et al, 2020). Nonetheless, the challenges of the women who cook and sell cooked food in the taxi-rank have not adequately been studied and have been misconstrued, dovetailed, and implicitly reduced to general street vendor challenges (Gamieldien & Van Niekerk, 2017).

Mpofu-Mketwa (2020) investigate the challenges faced by women who are street vendors at a township in Cape Town, kwa-Langa and are, in one way or another, incongruent with challenges of women entrepreneurs in the taxi-industry. Mpofu-Mketwa's (2020) research largely confirms with previous research conducted on the experiences of street vendors, such as, persistent harassment by municipal officials concerning issues of obtaining trade permits, lack of education on how to obtain the trade permits and lack of trading infrastructure (Arias, 2019; Gamieldien & Van Niekerk, 2017; Moagi et al., 2021). The street vendors, more often than not have to face the brutality of municipal officials confiscating their products for not having permits without following the Business Act procedures (Arias, 2019). Moreover, some of the street vendors, because of lack of education, do not know the procedures of acquiring the trading permits, which subjects them to perpetual harassment by the municipal officials (Gamieldien & Van Niekerk, 2017).

Nevertheless, Mpofu-Mketwa's (2020) research is incongruent with Mutopo's (2010) research of egalitarianism on married women street vendors concerning domestic chores and child rearing. Nonetheless, there is a difference between street vendors and the women who cook and sell food in the taxi-industry at the taxi-rank. The difference is that the street vendors sell their commodities in an open space near the roads which often pits them against municipal

police officials. The municipal police officials confiscate the street vendors' commodities for contriving the Business Act by claiming that they are obstructing the road and for not having trading permits (Arias, 2019). However, *omama* sell the cooked food at small kitchens in the taxi rank and although they may not have trading permits, they do not experience confiscating of their commodities by the municipal officials for being charged with obstructing the road or not having trading permits.

Violence is prevalent in the taxi-industry and the assassination of competitors is ubiquitously notorious and exposes women who are working in the taxi-industry to different challenges from those of street vendors. For instance, women who inherit their deceased (assassinated) husbands' minibus taxis because of greed and corruption in the issuing of the permits, they struggle to have the ownership of their deceased husbands' minibus taxi permits transferred to them. Therefore, posing challenges for them to operate as minibus taxi owners (Matiwane, 2019). Routes rivalry, and in particular lucrative routes, in the taxi-industry are prevalent and lethal (Ngubane et al, 2020; Vegter, 2020).

Moreover, women's obstacles further find expression when the taxi associations charges them exorbitant and arbitrary registration fees (Matiwane, 2019). The prevalence of violence in the taxi-industry undermines the support the industry and government afford; aimed at curbing violence against women in the industry because women do not report abuse cases for fear of victimisation. For instance, there is a women's support desk in the taxi-ranks (Matiwane, 2019; Nkete, 2015); however, women do not report the challenges they face from male minibus taxi-drivers because of fear of being victimised and possible assassination (Matiwane, 2019; Nkete, 2015).

Therefore, this research has studied the experiences of women who provide social reproductive labour within the taxi-industry. There are several studies that have been done on the taxi

industry and its relationship with women. There are studies which have focused on the issue of women who date taxi drivers *i.e.*, taxi queens (Shefer et al, 2011; Mchunu et al, 2020), women who are taxi and bus drivers (Matiwane, 2019; Martin, 2013) the treatment of women who have been widowed through taxi violence and widows needing to take over (Matiwane, 2019). However, this study deals with a slightly different issue; that of women who cook and sell food at the minibus taxi rank. Social reproductive labour is centred on domestic activities such as, but not limited to, cooking, cleaning and childrearing, and such labour is mostly unpaid. Social reproductive labour, while mostly performed by women, enables men to be productive at work (Benya, 2015; Hamlin, 2019). Tronto's (1994) contribution to the broader discipline of social reproductive labour signifies the importance of care in reproductive labour. Tronto (1994) suggests that care becomes a burden to its producers and further that care is gendered and coloured.

1.2 Theoretical Framework: Emotional Labour

Care becomes a burden to the social reproductive labour producers *qua* the women through consuming their time while providing the domestic activities, chores, and replenishing the labour for others (Chauhan, 2021; England, 2005; Tronto, 1994). Within social reproductive labour and care work there is a significant element intertwined in an intersectional manner that at face value can be misconstrued with burden of care. This element is the emotional labour. Transcending the self-definition of the concept (emotional labour) opens to the reader an opportunity to appreciate the complexity of the concept and how it estranges the worker from the self and the repercussion thereof. Brooke (2009a) gave a critical analysis of Hochschild's work on emotional labour in a Marxist juxtaposed and intersectional manner for a critical comprehension of how the work ensues exploitation and alienation. The essence of emotional labour endeavour is to expose capitalist labour damages to the worker through transcending

the physical damage to the most taken for granted damage *i.e.*, the emotional damage and its repercussion (Brooke, 2009a).

Hochschild conceptualization of emotion work rests on the distinction between emotion work and emotional labour. Emotion work is the process of managing and presenting emotions in the private sphere of our lives, while emotional labour is the process of managing and presenting emotions in the public sphere (Brooke, 2009b; Constanti & Gibbs, 2005). In a capitalist economy and in particular in the service industry the emotions of workers are sold in exchange for value, through a rigorous routinizing process by the management.

The consequences of emotional labour are bad as the effects of physical labour to the worker. They render the worker to a position of surface acting, deep acting and emotive dissonance. The phenomenon of surface acting on the one hand is the manifestation of the managements' constant efforts to motivate the workers to imbibe and embrace the act estrangement to their true feelings with the intentions to please the customers (Ronnie & Figart, 1999). On the other hand, surface acting is the direct consequence of surface acting, whereby; the workers adhere to the management efforts and deny themselves the opportunity to be in touch with their true feelings during the process of performing their duties (Brooke, 2009a, 2009b).

Nonetheless, emotional labour is ambivalent and not equivocal about the agency of the workers as it is unequivocal with the workers exploitation. In defence of Hochschild limitation and ambivalence on the agency of the worker *vis-a-vis* to exploitation (Brooke, 2009a) magnified the cabin crew protests against emotive dissonance ingrained in the emotive labour and the workers' endeavours to unshackle themselves from the exploitation through protest (Brooke, 2009a). Nevertheless, the protests Brooke (2009a) signified in Hochschild's work to defend the limitations of emotional labour in offering the workers' agency is not liberating because emotional labour continues exploit workers in the service industry. Sorel in Ciccariello-Maher

(2020) offers a liberating analysis of the limitations of not only Hochschild limitations to the workers' limited agency in liberating themselves from capitalist working relations. Sorel in Ciccariello-Maher (2020) argued that working-class conditions (exploitation) are not necessary and sufficient features to determine the workers efforts to liberate themselves from oppression and exploitation (Ciccariello-Maher, 2020). Sorels' argument contributes significantly to Hochschild's seminal work limitations on the significance of the agency for the workers to liberate themselves from the exploitative emotional labour but to further the thinking of the modalities that workers could possibly utilize to liberate themselves (Ciccariello-Maher, 2020).

Furthermore, and equally important, the social reproductive labour, emotional work is gendered and mostly performed by women in the service such as but not limited to the cabin crew and restaurant industry (Brooke, 2009a; Constanti, & Gibbs, 2005). Nonetheless, the experiences of taxi-industry workers who produce the social reproductive labour has not been researched thus it is largely unknown whether their work possesses the features that come with the social reproductive labour *i.e.*, undervalued when it's paid; burden of care and emotional labour. Therefore, this research endeavours to examine the experiences of *omama* in the taxi industry and to explore the gendered nature of work and their role at the taxi rank.

1.3 Research Rationale

The taxi industry is a highly gendered space and, in many ways, demonstrates patriarchal traits (Nkete, 2015). The prominent challenge the taxi-industry currently faces in Cape Town is violence (Damba-Hendrik 2022; Isaacs, 2022). Taxi violence mainly emanates from rivalry about lucrative routes between the taxi-owners and taxi-drivers. Another challenge is the impounding of the minibus taxis by the traffic officers and the high fines they normally receive when found at fault (Barrett, 2003; Ingle, 2009; Ngubane et al., 2020; O'Regan, 2022). While

the taxi violence, together with other challenges faced by this industry, is found in most parts of the country, this study paid a particular attention to the city of Cape Town because this is where the primary data collection will be based.

While there is research that has highlighted the challenges faced by women minibus taxi drivers (Nkete, 2015), the challenges specifically faced by the women who cook and sell food in the taxi industry have not been the focus. Furthermore, challenges faced by women who are working in the food industry and street-vendors have been highlighted (Gamieldien & Van Niekerk, 2017; Mpofu-Mketwa, 2020) and women who cook and sell cooked food at taxi-ranks are relatively known by the public. The voices of women who are part of the social reproductive labour in the taxi-industry are marginalised in taxi-industry literature.

Literature concerning the taxi industry largely focuses on its formalisation (Ingle, 2009). Moreover, the literature concerns itself, consciously or unconsciously, with the vilification of minibus taxi-drivers and portraying minibus taxi-drivers as the significant contributors to the social ills in our society (Potgieter et al., 2012). Therefore, this study contributes to the literature on the taxi-industry by giving voice to the often-disregarded women providing the social reproductive labour in the taxi rank *qua* the women who cook and sell cooked food in the taxi rank. Most of the social reproductive literature is normally focused on the industries, sectors, or organisations, such as, domestic workers (Du Toit, 2020; Safuta, 2019) and the education sector (Magoqwana et al., 2019).

1.4 Research Problem

Taxi industry literature is largely concerned with formalising modalities of the industry and, with an understanding of the nature of the violence that often erupts in this industry, and possibilities of how it can be put to an end (Barrett, 2003; Fobosi, 2019a; 2019b; Ingle, 2009;

Schalekamp & Klopp, 2018). Nevertheless, the literature concerning the taxi industry, is silent about the phenomena that is fundamental to the industry *i.e.*, social reproductive labour. Benya (2015) theorised of social reproductive labour as the kind of labour that replenishes and sustains the labour force through its activities, such as, cooking and doing the laundry.

Benya (2015) stressed that social reproductive labour is integral in the maintenance and existence of the capitalist society, although the capitalist society does not value or reimburse those who provide this kind of work. Inasmuch as social reproductive labour is important and that there is no industry that can effectively function without it. Mosoetsa (2011) theorised social reproductive labour within the household; however, the understanding and the challenges confronted by the social reproductive labour producers are influenced and are the making of capitalism that exclude them from the market thus poses impediments in their endeavours to provide reproductive labour. However, social reproductive labour has not been studied extensively in the taxi-industry.

Sauti (2006) research, did not adequately study the role of social reproductive labour in the taxi-industry and its impact on the industry, and the challenges women face in their provision of the reproductive labour. Moreover, Matiwane (2019) broadly focused on the entrepreneurship experiences of women in the taxi-industry; however, it was not specifically on the women who provide social reproductive labour in the industry. Nkete's (2015) research studied women minibus taxi-drivers' experiences and revealed that women minibus taxi-drivers in the industry have to attempt to assimilate masculine behaviours in order to survive. Women's assimilation into masculine behaviour is a survival strategy because men are unwilling to accept women and making taxi-industry conducive for women (Nkete, 2015). Women minibus taxi-drivers experience load cut as compared to their male counterparts (Nkete, 2015).

Nkete's (2015) research is in congruent with Matiwane's (2019) research about women's experiences in the taxi industry. They both agree that women who work in the taxi-industry experience hostility from their male colleagues who connive with taxi associations to stagnate their business growth through frustrating the process of having the minibus taxis of their former husbands to be transferred in their names to become the legit members of respective taxi associations to commence operating, lack of respect from their fellow male colleagues, lack of government financial assistance and support, and work under persistent fear (Matiwane, 2019).

Sauti (2006), Matiwane (2019), and Nkete's (2015) studies of women in the taxi industry are pivotal, although their limitations are that they are not specific and do not dwell specifically on women who provide social reproductive labour in the industry. Therefore, this study intends to explore the role of social reproductive labour in the taxi industry. This study further intends to investigate the challenges the women face as they provide support in a male-dominated industry while they also make out a livelihood for themselves and their families.

1.5 Outline of the Research Report

Chapter One provided the research introduction, research rationale, and research problem.

Chapter Two provides a literature review of the history of the South African taxi industry, social reproductive labour, hegemonic masculinity, and the taxi- industry precarious working conditions.

Chapter Three discusses the research methodology, research site, access to the field, data collection methods, participation observation, data analysis, sampling, ethical considerations and limitations of the study.

Chapter Four presents the research findings such as the precarious working conditions *omama* are subject to, and reverse unpaid social reproductive labour

Chapter Five discusses the findings of the research and nuances that emerged from the research findings and the implications thereof on *omama*

Chapter Six provides the research conclusion and suggests studies that can still be conducted on the experiences of *omama* who are social reproductive labour producers in the taxi industry.

In conclusion, this chapter teased out how the taxi industry is the largest employer in South Africa employing workers in various occupations such as but not limited to, minibus taxi drivers, mechanics, and queue marshals. This chapter demonstrated that the taxi industry has undergone transformation although it is limited when it comes to transforming gender relations. This chapter provided theoretical framework for this research project, rational and research problem.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter traces the history of the establishment of the taxi industry in South Africa largely to demonstrate how the literature of the industry has marginalized the women who cook and sell cooked food in the industry. This chapter argues that the colonial spatial planning and de-industrialization, the establishment of South African Black Taxi Association (SABTA), and the bus boycott was integral in the growth of the taxi industry. This chapter views the work performed by *omama* in the taxi rank as an extension of social reproductive labour. Accordingly, this chapter is going to have a section theorizing social reproductive labour with the intentions of extending it to the work performed by *omama* in the taxi rank. This chapter is going to demonstrate that government does not have a concerted policy to regulate the taxi industry which renders the industry to a state of precarity.

2.1 The Histography of South African Taxi Industry

Understanding the grand historical establishment of the taxi-industry is imperative to understand the experiences of *omama* in the taxi-industry and the hegemonic and performative masculinity of the industry. Accordingly, this chapter provides the history of the taxi-industry in South Africa, to demonstrate how the industry is gendered and how the voices and the experiences of women in the industry are silent. The histography of the taxi-industry in South Africa is populated with male experiences and the post-apartheid government endeavours to regulate the industry.

The establishment and the growth of the taxi industry in South Africa is a direct response to colonialism and apartheid spatial planning, which forcefully removed black people from the

cities. The removal of black people from the city to the township created transportation needs for the black people (Nelson, 2021; Schalekamp & Klopp, 2018; Vegter, 2020; Woolf & Joubert, 2013).

In the 1930s when the taxi industry was established it was met with State resistance. The taxi industry in South Africa was established in the early 1930s with six-seater sedan taxis and evolved in the 1970s to mini-buses carrying 10-16 passengers (Khoza, 1994; Sauti, 2006). Nevertheless, from its inception the South African taxi-industry has been subject to numerous changes from being a regulated to a deregulated industry. The period 1977 to 1987 marks the process of deregulation in the taxi industry signified by the passing of the Road Transportation Act (Fobosi, 2019b; Fourie, 2003; Vegter, 2020). The process of deregulation was meant to ease the burden of bus skyrocketing fees from black commuters, and to ease the resistance against apartheid restrictions on black people participation in the market (Vegter, 2020).

The colonial and apartheid regime governments passed the notorious Native Land Act, Group Areas Act and Group Areas Act 1951 which ensued forced removals of black peoples from the urban areas and located them 20-45 kilometres away from the urban areas and the cities (Xulu-Gama, 2017, More, 2017; Vegter, 2020; Nelson, 2021). The settlers in South Africa, or anywhere in a settler colonial state in Africa, exclusively wanted black cheap labour but not to coexist with the black people (Cavanagh, 2017; Kelly, 2017). Therefore, the spatial planning of the country had to reflect the settler's quest for black peoples' cheap labour; thus, a plethora of racial segregationally "legislations" were passed to "legalise" segregation and to enable the exploitation of black labour (Xulu-Gama,2017).

Therefore, black people serving the white South African settler community lived in townships far from work; therefore, they had to use minibus taxis to travel to and from work every day and this had a direct impact and contribution to the growth of the industry and made it lucrative.

For instance, Sauti (2006) argued that residing in townships and commuting to and from work every day using a taxi is expensive. When writing about experiences of rural-urban migrant workers living in the hostels, Xulu-Gama (2017) argues that the commuters sometimes need to take more than one taxi to reach their destination which may cost more than R60 per day given that the commuters sometimes need to take more than one taxi to reach their destination.

Moreover, black people continue to utilise the minibus taxis because of their flexible schedule, unlike the municipal buses that operate on a fixed schedule (Fobosi, 2021; Fourie, 2003; Sauti, 2006). Moreover, black people continue to utilise minibus taxis because they do not have private vehicles as compared to most white peoples (Komane, 2013).

Jolobe (2019) argued that the apartheid regime experienced a period of de-industrialisation which had a negative impact on the South African economy. However, the de-industrialisation period had a positive impact on the growth of the taxi industry. Gibbs (2014) argued that de-industrialisation contributed to the growth of the taxi-industry as men who got retrenched from many industries purchased minibus taxis. Sekhonyane and Dugard (2006) are in congruent with Gibbs, (2014) and argue that retrenchments, bus, and train boycotts had imperative and effective influence in the growth of the taxi-industry (Komane, 2013). Commuters became stranded during the bus and train boycotts, minibus taxis appeared as the only viable mode of transport effective. Moreover, men who were retrenched in factories bought minibus taxis with their pension funds and they violently eliminated rival municipal buses in certain routes which contributed to the growth of the industry (Gibbs, 2014).

Moreover, the exponential growth of the taxi-industry can be located in the taxi associations and their bargaining power. The South African Black Taxi Association (SABTA) played a significant role in negotiating with the financial institutions to fund the taxi owners in purchasing their minibus taxis (Khoza, 1994). SABTA negotiated with the insurance

companies to decrease the monthly premiums paid by the taxi-owners. Decreasing the monthly premiums had a significant role in the decrease of repossession of the mini-bus taxis and that, therefore, had a significant impact on the growth of the taxi-industry (Khoza, 1994).

Furthermore, SABTA rejected the then government proposal of rapid deregulation which would have resulted in having too many taxi operators entering the taxi industry through the issuing of too many permits (Vegter, 2020; Woolf & Joubert, 2013). SABTA role in the growth of the taxi industry and sought monopolisation of the industry had an adverse impact on the Public Utility Transport Corporation (PUTCO) in Johannesburg and Pretoria in the 1950s, contributed to the growth of the taxi-industry (Komane, 2013). The flexibility schedule of the minibus taxis saw PUTCO decreasing the number of its fleets and its previous routes being taken by the minibus taxis and sometimes taking them through violence (Gibbs, 2014; Vegter, 2020; Woolf & Joubert, 2013).

Post -apartheid government attempted and still continue to attempt to regulate the taxi industry notwithstanding that the post-apartheid government attempts to regulate the taxi industry does not yield the government desired outcome *i.e.*, regulation. For instance, the 1995 National Taxi Task Team (NTTT) marks the significant post-apartheid government attempts to regulate the taxi industry (Fobosi, 2019b). NTTT recommended to the then Minister of Transport the regulation and control of the taxi-industry through issuing the permit system, minimum of labour standards, and the introduction of the new, safer, and larger vehicles in the system (Barrett, 2003; Fobosi, 2019a; Fourie, 2003; Vegter, 2020). The introduction of the permit system was the governments' endeavour to end the routes rivalry in the taxi industry. Nonetheless, routes rivalry is still an occurring phenomenon in the taxi industry. The continuation of the route's rivalry is largely informed by greed among the taxi-owners and taxi associations in wanting to monopolise lucrative routes, and corrupt government officials. There are government officials, such as police officers, and municipal officials with authority to issue

permits who have vested interest in the taxi industry or who are taxi-owners. These officials would act as gate keepers by denying the new entry rivals permits on lucrative routes and steal docket numbers of hitman's involved in the assassination of the rivals (Ngubane et al., 2020; Vegter, 2020).

The last NTTTT recommendations *i.e.*, the introduction of new, safer, and larger vehicles in the system gave birth to the taxi recapitalisation programme (Fobosi, 2019c; Fourie, 2003; Ingle, 2009). The introduction of the new vehicles was informed by the public outcry regarding the dilapidated state of many of the minibus taxis on South African roads, to the extent that they were likened to public mobile coffins (Sauti, 2006). The essence of the taxi recapitalisation programme was that the government was going to offer scrapping allowances (R50 000) to the taxi-owners for scrapping their old minibus taxis with the expectations to use the scrapping allowances for deposit in purchasing new minibus taxis (Barrett, 2003; Fobosi, 2019c; Ingle, 2009; Vegter, 2020; Woolf & Joubert, 2013).

The announcement that South Africa was going to host the world cup in 2010 saw the government redirecting its focus to the launch of the bus rapid transit to fill the role of ailing or non-existent rail services, and incorporation of the minibus taxi industry into bus rapid transit (see Schalekamp & Klopp, 2018). However, the governments' lack of information about the essence of the taxi recapitalisation programme, and the taxi association conflicts on the formation of single mother body taxi association, both combined became an obstacle in the successful implementation of the taxi recapitalisation programme (Ingle, 2009; Vegter, 2020). Moreover, government association with certain taxi associations and attempts to neglect certain taxi association with the intentions of establishing one taxi association to represent the industry, further contributed to the taxi associations' conflicts thus contributed to the slow progress of implementing taxi recapitalisation programme (Fobosi, 2021; Vegter, 2020). Subsequently, the

government introduced the revised recapitalisation programme with the intention to overcome the initial programme limitation and to increase the scrapping allowance value (Fobosi, 2021).

The slow progress in the implementation of the taxi recapitalisation programme and by the NTTT recommendations exposed the taxi-drivers to precarity *qua* exploitation of minibus taxi-drivers by taxi owners, paid meagre wages, lack of compliance with labour laws, such as, sectoral board wage sector, unfair dismissal, and working uncompensated over-time in the taxi-industry remain unregulated (Fobosi, 2019a; Sauti, 2006). The long working hour's minibus taxi drivers are subjected to Mmadi (2012) aptly characterised the commodification of the social life. The phenomenon of commodification of social life find expression in the deprivation of the minibus taxi drivers' leisure time and time to spend with their families; rather they spend most of their time at work (Mmadi, 2012) and are vulnerable to easy dismissal and many other precarious working conditions (Fobosi, 2019a).

Government endeavours to regulate the taxi industry is the demonstration of understanding of the state in a classical Weberian theory, and unholy state trinity. Nonetheless, unholy trinity manifest itself in the taxi industry not in a linear manner. The classical Weberian conceptualisation of the state is that, the state is a rational institution that it is imbued with authority to govern everything under its territory (Lokaneeta, 2020). Furthermore, the classical Weberian conceptualisation of the state is that, the state has legitimacy in utilising rational coercion to induce subordination under its territory (Lokaneeta, 2020; Reddy, 2016). The classical Weberian conceptualisation of the state informs the characterisation of the taxi industry as an informal sector that needs to be formalised through regulation (Fourie, 2003; Woolf & Joubert, 2013) albeit having the industry comply with the National Road Traffic Act of 1996 (Fobosi, 2019c, 2021; Republic of South Africa, 1996).

Fobosi (2019b) and Fourie (2003) aptly debunked the supposition that the taxi industry is unregulated, through the notion of sociological regulation. Sociological regulation comprises of two categories; social and economic regulation. The essence of social regulation is the requirement that the industry operate within the guidelines of transport and labour, associations, rules and regulations, routes to operate, and commuters to be loaded in a minibus taxi (Fobosi, 2019b). However, whether these rules and regulation *qua* social regulation are adhered to is another issue not to parse on at this moment for a number of reasons previously mentioned, such as, corrupt government officials, police officers, or municipal officials with authority to issue permits, who have a vested interest in the taxi industry or who are taxi-owners (Ngubane et al., 2020; Vegter, 2020).

The essence of the unholy state trinity is the coalition between the market and the State with the latter expressing desires to maximise profits at the expense of the workers. The latter *i.e.*, the State, become complicit to the market desires and exploitation and becomes inactive because of the tax it receives from the market while dragooning and manipulating the public discourse, and formulating scapegoat discourse to redirect the public attention away from its failures to change their material conditions (Mlambo, 2022).

The unholy state trinity therefore becomes applicable in the taxi-industry in that when the industry becomes regulated it will have to pay tax to the state. For instance, the once government proposed and *quasi*-implemented integrated fare. Woolf & Joubert (2013) argued that the integrated fare collection would require that the minibus taxis have a card reader technology whereby the commuters are expected to have retail bank accounts to load a maximum of R 3000 per month to *tap-and-go* (payment method). If a *tap-and-go* payment method materialises the state would be able to monitor the annual income the taxi-owners make; therefore, devise strategies to tax the industry although the taxi-owners and drivers would not benefit but the banking sector and government (Woolf & Joubert, 2013).

Nevertheless, the deregulation of the taxi-industry in South Africa has a positive impact on the taxi-owners, thus the taxi industry experienced exponential growth (Sauti, 2006) and continues to grow (Masela & Machobane, 2020). The growth of the taxi industry subsequently availed employment opportunities. For instance, women create employment opportunities for themselves and are their own employers through the provision of social reproductive labour at the taxi ranks by cooking and selling food at the minibus taxi rank, (Mkhize, 2013; Sauti, 2006). However, there is a gap in the literature of taxi-industry (Fobosi, 2019a, 2019b; Khoza, 1994; Mmadi, 2012; Sauti, 2006) about the experiences of social reproductive labour producers in the taxi industry, unlike in other sectors such as domestic work (Christian & Namaganda, 2018; 2019; Safuta, 2019).

2.2 Social Reproductive Labour

There is a consensus on the concept of social reproductive labour among its scholars that it is fundamentally centred on domestic activities performed by women, such as, childrearing, and cooking (Benya, 2015; England, 2005; Fakier, 2010; Magoqwana et al., 2019). Nonetheless, social reproductive labour as a concept is an evocative term that in its materialisation emerges phalanx and eclectic labour performed by women. Accordingly, Magoqwana et al (2019) in conceptualising the social reproductive labour investigate racial and class dynamics in the provision of social reproductive labour. Magoqwana et al (2019) argued that social reproductive labour is largely performed by black women regardless of the class and professional positions they occupy.

Benya's (2015) research at Marikana post the massacre, demonstrates how capitalism in South Africa systematically engineered that black woman remain unpaid social reproductive labour producers for the mining companies. Capitalism in South Africa systematically unskilled black women, and prohibited black women to migrate to urban areas to search for employment

opportunities through various ‘legislations’ such as, but not limited to influx control (Benya, 2015; Xulu-Gama, 2017). The influx population control created apartheid procreation economy whereby, black women were confined in rural areas, taking care of children and performing a plethora of social reproductive labour while black men were recruited by the labour bureau to sell their cheap labour in the cities (Elder, 2003). Nevertheless, black women defied the systemic and systematic prohibitions to migrate in search of employment opportunities in urban areas notwithstanding that their employment was limited in the social reproductive sphere such as being domestic workers for white families (Elder, 2003). Moreover, some black women who migrate in search of employment opportunities in urban areas found the market hostile against them thus others eventually became shebeen queens¹ to survive (Elder, 2003; Khuzwayo, 1985; Modisane, 1986)

Fakier and Cock (2009), Mosoetsa (2011) and Xulu-Gama (2017) aptly tease out and highlight the complexities of providing social reproductive labour the poor black women are confronted with. Fakier and Cock (2009) demonstrated the difficulties of the provision of social reproductive labour to poor households of eMnambithi in KZN are structural. Structural poverty and unemployment, HIV/AIDS, lack of access to clean and adequate water and sanitation are factors that pose a significant challenge in the provision of social reproductive labour to the women at uMnambithi (Fakier & Cock, 2009). Fakier and Cock (2009) demonstrated that women in eMnambithi occupy a lower strata employment position thus earning meagre wages that pose a significant challenge in their endeavours to provide social reproductive labour.

The difficulties in the provision of social reproductive labour Fakier and Cock (2009) investigated are directly influenced by apartheid. Xulu-Gama’s (2017) ethnographic research

¹ Shebeen queens [were] women who [used] to own liquor stores in the township largely informal.

in Kwa-Mashu hostel revealed difficulties of social reproductive labour in black communities infused by the apartheid regime that is intransigent to be dismantled in post-apartheid South Africa. Xulu-Gama (2017) teased out how the apartheid regime dismantled the structure of black families through systematically facilitating rural urban migration; therefore, entrenching colonial patriarchal mantra. Black fathers were systemic and systematically forced to engage in rural urban migration to work in the white industries while their wives and children were prohibited to migrate with them and to reside in the urban areas (Cousins et al, 2018; Elder, 2003, Xulu-Gama, 2017). The black women were therefore coerced to remain in the rural areas providing social reproductive labour (Elder, 2003; Xulu-Gama, 2017). Nonetheless, the abolishment of the influx control that had previously prohibited women from participating in rural urban migration and urban residence (Xulu-Gama, 2017). Rural women continue to bear the brunt of being social reproductive labour producers.

Black women, in particular grandmothers and rural black women in general, continue to bear the brunt of being social reproductive labour producers because of the ever-skyrocketing unemployment. Therefore, the daughters who migrated to urban areas in search of employment opportunities, do not frequently remit or do not remit at all (Mokoene & Khunou, 2022; Xulu-Gama, 2017). The lack of employment for black women is the direct consequence of the apartheid regime and the post-apartheid regime neo-liberal policies (Cousins et al, 2018). The skyrocketing unemployment rate and direct impact on women in the provision of social reproductive labour to the extent that rural urban migration ceased to promise better employment opportunities (Fakier & Cock, 2009) and a better life but more often life infused with perplexities (Xulu-Gama, 2017).

Mosoetsa (2011) argued that the high unemployment has a direct effect on women and on the provision of social reproductive labour, because institutions such as political parties and the trade unions stopped to provide assistance to families during to make ends meet. Churches

became beacons of hope to despondent families. However, church support is only limited to counselling and does not extend to the provision of monetary support (Mosoetsa, 2011).

Extended families become an additional beacon of hope that assists struggling families in the provision of social reproductive labour through commensality (Mosoetsa, 2011) and taking care of the grandchildren (Button et al., 2018; Moore, 2019). Chiloane (2021) aptly demonstrates the extended family's role in the provision of social reproductive labour during the time of despondence and lack. The extended family would consciously and unconsciously be invoking *ubuntu* and became a 'foster' parent to the orphaned children (Chiloane, 2021).

The grandparents become a beacon of hope in the provision of social reproductive labour during a time of resource scarcity and a mothers' rural urban migration (Fakier & Cook, 2009; Moore, 2013). There are two salient and significant factors that inform grandparents: primary social reproductive labour; the phenomenon of *ubuntu* in the conceptualising of social reproductive labour, and the availability of old age grand. The notion of *ubuntu* is that older women are duty bound to nurture their grandchildren or the young generation and to inculcate in them family values, to be better human beings in society (Seekings, 2021). Moreover, some grandmothers would provide social reproductive labour to their grandchildren as a means of indirectly reciprocating care to their children, whom they could not provide care to while they were young because of rural urban migration (Moore, 2013).

Migration and immigration in South Africa are not primarily influenced by the conventional migration and immigration push and the pull factors. Black people were coerced to engage in rural urban circular migration to offer their cheap labour in exclusively white designated areas for a limited period of time more often, not more than 12 months (Posel, 2004, 2010; Xulu-Gama, 2017; Xulu-Gama & Lorgat, 2022). Nonetheless, this does not exclude the conventional migration and immigration conventionalism coated and still buttressed in race

and racial differentiation. For instance, young black South Africans engage in rural urban migration to search for employment opportunities in erstwhile, exclusively white urban areas (Hall et al., 2011; Rabe et al., 2019). Moreover, besides South Africa having strong economic hubs on the continent, Rugunanan (2022) argues that conventional migration pull factors are not sufficient factors to ensure migration, but rather its liberal democracy is an additional factor that projects South Africa as a preferred migration destination.

The second important factor that makes the grandparents the preferred social reproductive labour producers during the period of rural urban migration, is the availability of an old age pension grant. Old age pension grants for black senior citizens were extended to them by the democratic government. The previous regime, had limited old age pension grants to white senior citizens only (Button et al, 2019). However, the post-apartheid regime extended the old pension grants to black senior citizens (Button et al, 2019). Nevertheless, the black senior citizens, in particular black grandmothers, hardly enjoy their pension money as more often than not they have to provide social reproductive labour with it, to their grandchildren (Mosoetsa, 2011). Old age pension grants instead of providing relief to the grandmothers it positions them in the prison of love and burden of care (Mosoetsa, 2011).

The prison of love is a situation whereby women are constrained either monetarily or timewise to provide effective social reproductive labour (England, 2005), but largely monetarily constrains in African context (Fakier & Cock, 2009, Mosoetsa, 2011). The prison of love and the burden of care are intricately intertwined. The burden of love is the financial strain and time consuming of social reproductive labour women are subject to, in the provision of the labour which motivates the women to contemplate and consider whether to continue to provide social reproductive labour. However, they continue to provide the social reproductive labour, notwithstanding the constraints and obstacles they encounter. Xulu-Gama and Lorgat (unpublished) ontological infused research on community healthcare workers, teases out the

phenomenon of prison of love. Lack of government support, dysfunctional and lack of coordination and cooperation in inter-ministerial departments in administering the healthcare community workers, and lack of financial remuneration which double their material condition; however, these community healthcare workers continue to provide care to their patients to the extent that they take from their meagre resources to give to their patients during the time of suffering (Xulu-Gama & Lorgat, unpublished).

De Wet (2012) research on the prison of love, on community workers, demonstrated how political rhetoric enthrals black women to the prison of love in South Africa. De Wet (2012) argued that the African National Congress (ANC) liberation political rhetoric of volunteerism, collectivism, coated with elements of *ubuntu*, position black women in the prison of love. De Wet (2012) further argued that at the same time the prison of love occludes and obfuscate the effects of prison of love and prevent the health community workers from abandoning the provision of care. Liberation political rhetoric coupled with skyrocketing unemployment in one way or another, influence the healthcare community workers not to abandon their provision of care in the hope and expectations that, perhaps, in the future they will be remunerated for the provision of care they provide, notwithstanding that remuneration is the motive for them to provide social reproductive labour (Nxumalo et al., 2013). It is imperative to mention that remuneration was never their motivation to be community healthcare workers an act of necessity in the midst of high HIV prevalence and many devastating socio-economic challenges, and an act of love coupled with liberation political rhetoric (De Wet, 2012; Nxumalo et al., 2013).

There are women who *quasi* break the prison of love and embark on migration to seek for employment opportunities in the urban areas. However, the lack social reproductive labour producers on the absent of migrated mothers to search for employment opportunities in the urban areas, these women continue to provide social reproductive labour through mobile

phones and frequently visit their children on weekends (Fakier, 2010). When women enter the market in search of employment opportunities they are confronted with a dilemma of devaluation of their labour. The market devalues women's labour which is informed by the notion that they are inherent social reproductive labour producers (England, 2005) influenced by liberal capitalism (Fraser, 2017). Benya's (2015) research on Marikana demonstrates complexities of liberal competitive capitalism and how it creates a surplus of unpaid black women labour. These black women engaged in rural urban migration when their men ceased to remit and had extra marital affairs; therefore, they migrated to the cities to salvage their marriages. However, others became cognisant that their marriages reached a point that cannot be salvaged and started searching for employment opportunities and others cohabited with the rock-drillers and therefore became their social reproductive labour producers (Benya, 2015).

Liberal competitive capitalism locates production and reproduction in silos, while prioritising production over reproduction as if reproduction is independent of production (Fraser, 2017). Liberal competitive capitalism further dragoons' women to the market while paying them meagre wages and consuming much more of their time (Fraser, 2017). Liberal capitalism dragooning women to the market has adverse impact on families. The parents spend little time with their families thus are deprived of time to provide social reproductive labour; therefore, families were in a state of crisis (Fraser, 2017). Once the families are in a state of crisis the responsibility of providing social responsibility is taken by the grandparents (Fakier & Cock, 2009; Cantillon et al., 2021).

The market does not absolve women from being social reproductive labour producers. For instance, when women knock off work, more often than not they have to provide social reproductive labour to their children and to their partners (Christopher, 2012). Women being the primary social reproductive labour producers regardless of being paid labourers is informed by the feminization of social reproductive labour and aided by hegemonic masculinities.

2.3 Taxi- Industry Precarious Working Conditions

Precarious working conditions are characterised by the lack of market security, lack of employment security, job and work security, and income security (Lorgat, 2022). Lorgat (2022) offered a best locus of enunciation in theoretical and conceptual understanding of the concept of precarious working conditions. Machinya (2022) located the ubiquitous precarious working conditions in South Africa with the rise of the liberalisation of the economy. Barchiesi (2016) gave an immaculate linear South African political economic historiography, tracing it from colonial rule. Barchiesi (2016) demonstrated that South African labour is racialised and black peoples during the British colonial rule and the apartheid rule were denied the right to the category of being a worker but rather they were 'gifted' with the category a labourer. Barchiesi further argued that the denial of black people of the category of being a worker is still prevalent post-apartheid. Barchiesi (2016) argued that denying black people the category marginalises them from the benefits of their labour, and positions them in a precarious working condition that is pervasive and ubiquitous in a post-apartheid democratic dispensation.

Barchiesi (2016) categorically referred to the phenomenon of denying black people the benefits of their labour as precarious liberation. In conceptualising precarious work, Barchiesi (2016) argued that it is a kind of work that is insecure, and an unstable labour market that produces unrewarding employment prospects. Herod and Lambert (2016) argued that precarious work is a kind of work that remunerates the workers meagre wages, has no labour rights, such as, sick leave with payment, no contract protection and lack of physical and legal protection, temporary work and informal employment kind of work because of the failures of the formal economy to create employment opportunities.

Barchiesi (2007) demonstrated how the market subjects the few employed in precarious employment conditions, such as, not having adequate medical aid cover, and inadequate

unemployment insurance cover. Precariousness of the working conditions became prevalent with the rise of the neo-liberal state and withdrawal from welfare services (Herod & Lambert, 2016). The precarious working conditions are intricately intertwined with capital accumulation (Harvey, 2004; Standing, 2018) which creates a reserve of surplus labour (Benya, 2015).

Foucault (Masquelier, 2019; Herod & Lambert, 2016) offered an interesting and intersectional conceptualising of the phenomenon of precarity intricately intertwined with the State and the market in a blurry yet recognisable structure of political responsibility and accountability. These structures successfully managed to inculcate to the workers that they are in one way or another responsible for the state of their precariat working conditions; therefore, through hard work they can escape their state of precariat working conditions (Masquelier, 2019).

Khoza (1994) in teasing out the precarious working conditions in the taxi industry traced the establishment and the accumulation of capital in the taxi industry since its inception in the 1930s. Khoza (1994) further demonstrated how the taxi industry managed to consolidate capital accumulation with the establishment of SABTA and the taxi associations which positioned the minibus taxi-drivers and other workers in the taxi industry in precarious working conditions. The capital accumulation of the taxi industry had a positive impact on the minibus taxi owners; while on the other hand, it had a negative impact on the minibus taxi-drivers as it subjected them to precarious working conditions (Khoza, 1994). Fobosi (2019b) argued that the consolidated minibus taxi owners' power over the workers, in one way or another, regulated precarity of the taxi industry workers *in lieu* of the sociologically regulation of the industry in discarding the informal features in the industry.

Fourie (2003) argued that the prominent feature characterising informal economy is that the business is not regulated by the societal institutions in a legal and social environment in a manner that differs from regulated business. Furthermore, informal businesses activities are

not counted in the National Accounts, and the informal sector is important when unemployment and poverty are high, while the economic growth is slow (Fourie, 2003). The taxi- industry continues to be characterised as part of the informal sector despite being sociologically and economically regulated and its adherence to the National Road Traffic Act. Nonetheless, there are minibus taxis that operate illegally because of poor governance and corruption of government officials and certain minibus taxi owners which often leads to violence within the taxi industry as such, entrenching precarious working conditions (Fobosi, 2019c, 2021; Ngubane et al., 2020; Vegter, 2020).

The employers in the taxi industry have systematically managed to subject their workers in a state of precarity through inculcating to them that they are responsible for their state of precarious working conditions. They have also made them entrepreneurial subjects through indoctrinating them that through hard work they can be able to evade their precariat state (Masquelier, 2019). Attempting to evade their state of precarity informed by the constant anxiety of failing themselves, the workers engage and subject themselves to various entrepreneurial activities, working over-time or having more than one employment (Masquelier, 2019). The taxi-industry has successfully managed to inculcate to its workers that they are responsible for their state of precarity. For instance, the minibus owners would have a weekly check-in amount from the minibus taxi-drivers.

The minibus taxi driver would therefore have to meet the weekly check-in amount and to surpass it to make extra money for themselves to supplement their meagre wages (Fobosi, 2019; Woolf et al, 2013). Trying to surpass the weekly check-in amount pities the minibus taxi-drivers with the law enforcement officers for high- driving speed (Sauti, 2006). Furthermore, minibus taxi drivers avoiding a state of precarity would, therefore, be overloaded and break many road traffic rules and drive faster to meet the daily check-in amount and to surpass it to

make extra money for themselves to supplement their meagre wages (Sauti, 2006; Woolf, 2013).

The successful turning of the workers into an entrepreneurial subject deviates the antagonism towards the market and the States' responsibility for the workers' conditions of precariat (Masquelier, 2019). Instead of the workers mobilising against the market and the State for withdrawing welfare services, to discard their conditions of precariat, the workers further entrench themselves as entrepreneurial subjects supposing they are averting permanent conditions of precariat, and the risks associated with resignation from their respective employment (Masquelier, 2019). Minibus taxi-drivers although aware of the lethal consequences of route rivals between different taxi associations and minibus taxi-owners, continue to provide a service for workers to commute to and from work on contested routes, notwithstanding the risk of death, and that their families would not be compensated (Khoza, 1994; Ngubane et al, 2020).

This chapter aptly demonstrated that historiography of the establishment of the taxi industry in South Africa and further demonstrated that the literature about the industry is silent about the experiences of women who cook and sell food in the industry. Furthermore, this chapter demonstrated that the colonial government spatial planning which culminated with the Group Areas Act and the de-industrialization, and the establishment of SABTA were integral to the exponential growth of the industry. The growth of the industry is however marred by controversies of corruption, murder and lack of government precise plan to regulate the industry which therefore render its workers to precarity.

Chapter Three

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the research methodology that was used in conducting this research, adumbrating the site where the research was conducted, and discusses the researchers' experience, access to the field, the research data collection methods, researcher participation observation report, data analysis method the researcher utilised, sampling utilised to collect the data, limitations of the study, research ethical considerations and its' limitations.

3.2 Research methodology

The research design for this study is a qualitative research design. A qualitative research design was appropriate because it enables the researcher to critically study the nature of phenomena, the phenomena qualities in their varying manifestations, and the context in which they manifest themselves or from the perspectives from which they can be perceived in their natural environment (Busetto et al., 2020; Cresswell, 2014; Nieuwenhuis, 2007). The aim of the qualitative research design is to comprehend the determined causation of the phenomenon with the intention to afford the individuals an opportunity to share their experiences and to hear their voices about the causation of the phenomenon they are confronted with (Busetto et al., 2020; Cresswell, 2014; Punch, 2005). Therefore, qualitative research design is appropriate for this research, which endeavours to understand the lived experiences of *omama* who cook and sell cooked food in their social context *i.e.*, first and foremost as the black people who continue to live in the erstwhile apartheid designated areas at the taxi rank, as migrants and as mothers. The social context *qua* the location in studying the lived experiences of *omama* is important because it will enable the researcher to adequately comprehend the particularities of the location; therefore, qualitative research design makes that possible. Furthermore, to make sense of *omama* experiences, critical theory was utilised.

The critical approach in qualitative research design concerns itself with affording agency to the people who are oppressed by structural conditions, such as, racism, class, and gender (Cresswell, 2014). A critical approach studies social institution and its transformation by interpreting the meanings of social life, historical problems of domination, alienation, social struggles, and the critique of society and envisioning new possibilities (Cresswell, 2014). Therefore, critical theory is best suited to studying the social reproductive labour in the taxi-industry and to explore the complex gendered nature of work at the taxi rank which is all imbued with power relations.

3.3 Research site

Data collection for the research was done at Deck Station Cape Town CBD minibus taxi rank. Deck Station taxi rank is significant because it houses most of Cape Town minibus taxis; therefore, it brings together black people from different Cape Town residential areas with different experiences. Moreover, Deck Station is significant because it signifies the intransigent apartheid racial spatial planning *i.e.*, having black commuters and black minibus taxi drivers who continue to reside in the erstwhile areas designated by the then apartheid regime government in post-apartheid dispensation. Cape Town CBD minibus taxi rank is a central point at which the young and the old, the employed and the unemployed, the people from rural and urban areas meet.

3.4 Access to the field

The minibus taxi rank is easily accessible to all the citizens in particular to males as they dominate the space, and as a male student it was relatively easy to have access to the taxi rank. Moreover, being familiar with the taxi industry- growing up having an uncle who was a taxi-owner, an uncle who is a taxi driver, and commuting with minibus taxi almost every week to

and from campus predisposed the researcher to the taxi rank relations that by and large are gerontocratic in their nature and infused with violence. Therefore, being privy of the taxi rank milieu helped the researcher to have a relatively easy access at the taxi rank. Before starting this research project, this is a space I was using every day for commuting to and from the university campus. *Mama Dlali* is a 54-year-old widow from Eastern Cape at Cofimvaba, who started to sell cooked food at the taxi-rank in 2002 as a street vendor. In 2007 during the world cup preparations, she registered for a kitchen in the taxi rank. I developed a good rapport with her during my field work. During the field work when I arrived in the morning, I would place my order for lunch and buy breakfast from her kitchen. *Mama Dlali* requested on my behalf for some of her colleagues to participate in the study. The intervention of *mama Dlali* was really useful as there were *omama* who had refused to participate in the interview; but after she explained her understanding of what I was doing, they were happy to participate. There are those who did not participate because there was no reward or payment involved. Those who did not own the kitchens they were work in, claimed that their employers would reprimand for slackening when they arrive and find them participating in the interview and for participating in the research without their permission and be accused of giving out business information without their permission. Therefore, the process of getting into the field was not difficult because of my familiarity with the space; however, the problem started when I had to engage the potential participants about the research study. The women were happy to have me as a customer but were not comfortable with me asking questions about their lived experiences as *omama* who cook and sell food at the minibus taxi rank.

3.5 Sampling

The research mission, objectives and population size determine the sampling a researcher will utilise *in lieu* of their volition. The researchers' initial objective was to use non-probability

sampling informed by the thinking that the research participants were going to be a minimum of 15; therefore; adding on the depth of the research findings. It became impossible to find a minimum of 15 participants and many *omama* declined to participate in the research. Therefore, nudged by the number of participants available, the researcher utilised convenience sampling. Suri (2011) in conceptualising convenient sampling argued that it is must be the last resort sampling method for the researcher to utilise when struggling to find participants. Accordingly, convenience sampling for this research was the last resort for the researcher to utilise because of the struggle to find the participants, and was further informed by the availability of *omama* at the rank given their busy working day of cooking and selling of the food. Therefore, *omama* were interviewed when they were not busy cooking, and selling. Convenience sampling is a process whereby the researcher in the field work chooses participants according to their availability and a time that does not inconvenience them (Acharya et al., 2013; Byrne, 2001; Suri, 2011).

3.6 Data Collection Methods

3.6.1 Semi-structured interviews

This research has employed two key data collection methods, namely, semi-structured interviews and participant observation. A semi-structured interview guide was selected because the researcher aimed to collect *mama*'s lived experiences and permitted the participant to say as much as possible within the bounds of the research objectives. Semi-structured interviews further permitted the researcher to gather an in-depth understanding of their work experiences unmediated strict formal research principles and to be explorative as much as possible.

The interviews were conducted face to face at the taxi-rank in *isiXhosa* and in English. The *isiXhosa* interviews were transcribed and translated by the researcher into English for data

analysis. The interviews were recorded using the researchers' mobile phone; field notes were taken during the interview. The essence of semi-structured interview the interviewer asks the interviewee questions and the interviewee responds. DeJonckheere and Vaughn (2019) argued semi-structured interviews are effective to utilise if the researcher is new and the date is exploratory. DeJonckheere and Vaughn's (2019) argument is congruent with the mission of this research; exploring the experiences of *omama* who are providing social reproductive labour in the taxi industry. DeJonckheere and Vaughn's (2019) assertions about semi-structured interviews find resonance in Gill et al., (2008) and BARRIBALL et al., (1994) who suggest that semi-structured interviews are effective to utilise if the researcher is new and the date is exploratory. DeJonckheere and Vaughn (2019) argue that semi-structured interviews weaknesses are derivative from the researcher inept to utilise it, for instance, if the researcher does not have a reliable audio-recording equipment and not familiar with the recording equipment that is going to compromise the effectiveness of the semi-structured interview. Moreover, DeJonckheere and Vaughn (2019) further argued that if the researcher does not take notes during the interview, it could deprive the researcher of the nuances in the interview; therefore, compromise the semi-structured interview.

3.6.2 Participant Observation

Observation data collection method was adopted as a further tool of collecting data for this research. Meneses-Falcón (2021) conceptualised participation observation within the broader context of ethnographic work and argued that the basic tenet of participation observation in data collection is to capture the participants' world view and their hidden meaning. Meneses-Falcón (2021: 282) argued that participative observation enables "the researcher to confirm the discrepancies between what the informants say and what they do, *because he/she is there to verify it, offering greater credibility*".

Kawulich (2005) is in agreement with Meneses-Falcón (2021) in theorising participative observation, arguing that systematic observation of participants is not limited to, informants' behaviours in their social setting, to verify discrepancies from the described information in the interviews by the informants. Sayer (1992) amplified the power dynamics involved in observation. Sayer (1992) argued that observation is not absolutely neutral and that observation is mediated by the researchers' theory. Discarding the fallacy that observation is neutral and not mediated by the researchers' theory Sayer (1992) argued that scientists get located in the phenomenon of radical relativism. The phenomenon of radical relativism is that the truth is absolutely relative to the researcher's theory.

Sayers' (1992) argument brought to the fore the concerns of ethics and ethical consideration when conducting observation. Li (2015) research on understanding how women come to gamble and develop gambling problems, raised important ethical consideration involved in observation. Li (2015) argued that covert participation enables the researcher to provide a detailed analysis of social realities the researcher is studying; however, it has raised controversy and debate concerning ethics regarding the deception of participants and the absence of consent from participants. Li (2015) suggests the researcher engages in an overt participation observation qua to not absolutely discard and disregard ethics and ethical consideration in conducting the research. The researcher informed 8 of the participants about the research mission and objectives. Therefore, they were aware of the researchers' presence in the taxi rank; however, while waiting to interview them, the researcher observed the *milieu* of the taxi-rank and therefore took notes of it. The researchers' overt observation strategy is acknowledged by Busetto (2020) and Nieuwenhuis (2007).

There were instances whereby the *omama* who own the kitchen would not arrive at the rank at the usual arrival time and the *omama* who are employed as cooks and sellers in the rank would not know what time they would arrive. When an opportunity availed itself, I would take it to

interview *omama* who are employed to cook and sell in the taxi rank. However, most of them would refuse claiming that *umama* who is the kitchen owner could come in any time, thus they would be in trouble if they were found participating in the interview. Nevertheless, *omama* who are kitchen owners were people who are merely profit oriented, for instance, while waiting to interview *mama Dlelembe* the researcher saw 4 homeless men standing close to her kitchen. When the researcher queried their presence, *mama Dlelembe* said when they close and have leftovers, they give them away and keep some for the children of *omama* and for themselves as well. Moreover, the taxi-rank can be a safe place during times of difficulty. For instance, when a person is getting mugged, they can run to the taxi-rank for safety.

3.7 Data Analysis

This research adopted thematic analysis to analyse its data. Thematic analysis was adopted because of its efficiency in permitting the research to collectively organising the lived experiences of *omama* which is in congruent with the research objectives. Transcriptions of *omama* interviews were coded with the intention to identify similar patterns in them, in order to formulate collectively shared experiences of *omama* for systematic analysis of the overarching social structure the life *i.e.*, being a black woman, social reproductive labour producer in a volatile and violent industry, and being a migrant worker who earns meagre wages. Utilising thematic analysis, the researcher was conscious not to deprive thematic analysis its rigour to avoid reducing it to a mere descriptive method. Braun and Clarke (2012) argued that thematic analysis is a method of systematically identifying, organising, and offering insights from collective patterns of meaning in data. Subsequently, themes such as: precarious working conditions reverse social reproductive labour, and social reproductive labour and migration as the survivalist strategy were established.

There are two undisputable modalities a researcher can utilise in thematic analysis to capture the group collective patterns from the data: inductive approach and deductive approach (Joffe, 2016). On one hand, the essence of inductive approach is the extension of themes from the researchers' data. Inductive approach, in a *quasi*-manner, is able to quell and separate the knower from the known because the research themes are derived from the data; therefore, the researchers' interest and beliefs can be occluded from the research (Kiger & Varpio, 2020). On the other hand, the essence of deductive approach is the extension of themes from the raw data. Deductive approach themes and its analysis are derivative from a researcher's analytical theories and interests (Nowell et al., 2017).

It is important to mention that Joffe (2016) argued that the researcher can utilise both inductive and deductive approach when utilising the thematic analysis. In formulating themes for this research deductive approach was utilised in this research drawn from the taxi industry literature. Omama experiences are ubiquitous in the taxi industry.

In conducting thematic analysis, the researcher had to familiarise himself with the data through initial listening to the interviews prior transcribing and translating. Post transcription and translating of the interviews to English, the researcher generated initial codes, search for the themes, reviewed potential themes, defined, and named the themes, and produced the report processes. The process of reviewing of the identified themes was undertaken to ensure theme credibility of the report, and to ensure that the identified themes are significant to the research and to the broader research questions and objectives. The process of identifying and reviewing the identified themes process is in congruent with thematic analysis theorists' argument process number 4 and 5 in the system of formulating the themes (Braun & Clarke, 2012; Joffe, 2016; Kiger & Varpio, 2020; Nowell et al., 2017).

3.8 Ethical Consideration

Some of the fundamental social science research ethics are informed consent, anonymity, right of withdrawal from the research, avoidance of inflicting harm to the participants (see Tracy, 2020; Lune & Berg, 2017; Matebeni, 2015; Macleod, & Mnyaka, 2018) were all complied with in conducting this research.

An example of adherence to ethical considerations when conducting research is the provision of the information sheet to the participants in a language, they can understand prior requesting them that they sign an informed consent. The researcher verbally explained to all *omama* interviewed, the objectives and mission of this research in isiXhosa language with the exception of one participant who did not speak *isiXhosa*. Explanation to mama Ngqulunga was done in English and the decision to verbally explain the research objectives and mission to *omama* was informed by their request. *Omama* were too busy to read the information sheet, thus they requested that the researcher verbally explain it. Moreover, *omama* were informed about their right of withdrawal from the research.

In conceptualising informed consent, Tracy and Lune (2017) argued is a process whereby the participants participate in the research voluntarily without being coerced to participate and are made conscious of their right to withdraw from the research anytime. Matebeni (2015) critically engaged with the phenomenon of withdrawing from research and the disadvantages it poses to the researcher. Matebeni (2015) argued that there was a moment one of the participants requested to withdraw from research because of change of their gender identification. The sudden withdrawal from the research by the participant at a late stage of data collection posed dilemma to the researcher, whether to continue to use the participant information. Nonetheless, the researcher had to adhere to ethical consideration; therefore, not used the participants' information (Matebeni, 2015). The researcher went to the field work informed by Matebeni (2015) experiences and asked the participants to use their data they have provided if there can be a moment during the interviews that would wish to withdraw from

participating in the research. The researcher started the field work cognisant of this fact and asked for permission from the participants to use the data already available should they decide to withdraw from the research. Fortunately, none of the participants withdrew. The request was informed by the initial uneasiness of the participants to participate in the research.

Another important phenomenon when conducting the research is anonymity. The participants were all informed that their real identity was going to be concealed to protect them against any danger by using pseudonyms. Concealing the identity of the participants Tracy (2020) argued that it protects the participants from the risks of criminal or civil liability, damage or reputational damage. Moreover, Macleod and Mnyaka (2018) argued that there are instances where the use of pseudonyms does not necessarily protect the participants. To mitigate against Macleod and Mnyaka (2018) their research informed the participants that it was going to utilise deductive disclosure. The notion of deductive disclosure is whereby the researchers' desire to modify slightly or omit some data about the participants which may be attributed to them and especially if the attributes are unique to them (Macleod & Mnyaka 2018).

3.9 Limitations of the study

The researchers' intentions were to interview a minimum of 15 *omama*; however, it was possible to only do 8 interviews. The reason for interviewing only 8 is that most of the women refused to participate claiming that they were busy. This was understood by the researcher as their way of politely declining the request to participate in the interview. Their businesses have off peak times which could have been used for the interviews or informal conversations.

The quality of the interviews impacts the findings. *Omama* who were interviewed were not free to share their experiences as some were afraid that their employers might come in while they are being interviewed and that might put them at loggerheads with their employers. Moreover, some were not too convinced of the researchers' identity with some thinking the researcher

could be a City of Cape Town official or a Provincial or National Government official. The researcher had to convince them through showing them the student card that indeed was a student researcher *in lieu* of government official undercover thus they agreed to participate in the interviews although the quality of the interviews was weak. The weak quality of the interviews was informed by hesitation by *omama* in answering questions concerning their duties. Therefore, the weak quality of the interviews became apparent in the preliminary data findings thus the researcher went back to the field for the second time to fill the gaps that emerged in the data findings. However, upon arrival in the field, 6 of *omama* had left and the people who replaced them claimed they found jobs elsewhere outside the taxi-industry without mentioning the sector they are now working in and declined the researchers' request for their phone numbers without their consent.

Chapter Four

Findings

4.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses research findings significant to this research. This study found that *omama* migrated to Cape Town in search of employment opportunities; however, because they could not get their preferred occupations, they ended up working at the taxi rank cooking and selling cooked food. Significant to the research findings is that *omama*'s work is located in the paid social reproductive labour although underpaid and that they are facing obstacles in performing their social reproductive labour. In performing their underpaid social reproductive labour, *Omama* are subjected to precarious/precarity (henceforth this research is going to use precarity interchangeable with precarious conceptualized in chapter 2) working conditions *i.e.*, paid meagre wages, long working hours, and a lack of bargaining power (or organisation) to ameliorate their precarious working conditions. Moreover, what emerged from the research is what I call "*the reverse social reproductive labour*". The phenomenon of reverse social reproductive labour refers to *omama* not monetarily paying the people (mostly family members) who care for their children while they are at work. This research additionally found that *omama* have little time to socialize and engage with their respective communities and to spend time with their families because of the long working hours. The lack of trade permits poses challenges to *omama* in operating in their kitchens. *Omama* are not aware where they should apply for trading permits and the City of Cape Town is not taking any initiatives in educating *omama* about the process of applying for trade permits. The working relationships of *omama* and the minibus taxi-drivers are infused by the intimacy of labour and mediated by gender power dynamics and age power dynamics.

4.1.1 Social Reproductive Labour and Migration

Formal employment is shrinking with the rise of a neoliberal economy; therefore, informal employment emerges as the survivalist sector to absorb those who cannot find employment opportunities in the formal economy. For example, *omama* interviewed and working at the taxi rank, revealed that cooking and selling cooked food to the minibus taxi drivers was not their preferred job. However, because of unemployment and job scarcity in the formal employment sectors, *omama* choose to work in the taxi rank cooking and selling cooked food while they are looking for their preferred jobs. *Mama Mbele* claimed she is working at the taxi-rank because she loves to cook. When *mama Mbele* was asked if she could get job at a restaurant whether she would resign from working at the taxi rank, she claimed she would not. She said: *'I like to cook.... No, I like it here'*. Nonetheless, at the preliminary data collection stage, when the researcher went back to the taxi rank for the second time, it was said that *mama Mbele* found a job in different sector. When the researcher inquired who replaced her and where she is currently working, no one knew. In fact, all *omama* first interviewed when the researcher went back to the field, for the second time during the preliminary data analysis it was said they found new jobs with the exception of *mama Mjoli* who was still working at the taxi rank and *mama Dlali* as the kitchen owner. On the second visit to the field *mama Mjoli* was not cordial and friendly as she was in the first claiming to be busy for the second interview although she finally gave the researcher a few minutes of her time. *Mama Mjoli* said that she worked at the taxi industry because of lack of employment in other sectors of the economy, *"It is because of lack of employment and not liking to stay in township and getting involve in township scandals. So, I found the job here"*. *Mama Ngqulunga*, *"It was like someone I know. You meet someone I know and say I was looking for someone and they say you can come and work, but I am busy looking for job because the job is too much, and the job is little, [SIC]"*. When *mama Ngqulunga* and *mama Shange* were asked the reason for working at the taxi rank cooking and selling cooked food, she replied that it was because of unemployment

and she would quit the job if she could get better opportunities. She also claimed that she started cooking and selling cooked food at the taxi rank because of unemployment and she could leave it if better opportunities avail themselves: *“I have, it's because of unemployment..... Yes, I would leave”*. Mama Dleembe also claimed that she is working at the taxi rank because of unemployment, *‘It is a lack of employment.... and you have to try and find work’*.

Omama’s lives are intricately intertwined in migration and in particular in circular migration. Out of 8 of *omama* interviewed for this research, 6 were born in Eastern Cape and migrated to Cape Town to look for employment opportunities. *Mama Mbele* is the only *umama* born in Cape Town; however, *mama Mbele* considers Queenstown, Eastern Cape as home: *“I do have a home at Queenstown”*. For *mama Mbele* to consider Queenstown as home though she was not born in Eastern Cape, demonstrates the power of socialisation and circular migration. For instance, *mama Dlali* grandchildren were not born in Eastern Cape but she socialises her grandchildren to view real home Eastern Cape *in lieu* of Cape Town, *“No, I am yet still building my house.....Now that they are growing up and that during holidays, they have to visit Eastern Cape just like other children I must build houses here and there at Eastern Cape so that they have a place to call home”*.

4.1.2 Gendered nature of women’s work

Omama have little time to socialise and engage with their families and respective communities as they spend most of their time at work. They arrive home in the evening and have little time to engage with their respective community affairs. *Omama* are deprived of the time to provide adequate social reproductive labour to their children as they arrive home in the evening thus have few hours to spend with their children and assist the school-going children with their homework. The only time they have to provide social reproductive labour is on weekends when they are off at work. The time they have to provide social reproductive labour is limited since they are off one day on weekends which is busy with doing house chores, going to church or

resting. *Omama* working hours start as early as 06h30 in the morning and go home in the evening. The travelling distance from the CBD to the Cape Flats is huge.

Furthermore, *omama* working days are Monday- Saturday, *"I start at 06h00" ...and begin with prep [SIC]" mama Mjoli*. The taxi-industry commodifies the lives of *omama* because they spend most of their time at work and have Sunday as the day they spend at church, do house chores, or sleep; therefore, they are deprived of time to engage with their community and community members. Moreover, when most of *omama* knock off from work, they get home, bath, watch T.V and sleep, therefore, they do not have the time to engage with their community. For instance, *mama Mtshali* claimed that she works 6 days a week *"Then I take a day off on Sunday. I alternate, on certain week I work 7 days and on the following week I take off on Sunday"*. On Sundays *umama Mtshali* is off, she spends her day at church and goes home to perform house chores, *"On my day off I go to church..... and I come back late and cook for my children"*. *Mama Mkulisi* claims are similar to *mama Mtshali*. *Mama Mkulisi* claimed that on her day off on Sundays, she does the laundry and cooks, she states: *"I do the laundry and go to church"*, *Mama Mkulisi*.

Mama Mjoli claimed she works when she says: *"I work 7 days. I am here Monday- Sunday and sometimes on certain Sundays I take off day and usisi works..... When I get home, I take a bath then I watch the TV or if I feel like eating a supper, I then eat it then I sleep [SIC]"*. *Mama Mbele*, just like *mama Mjoli*, gets home, cooks, takes a bath, and watches TV and then sleeps, (*"I cook, bath and watch the T.V"*). *Mama Shange* does the same thing as *mama Mbele*, she states: *"I cook, bath, and watch the T.V"*. It's not all *omama* who have the luxury of getting home to watch TV and then sleep. Others get home and have to take care of their children and prepare them for the following school day. *Omama* who live with their children and grandchildren, have to assist them with their school work and help them to prepare for the following school day. For instance, *umama Dlali* claimed that upon her arrival at home, she has to assist her grandchildren with school homework, *"Yes, I am now dealing with those who are at school not the ones who are at crèche. They do not yet have homework"*.

Mama Mtshali is fortunate to have her husband to assist her with taking care of their children, “We bath them at night, and he wakes up in the morning to cloth them their school uniform and we help each other to steam iron their clothes”. Moreover, *omama* who are like *mama Dlelembe* with no partners, spouses and family to assist them with childrearing and with the little time she has after work have to find modalities to supplement her meagre wages which further commodify her life. *Mama Dlelembe* has an additional survivalist strategy. She claimed that after work she sells cleaning material and perfumes to make enough money to support her children, “Yes, I sell the multipurpose of cleaning and the perfumes..... I have to pay school transport and school fees.... And the money I am earning is not enough for my needs”.

Precarious working conditions minibus taxi-drivers are subjected to because of lack of organisation is not exclusively peculiar to them. Likewise with the mini bus taxi-drivers, *omama* are subjected to precarious working conditions perpetuated by a lack of organisation in this sector yet the literature in the taxi-industry marginalises their experiences. For instance, all *omama* work 6 days a week and are paid less than R1000 per week, and they all work more than 8 hours per day, *mama Dlelembe* “I start at 06h30” *mama Mjoli*....., *mama Mkulisi*, “I close at 18H00 later” “No, I am from Phillippe. I work here at Station Deck. Well, here my work is to cook. I arrive here at 06h00 and begin with prep”. *Mama Mtshali*, “I am paid weekly It is R500. Well, we are not paid at the same scale the seniors are paid more than the juniors”.

4.1.3 Reverse Social Reproductive Labour

Omama are the mothers and their children are young; therefore, require someone to take care of them while they are at work. Therefore, the unemployed family members become the care givers to the children of *omama* while they are at work. The meagre wages *omama* are getting motivate them to engage reverse underpayment of social reproductive labour extended to them by their family members. Reverse underpayment of social reproductive labour is a process

whereby *omama* are either not paying the care-givers of their children or pay them through incentives such as groceries, or intermittent remittance for those who left their children at Eastern Cape.

Mama Mbele is in her late 30s born in Cape Town and currently living in Phillippe. *Mama Mbele* is a mother to an 8-year-old boy and are all living together with her mother. *Mama Mbele* starts at work at 06h30 therefore she leaves home earlier than 06h30 to make it on time to work. She leaves her child asleep therefore unable to prepare him for school. To be a mother to her child, *mama Mbele* said that she prepares her for school every day at night when she knocks off. However, because of her work she is unable to always be there for her child, therefore her mother assists her thus it is her mother who earns social grant on behalf of her child, “*I start at 06h30 I do have child. I live with my mother... It's a boy... He's 8.... I prepare for him late... No, my mother takes him to school*”. Nonetheless, *mama Mbele* claimed she does not pay her mother for taking care of her child but intermittently assist her when there is a need to assists “*No, how can I pay my mother..... I help her when she has a problem with the grant money*”.

Mama Mkulisi is in her late 30s and a mother of 2 children and lives at Khayelitsha with her two children and unemployed brother. The first born is 5 years old and the last born is 8 months. *Mama Mkulisi* is assisted by her unemployed brother in taking care of her children while she is at work. Her brother fetches *mama Mkulisi*'s children from creche and babysits them for a period of 2 hours from 16h00 – 18h00 until *mama Mkulisi* arrives home and cooks for the whole family, “*I start at 06h30 in the morning and close at 18h00 late I live at Khayelitsha... I close at 18H00 later... I work 6 days a week..... The first one is 5 years and the other is 8 months.... Their uncle fetches them.... He stays at crèche then when he comes back at 16h00 he takes him until I come back.... I do the laundry when I come back from work and what he does is to take hang it outside the following day*”. *Mama Mkulisi* did not claim to be paying his brother for the assistance while she is at work.

Similar to *mama Mkulisi*, *mama Ngqulunga*, and other *omama*, claimed that her two brothers' assistant in taking care of her children while she is at work, particularly during the weekends and school holidays. However, *mama Ngqulunga* did not claim to be paying her brothers for taking care of her children while she is at work but rather, she assists them whenever they need something, "*Yes. They always take care of her, even to feed her.... Yes, they know how to do everything..... they know how to cook, and they would eat and wait for me until I come No if they need something I only have I give them the money. I do not pay them*".

Mama Mjoli claimed that she does not live with her child but rather her child lives with her brother and she never claimed to be paying her brother for living with her child, "*She's living with my brother.... Yes, I see her during the weekends when she is not going to school but sometimes now, she has Saturday classes [SIC]*". Nonetheless, *mama Mjoli* did not mention paying her brother or contributing towards the groceries in her brothers' house since her daughter is living with her unlike the other *omama* like *mama Ngqulunga* who assist their brother's and *mama Mbele* who claims to assist her mother whenever there is a need.

Mama Shange in her mid-30s living at Phillippe, found it very difficult to share personal information and was reluctant to talk about her work. She said she has children although they are not living with her but rather, they are living with her parents in Eastern Cape. Nonetheless, when *mama Shange* was asked if she is remitting every month for her children who live with her parents in Eastern Cape claimed 'Yes', she is remitting every month to her parents at home, "*I live at Liez next to Phillippe..... They are in primary school, but they are at Eastern Cape ... They live with my parents*".

The phenomenon of not paying family members who take care of children while *omama* are at work is prevalent. *Mama Dlali* case is different from other *omama*. *Mama Dlali* is a 54-year-old migrant widow from Eastern Cape in Cofimvaba. *Mama Dlali* migrated to Cape Town in 1999 to live with her late husband, who unfortunately died in 2000. Left with the responsibility

to take care of her 4 children alone, *mama Dlali* started as a street vendor selling coffee, tea, a quarter loaf of bread with egg, and tripe, “*What happened is that in 2000 my husband died, and I had 4 children and unemployed, and uneducated. I was doing nothing. So, that is how I started working by selling here. I was selling here tea and a bread quarter with an egg to raise up my children..... I was selling coffee and mpesi (tribe). This one was.... they were very young at that time. This one was 7 months, and that one was 5 years*” not far from the taxi rank where she is currently working. She began working in the semi-formal kitchen in June of 2010 after the renovations by the City of Cape Town in preparation for the 2010 Soccer World Cup, “*I started in 2010 during the FIFA After that 4 years in 2010 I got the key in June to work here*”.

Mama Dlali is working with her children and she is not paying them for working for her but rather she assists them with whatever they need whenever she can, “*No if they need something I only have I give them the money. I do not pay them..... these one I am paying according to their needs for instance one of them wants a house thus now I am in that searching a house for her [SIC]. “No, we are not paying it. The old ones they fetch them after school and they prepare food for them, and bath them and when we arrive, we find them ready to sleep*”.

4.1.4 Working Conditions

The working conditions of *omama* are characterised by precarity *i.e.*, working 6 days in a week, being paid meagre wages and having no worker’s bargaining organisation to ameliorate their precarious working conditions. *Mama Mtshali* who is in her early 40s’ was born in Eastern Cape in Lady Frere, migrated to Cape Town to look for employment opportunities in order to financially assist her truck driver husband in rearing their children, “*Yes, I do. I wanted to assist him (her husband) because he was not making enough money to support the children*”. *Mama Mtshali* is currently living at Mfuleni Township.

The working conditions of *Mama Mtshali* as with other *omama*, depicts the precarious working conditions. *Mama Mtshali* works 6 days a week Monday to Saturday and she is paid a weekly salary of R500, *‘I am paid weekly..... It is R500. Well, we are not paid at the same scale the seniors are paid more than the juniors’*. If *mama Mtshali* is paid a weekly salary of R500 it means in a month she has a salary of R2000, working 6 days a week and approximately 7 hours per day from Monday to Saturday. *Mama Mtshali* is not satisfied with her salary and asserted that it is too little, *‘No, I am not happy because it is little. I want more money for my children’*. When asked whether they have worker’s organisation, *Mama Mtshali* unequivocally said no and she had never seen one before, *‘No, I have not seen one’*

Mama Ngqulunga’s precarious working conditions are similar to that of *mama Mtshali*. *Mama Ngqulunga* is a Congolese migrate from Kabala who is in her mid-40s. *Mama Ngqulunga* migrated to Cape Town, South Africa in search of a better life and employment opportunities to raise her only daughter and take care of her two high school going younger brothers. *Mama Ngqulunga* works 6 days a week and maximum of 7 hours per day and yet she is paid a weekly salary of R800; therefore, taking home a monthly salary less than R4000. *Mama Ngqulunga*, *‘R700..... Per Week.....but the pay is not much money. The money is little. I am working from Monday to Saturday’*. *Mama Ngqulunga* expressed dissatisfaction with her job given the meagre salary. *‘The job is too much because I am doing all things by myself. I am cooking, I am selling, I am washing the dishes, I am mopping. Even the customers ask for the food, I will go and give the food but the money, that R700 is small’*. Due to the extent of dissatisfaction with her working conditions, *mama Ngqulunga* said that she is currently looking for a new job and that she is applying online and asking for referrals through acquaintances to inform her if they know of job opportunities, *‘I apply online Sometimes I ask someone if they are looking for someone’*. *Mama Mjoli* was born on 23 December 1984 living at Philippe and is a mother to a 17-year-old daughter who is currently completing her grade 12 and is living with her uncle. Similar to *mama Mtshali*, and *mama Ngqulunga*, *mama*

Mjoli is working 6 days in a week, and is earning R2 400 per month “*I work 7 days. I am here Monday- Sunday and sometimes on certain Sundays I take off day and usisi works..... I am paid R2 400*”. Moreover, *mama Mjoli* works a minimum of 6 hours per day and 6 days per week yet she receives a salary less than R3000 per month, “*Sunday I start at 07h00 because it's Sunday and on Sunday it is quiet and the criminals*”. When *mama Mjoli* asked why they do not have a labour bargaining workers’ organisation that would advocate for their welfare as workers, she expressed a lack of trust among themselves as the significant impediment in organising themselves, “*Well, we are not the same. We would plan that we are going to do something then there would those who will take what we discussed in the meeting and tell the owners*”.

The taxi industry is notorious for employing its employees through word-of-mouth without signing a legally bonding employment contract delineating the employees’ responsibilities, and benefits, such as, leave, working hours and lunch times. The lack of an employment contract subjects the employees to their employer’s whim thus they can be dismissed anytime. The fear of *omama* for their employers was palpable when they were requested to participate in the interview thus others especially those whose employers were not present, refused to participate, claiming that if their employer would enter while they are being interviewed, they might be in trouble, ‘*No, I have said that I am not the owner that is why I did not want to participate because the owner might come just like’ mama Shange.*

4.1.5 Gendered role play at the taxi rank

PRASA is lacking in providing proper welfare to *omama* thus making their working conditions not conducive and difficult to function in effectively. When the researcher went to the field for the second time at the preliminary data analysis stage, *mama Dlali* showed the researcher their main kitchen, where all *omama* in the taxi rank collect water for cooking and for the bathrooms they use. Moreover, *mama Dlali* informed the researcher that neither PRASA nor the City of

Cape Town provide maintenance services for the main kitchen where *omama* collect water for cooking, and washing their dishes.

PRASA does not provide the cleaning services for *omama* although they are paying a monthly rental of R3000 to PRASA without default. The reasons *omama* are paying the monthly rent to PRASA is because they were informed by the City of Cape Town that the land where their kitchens are located is privately owned by PRASA when they were moved from their initial locations not far from the current places where their kitchens are located. This was in 2007 when the City of Cape Town was preparing for the World Cup and was renovating the taxi-rank. However, PRASA does not provide adequate security thus subjecting *omama* to vulnerability and therefore to break-ins in their kitchens, *“Here in the main kitchen ...It was difficult too because we opened in August, we came to clean and the following day I had a break-in and I had to borrow money to replace the stolen equipment..... There are PRASA securities but we acknowledged that PRASA is not concerned with our welfare. When we query how can I experience breaks-in yet I am paying money for the security would say go to Police station. What is police station going to do because I am renting in your place? PRASA would say they cannot reimburse me my stolen stuff. So, as omama we met and decided to have our own security to work together with PRASA. Therefore, we have weekly contributions.... It is the people who are in the committee who knows much it is paid but we pay R50 every week... We looked for people who are trained to be security guards but who are unemployed... PRASA does not clean for us. We do everything ourselves. If there is problem with the kitchen, we fix it ourselves, if we need plumber, we outsource it ourselves and the handyman is paid by ourselves”*, *mama Dlali*. PRASA and the City of Cape Town are limited in the provision of security and motivated *omama* to outsource security for themselves to assist the PRASA security.

Omama are working in a volatile environment in the taxi-industry. When the minibus taxi-drivers are protesting, and when the protest is protracted, *omama* are not paid and the reasons why *omama* are not being paid is because they would be not working given that the minibus taxi drivers are their primary clients, *“Our primary clients are taxi-drivers and the other people are an*

additional customer. If the taxi drivers are not working there is no need for us to work. You can come here and you won't have a customer”, mama Dlali. Protracted minibus taxi-drivers protest contradicts the essence of omama employment in the taxi-industry and challenges their welfare as they do not get salaries. For instance, mama Mtshali claimed that if the protest takes a long time to end, they do not get paid, “When it is 3 weeks get paid for 2 days not all of the days [SIC]”. Mama Mtshali claims were further corroborated by Mama Ngqulunga, “Yeah, if you do not work you do not get salary... If you do not come there is no salary”. The non-payment of omama when there is a protest does not emanate from the employers’ blatant exploitation; however, it comes from the structure of the industry as a whole since the employers depend on minibus taxi-drivers working to generate income, and this is discernible from umama Dlali’s assertions, “It is not frequent thing but when we came back from COVID in August since we had closed in February, we came to clean and the following day there was a break-in..... Until August It was very difficult because the money that I am getting here I cannot save it because the way I am struggling. If there is no bed at home I must now that I am working for the bed. Firstly, I had to buy houses because when my husband died, I was living in a corrugated iron shack..... I suffer from hunger. You see last year, they strike from June, I think I was in rural areas then to build, the way the children were struggling I had to halt the building there and come back to keep the business floating. That 3 weeks was like 3 years to me [SIC]”.

The working conditions of omama further contravene the Basic Conditions of Employment Act. Basic Conditions of employment Act suggest that workers must not work more than 8 hours per day (Government, 1997). Omama, work a minimum of 7 hours per day mostly from 06h30- 16h00 and from 16h00-18h00 they are cleaning and preparing to go home since many of them finish cooking and selling at 15h00. Therefore, they work more than the 8 hours stipulated by the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, “We do not have food that remain. Even now we are cooking for the second time..... No, we cook twice a day and the reason we cook twice we are avoiding a situation whereby we have to have food remaining’ mama Dlelembe, ‘I start at 06h30 in the morning and close at 18h00 late” mama Mkulisi. “I start at 06h00 ...Then I take a day off on Sunday. I alternate, on certain

week I work 7 days and on the following week I take off on Sunday” mama *Mtshali*. However, they are not compensated for working more than 8 hours per day and for working on weekends as Basic Conditions of Employment Act (Government, 1997).

There are interesting nuances in the relationship of *omama* and the minibus taxi-drivers, and on how they negotiate gendered roles in the taxi-rank. For instance, when certain *omama* were interviewed in the presence of minibus taxi-drivers who either came to the kitchen to purchase *i-plate*² or to visit *omama* because they have established good relationships with them, “*We have a very good relationship*”, mama *Shange*. Mama *Mtshali* expressed similar assertions that they have a good relationship with the minibus taxi-drivers, “*No, they are okay, and they are friendly*”.

How *omama* related with the minibus taxi-drivers is largely mediated by age. For instance, the minibus taxi-drivers in their 20s they would call older women *omama*, largely because they could be their mother’s peer. *Omama* who would call older minibus taxi-drivers and minibus taxi-drivers who are their peer *tata*³ as way of respect and *bhuti*⁴. However, some young *omama* in their thirties and in particular if they are flirting with the minibus taxi-drivers peers would call them by their name.

Moreover, some old *omama* kitchen owners would covertly approve their workers flirting with the minibus taxi-drivers. For instance, while waiting to interview *mama Dlelembe* outside her kitchen, her neighbour and colleague was busy flirting with one of the minibus taxi-drivers who constantly buys *i-plate* in their kitchen. The *umama* who is a kitchen owner was busy preparing the food for the minibus taxi-driver, and when she was done, she called her worker who was still busy flirting with the minibus to come and serve him. *Mama Dlelembe*’s colleague went to fetch the plate to serve the minibus taxi-driver. Nonetheless, what was

² *i-plate* is the taxi-rank colloquial term to refer to the cooked food sold by *omama*

³ *Sir*

⁴ *Brother*

significant in *mama Dlelembe's* colleague is the demonstration of the hegemonic femininity. *Mama Dlelembe's* colleague asked the minibus taxi-driver how in his culture a woman serves a man, if the women have to portray a submissive role and kneel before him and bring him warm water with a towel to wipe his hands. The minibus taxi-driver confirmed *mama Dlelembe's* colleague predilection of how a women serve a man in his culture. *Mama Dlelembe's* colleagues and the kitchen owner covertly encourage the flirting of their workers with the minibus taxi-drivers and other male customers.

The relationship between *omama* and the minibus taxi-drivers is a cordial relationship infused by the elements of intimacy of labour that *omama* had to feign their feelings in order to maintain and sustain good relationship with the minibus taxi drivers. *Mama Dlali's* assertions about her relationship with the minibus taxi drivers unequivocally demonstrates the intimacy of labour; whereby, they have to feign her true feelings in how she relates with the minibus taxi drivers that it's bearable, "*No, it is not good. It is bearable*".

Certain women such as *mama Mkulisi* have an overt relationship with the minibus taxi-drivers and seemed like the minibus taxi drivers know more intimate information about them. For instance, while interviewing *mama Mkulisi*, I found her visited by one the minibus taxi-drivers who kept on interfering in the interview responding on her behalf.

: *What caused you to work here at the taxi-rank? Was it, perhaps, unemployment?*

Mama Mkulisi: No

Taxi driver 2022/03/28]: Interjects.... Yes, it's a lack of employment opportunities] because you earn something

Yonela: When you are at work, who takes care of your children?

Taxi driver: Interjects.... His brother

The taxi drivers' knowledge of *mama Mkulisi* signifies that he was not merely a random client but had developed a personal relationship with *mama Mkulisi*. *Mama Ngqulunga* claimed that their relationship with the minibus taxi-drivers is merely a client-customer relationship and it does not transcend client-customer relationship, '*They are only customers*'. However, other women have built strong bonds and customer loyalty with certain minibus taxi-drivers to the extent that certain minibus taxi-drivers would not buy nor eat in other kitchens but only in the kitchens of the women that they have created strong bonds with. If it happens that *umama* who have minibus taxi-drivers as clients have sold out for that day and the minibus taxi-drivers want to purchase *i-plate*, *omama* ask for *i-plate* from fellow colleagues to sell. *Mama Dlelembé* replied when asked how they serve their loyal customers if they have sold out for that specific day, "*If ever like a person arrive and want a rice and they do not have it, we give it to them Yes, when they sold out, we give it to them Yes, and they give us too when there is something we do not have*". Having loyal customers has not pit the women against each other; however, it has fostered good working relationships.

Mama Dlali explains that their relationship with the minibus taxi-drivers is bearable, to a certain extent, claiming that minibus taxi-drivers are rude yet they have become accustomed to it although it bothers them, "*No, it is not good. It is bearable. For instance, she recently cried when she was delivering a food. She was insulted by a taxi-driver for nothing. For example, you see how I am packing? I put the take-away like this and pack the spoons separately and the toothpicks and serviette and this one driver did not see the spoon and instead of asking for it he insults her, cursing her with her private parts [one of the taxi-driver comes to order a plate while we are talking] although most of the time they are not troublesome people as we often know them as rude people. They are rude but... I do not know maybe it is because one got used to them There are those who are rude in their way*". The minibus taxi-driver's petty complaints about food and sometimes the insults signify the unequal power and gender relations. For instance, *Mama Mtshali* claimed that the minibus taxi drivers would sometimes have petty complaints about

food, “Sometimes a person would complain claiming you dished him a meat with fats, and someone would complain you did not give me enough gravy”.

The unequal power relations and unequal gender relations and hegemonic masculinity are more discernible from *Mama Dlali*'s assertions about how her daughter was insulted by one of the minibus taxi drivers. The majority of minibus taxi-drivers place their order and it's delivered in their taxis, therefore, in one way or another, this obscures the gender power dynamics. However, for the few minibus bus taxi-drivers who came to purchase the food in the kitchens directly, in particular if the minibus taxi-driver was old, hegemonic and performative masculinity and femininity were discernible traits. *Omama* would not be merely serving a customer but rather appear serving a man of the house with the submissive attitude with assertions such as, “ewe tata”⁵

4.1.6 Trading Permits

The government attempts to regulate the informal trading and in particular street vending through a requirement that street vendors must have trading permits. However, the Business Act (Arie, 2019) makes provision for a grace period to be extended to street vendors when they do not have trading permits so that their businesses are not closed down but rather be afforded an opportunity to apply for a trading permit while trading. Moreover, the Business Act requires that the municipality take into consideration unemployment effects prior to restricting street vendors the right to trade,

Mama Dlali does not have a trading permit and is aware that she is trading illegally; however, she claimed that she is uneducated and does not know procedures to follow to have a trading

⁵ Yes, sir

permit. However, the City of Cape Town does not harass *Mama Dali* for not having a trading permit nor does it threaten to close down her kitchen. *Mama Dali*, although unaware of the provision of the Business Act that grants traders without a trading permit grace period to trade while in the process of applying for the trade permit. She assumes that she continues to trade because of her steadfast and resoluteness against the City of Cape Town municipality. *Mama Dali* claimed that there was a time when she was fined R3000 for not having a trading permit, “I tried to create a permit but since I am uneducated, I struggled not knowing how to have it..... Recently, I negotiated to have my R3000 charge to be scrapped. I asked where will I get R3000? There was a law enforcement official to charge me that I am operating without a permit. I said if permit was necessary, it was supposed that on the 15 of June 2000 when I arrived here it was supposed to be at the table.... so now I do not where I am going to get the permit to be charged R3000. I do not have the R3000, and I won't have it. I took the fine charge back to them and I do not want anyone to come back again to harass me in the presence of my customers telling me that I do not have certain documents”.

The Business Act makes provisions for a municipality prior closing down an informal business for not having a trading permit. The municipality must take into consideration the unemployment impact of the employees of that specific trader, afford the informal trader/business owner an opportunity to apply for a trade permit, and take into consideration the financial implication to the informal trader before imposing a fine. *Mama Dali* is unconscious of the Business Act provisions and therefore, thought that she did not pay the fine imposed on her by the municipality because of her steadfast resoluteness. However, on the second visit to the field, *Mama Dali* informed the researcher that the municipal officials came back again to conduct an inspection and required of her the trading permit, “last month law enforcement, City of Cape Town officials to inspect our places and close the dirty kitchens. We were fined R3000 for selling here, R3000.... we have to apply for the permits from the council and the strange part is that the council does not give us the permits”. *Mama Dali*'s assertions signify dereliction of duty, in part, by the City of Cape Town.

The Business Act makes a provision for the municipal officials to educate the informal traders about the process of applying for trade permits. *Mama Dlali* said they do not know how to apply for the permits and, initially when they were looking for a place to work, the City of Cape Town told them that the current place they are working at in the taxi-rank is owned by PRASA; therefore, they must liaise with PRASA thus they are paying their rent to PRASA. Nonetheless, the City of Cape Town is demanding that they have trading permits and fine them for not having permits yet they are not trading on their property “*We are here because of PRASA. We are here not because of the council but we are here because of PRASA.... Yes, we are fined buy the City of Cape*”. Nevertheless, *omama* are honouring their commitments with PRASA *qua* paying the rent; however, PRASA is not valuing its commitment to *omama*; therefore, making their working conditions challenging.

4.2 Conclusion

This chapter demonstrated that *omama* in the taxi rank occupies the traditional gendered roles of being a social reproductive labour producers. The position of *omama* as social reproductive labour producers in the taxi rank nudges them to perform a reverse social reproductive labour. *Omama* lamented the lack of clear governance in the taxi rank put them in a perpetual state of uncertainty with their right to trade in the taxi rank.

Chapter Five

Discussion, Analysis and Conclusions

5.1 Introduction

The work performed by *omama* at the taxi rank is integral for the production of labour power of the minibus taxi drivers and many other workers within Deck vicinity. For example, *omama* cook and sell breakfast and lunch to the minibus taxi drivers and other workers within Deck vicinity and that give these workers a labour power in their respective duties. The minibus taxi-drivers purchase their breakfast, and lunch and for some, supper at the taxi-rank. Were it not for *omama*, it would be challenging for the minibus taxi-drivers to have the labour power to effectively do their work. Therefore, this section provides discussion and analysis of the findings on the work performed by *omama* at the taxi-rank.

The decision to migrate to Cape Town was not of their volition but for lack of employment they were compelled to migrate notwithstanding that they had not found their preferred employment, thus they were still searching for their preferred jobs during the initial data collection. The migration trend of *omama* from Eastern Cape to Cape Town reflects the old colonial migration order of separate development; whereby, the previous colonial governments developed only white cities and neglected black peoples' city development. The experiences of *omama* concerning migration are aptly argued by Machinya (2022).

The migrants are seized with reasoning that to escape being poor, migration is the alternative. However, migration is never the panacea to unemployment, thus when they come to terms with the idea that migration is not, the migrants end up taking jobs that the locals do not want (Machinya,2022). *Mama Mtshali* migrated from Eastern Cape in search of employment to assist her husband in taking care of their family because of her husbands' meagre wages. However, *mama Mtshali* could not find employment of her choice, thus she ended up working

in the taxi-rank selling cooked food. Other *omama* share similar experiences with *mama Mtshali*.

The migration patterns of *omama* further reflect the erstwhile colonial government migration trends that entrenched rural-urban migration in a manner that black people are temporary urban city residences. For instance, *mama Dlali* does not consider Cape Town as home although she migrated to Cape Town in 1999 and socializes her children and grandchildren in being conscious that Cape Town is not their home but home is Eastern Cape at Cofimvaba. *Mama Dlali* claimed that she has built a home at Eastern Cape for her grandchildren that during the school holidays, in particular December, they have a home to visit just like other children. The continued rural-urban migration by black people notwithstanding the abolishment of the Influx Control (Xulu-Gama, 2019) is the reflection colonial government brainwashing of black people that they are sojourners in the cities.

Migration subjects the immigrants to exploitation in a manner that they would take any menial jobs because they have to survive in the foreign land and send remittances back at home and because the primary goal for their migration was informed by the thinking that migration is the panacea to their unemployment status (Machinya, 2022) and that is evident in the lives of *omama*. *Omama* have children and most of them took the decision to be workers because they wanted to be able to provide financial support to their children. However, financial support alone is not sufficient for the well-being of their children; therefore, they need time to spend with their children, providing social reproductive labour. Nonetheless, the taxi-industry largely deprives *omama* an opportunity to provide social reproductive labour to their children.

They arrive home late; therefore, the relatives had to be the ones who provide social reproductive labour to their children. Moreover, *omama* such as *mama Dlali* who have adult children who work, have the duty to provide social reproductive labour fall on the older

children. *Mama Dlali* claimed that their role as adults is limited largely to assisting with homework during the weekdays. Other *omama* such as *mama Mtshali* are assisted by their husbands and others by extended family members in taking care of their children while they are at work. However, other *omama* have left their children in Eastern Cape with their grandmothers.

Omama are working long hours for meagre wages and their work deprives them of the opportunity to spend time with their families and to engage with their respective communities. *Omama* spend the little time they get when off on Sundays at church and after, they have limited time to do laundry, cook, and prepare for the new week ahead.

Church in black peoples' lives is integral and the institutionalisation of church in their lives can be traced back to the colonial period. Church and in particular Christianity, offers black people a refuge from colonial oppression, material scarcity, deprivations (Ngcobo, 1994) and affords them an opportunity to present their lack to God through prayers, and further teach, in particular young mothers, on how to be good mothers and wives to their husbands (Ngcobozi, 2012). However, the research had an unrecorded conversation with *mama Dlali* on religion. *Mama Dlali* expressed her pain, inflicted by her previous church that she continues to dearly love. *Mama Dlali* claimed that after the death of her husband, men in her church took advantage of her. She claimed that she was compelled to let her daughter, who was then 15 years old, to marry an old man. Therefore, her daughter could not finish grade 12 and could not further her studies because she had to be a wife to the old man.

The essence of reverse unpaid social reproductive labour is the phenomenon of not paying the family members, who are taking care of *omama* children and extended family members such as grandmothers. Nonetheless, *omama* are aware that they are supposed to pay the family members who are providing care to their children, but they do not have the ability to do so.

Therefore, *omama* claimed to assist family members who take care of their children while they are at work by assisting them when there is a need and where they are able to. For instance, *omama* are working a minimum of 7 hours a day and they are working on weekends. However, they earn weekly wages of less than R1000, which is below the gazetted minimum wage by the government (LWO Employers Organisation, 2022; The Republic of South Africa, 2022). Therefore, the underpayment of *omama* creates a cycle of exploitation as *omama* find themselves forced to engage in reverse underpayment of care, provided by their family members. The undervaluing of *omama*'s social reproductive labour finds expression in conceptualising social reproductive labour to be the natural act of care inherent in women; therefore, compelled to provide. Benya's (2015) research on Marikana post-the-massacre aptly demystifies, in particular, racial capitalism, on how it conceptualises black women's social reproductive labour, as labour not deserving to be rewarded. Moreover, England (2005) conceptualising the care work, and professional jobs, such as, being an educator, is devalued because nurturing and caring is considered to be a natural act of love, thus devalued by the capitalist society (Fraser, 2017).

The working conditions of *omama* are complex with significant nuances. The work of *omama* is integral in the functioning and the production of the minibus taxi-drivers labour power; however, their work comes with formidable challenges to their lives. *Omama* are subjected to precarious working conditions *i.e.*, long working hours, a minimum of 7 hours per day, and working on weekends without being compensated for working over-time, and having their daily wages not doubled for working on weekends, as gazetted in the Basic Conditions of Employment Act.

Omama, -as typical of the taxi industry-, do not have any form of legal employment contract, therefore, this perpetuates their precarious working conditions, as they can be fired at the employers' whim. It is for this reason, when asked to participate in the interviews, most of

them were afraid assuming that it might put them at loggerheads with their employers if they would find them participating in the interviews. On the other hand, the lack of contractual obligations affords *omama* agency to resign at whim when they find new jobs without having to oblige their contractual obligations. For instance, they do not have to serve notice for termination of their contracts thus when the researcher went into the field for the second time the initial *omama* who had been interviewed could not be found because they had new jobs.

The lack of contractual obligations, also have a negative impact on *omama* as it deprives *omama* labour protection, such as, leave days, compensation for overtime and so forth. Therefore, the lack of a contract entrenched *omama* in precarious working conditions, thus they are paid a meagre wage which leads them to engage in reverse unpaid social reproductive labour.

Every worker should have a conducive environment and a cordial relationship with his colleagues. However, the working environment of *omama* is complicated. For instance, the land where the kitchens are located is owned by PRASA. *Omama* claimed to pay monthly rent without failure to PRASA. However, PRASA fails to provide *omama* with a conducive environment to perform their work. For example, *mama Dlali* showed the researcher their communal kitchen where they all collect water to prepare their meals, and the communal bathroom. Nonetheless, *mama Dlali* complained about the lack of hygiene in their communal bathrooms. She claimed that PRASA is not cleaning their bathroom; therefore, they clean it themselves. Furthermore, *mama Dlali* claimed that PRASA is failing to protect their businesses. She said that she once experienced a break-in and PRASA refused to take responsibility for it. As a result, they met as *omama* kitchen owners and outsourced the security because PRASA is failing them.

When there are protracted minibus taxi-drivers protests, they do not get paid. The reason they do not get paid is because they do not work because the minibus taxi-drivers are their primarily clients. Moreover, protracted protests do not only affect *omama* who are employed to cook and sell cooked food but it also affects *omama* who are kitchen owners because they are also not making any income thus *mama Dlali* had to put on moratorium the construction of her homestead in Cofimvaba during the lockdown and the protracted protest.

The work of *omama* is integral to the minibus taxi-drivers, however, there are certain minibus taxi-drivers, although few, who seem not to appreciate the work *omama* are doing. For instance, the harassing and cursing of *mama Dlali* children by certain minibus taxi-drivers demonstrates that there are certain minibus taxi-drivers who do not appreciate the work *omama* are doing for them. The petty complaints about the quantity of food by certain minibus taxi-drivers also gives the impression that there are certain minibus taxi-drivers who do not appreciate the work *omama* are doing.

Omama do not have ulterior motives or a vendetta against any of the minibus taxi-drivers but rather they are selling the food at the taxi-rank because they saw a business opportunity to make a living for themselves, and their families and for making life easy for the minibus taxi-drivers when performing their work. Therefore, the petty complaints made by some minibus taxi-drivers are manifestations of power dynamics and gender power dynamics. The minibus taxi-drivers might feel that they are entitled to make reasonable or unreasonable demands because they paid for the food.

Moreover, others feel that because they are men, they are in one way or another entitled to demand the quantity of food they desire, giving them the right to complain. Another important gender and power dynamic between *omama* and the minibus taxi-drivers that was apparent was performative masculine behaviour and hegemonic femininity mediated with ageism. If the

minibus taxi-driver was old, *omama*'s behaviour would portray the hegemonic femininity submissive traits. However, if the minibus taxi-drivers were not old they would not demonstrate the hegemonic masculinity although they would relate with them in a respectful manner. Thus, they would call them *bhuti* regardless of the fact that they are young.

Nevertheless, certain minibus taxi-drivers would not reciprocate the respect by *omama in lieu*, they would exude hegemonic and performative masculinity, and thus there are certain minibus taxi-drivers who cursed *mama Dlali*'s daughter. Moreover, it is important to mention that there is a cordial relationship between minibus taxi-drivers and *omama* and there are some minibus taxi-drivers who have their preferred kitchens where they buy their breakfast and lunch and have conversations with *omama*.

The status of *omama* concerning the trading permits is ambivalent as they do not know who actually owns the space they are renting. *Omama* pay rent to PRASA because the City of Cape Town claimed it does not own the place where their kitchens are located; however, the City of Cape Town demands that they have trade permits and fine them for not having them. Nevertheless, *omama* continue to trade without the permits. However, *mama Dlali* never said that the City of Cape Town has ever closed their kitchens since they moved in, in 2010, for not having the trading permits. The City of Cape Town fines them and never follows up on the fines and threatens to close their kitchens for failure to pay their fines.

5.2 Conclusion

This research demonstrated that the taxi industry has undergone significant transformation in the past decades; however, the transformation has not significantly changed the lives of *omama* and the gendered power dynamics. For instance, the work performed by *omama* in the taxi-rank is salient for the effective functioning of the taxi industry. If the work performed by *omama* in the taxi-industry is imperative for the effective functioning of the industry it troubles why their work and experiences in the industry are silent. The silence of *omama* experiences in the industry appeals to the broader social construct of social reproductive labour; that it is supposed to be unpaid and when it is paid it is underpaid.

This research accordingly demonstrated that the work of *omama* to cook and sell cooked food is interlinked with migration and with unemployment being the impetus for *omama* to work at the taxi-rank. *Omama* migrate to Cape Town to search for employment opportunities; however, the lack of employment leads them to work in the taxi-rank cooking and selling cooked food. This research further demonstrated that the work of *omama* deprives them an opportunity to spend time with their families as they work long hours and work far from their homes. The distance to and from work further contributes to depriving *omama* time to spend with their families.

This research demonstrated an unfortunate phenomenon in the lives of *omama*. The wages *omama* are paid contradict the essence of their migration to Cape Town *i.e.*, to look for jobs to assist their families. The meagre wages *omama* are paid force them to engage in reverse social reproductive labour through not paying family members who are taking care of their children while they are at work. This research further demonstrated that the working conditions of *omama* are populated with precarity. *Omama* are working 6 days a week and they are not compensated for the overtime they are working.

The working conditions *omama* are working under are volatile and unpredictable. For instance, minibus taxi-drivers who are *omama* primary customers can protest anytime regarding issues concerning the impounding of their minibus taxis and traffic fines. When the minibus taxi-drivers protests get protracted *omama* are not working and not paid. Moreover, this research demonstrated that the relationships of *omama* and the minibus taxi-drivers are mediated with emotional labour; whereby, *omama* sometimes have to feign their true feelings towards the minibus taxi-drivers even when they are rude to them. For instance, the case of *mama Dlaki* having one of her daughters cursed by the minibus taxi-drivers. Finally, this research demonstrated that *omama* are struggling to get permits. The City of Cape Town is failing *omama* when it comes to having permits. *Omama* are therefore left wondering, not knowing how to apply for trading permits and who from, because they claim that the City of Cape Town is not responsible for the place, they are trading in and it is PRASA property. However, *omama* claim that the City of Cape Town came back to them demanding that they have trading permits to trade in the property they claim does not belong to them.

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