



# Informal Sector Dynamics in South African Urban Businesses: A Qualitative Exploration

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## Abstract

The informal sector in South African urban areas plays a significant role in the country's economy and social fabric, despite facing regulatory challenges. Qualitative data collection was conducted via semi-structured interviews with key informants from various informal sector enterprises across different cities in South Africa. Interviews revealed a common theme where entrepreneurs faced high operational costs and regulatory pressures, yet maintained their businesses due to the strong demand for their products/services in urban markets. The findings suggest that despite facing significant challenges, the informal sector continues to thrive through strategic adaptation and community support networks. Policy makers should consider developing targeted interventions to support sustainable growth within the informal sector while also addressing regulatory barriers.

**Keywords:** *Africanization, Contextualism, Ethnography, Informality, Microeconomics, Participatory Research, Qualitative Inquiry*

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