

CHAPTER THREE: STUDY DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The chapter focuses on the methodology that was employed in exploring survival strategies employed by persons with disabilities amidst an economic depression. Research methods that were employed during the study are also comprehensively explained. Data collection procedures that were employed in this research include in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, key informant interviews and documentary analysis. The chapter discusses the research design that was employed by the researcher in conducting the study and justification of the research design. The study location, target population and sampling techniques that were utilised to select participants are also discussed in the chapter.

Creswell (2007:05) conceives of a research design as a procedure that is taken from understanding the problem statement to analysis and interpretation of data. This implies that a research design encompasses conceptualisation of the problem statement, research questions of the study, collection of data, analysis of collected data and presentation of findings. Bogdan and Taylor (1975) cited in Creswell (2007: 249) define research design as the whole procedure of conducting a study. Flick (2010) defines research design as a blue-print that is followed by the researcher when conducting a study; thus, a research design involves issues such as theoretical framework that guides the research, sampling, methods of collecting data, analysis of data and presentation of data. Through the definitions furnished, one can summarise research design a plan that is to be followed by a researcher when conducting a research.

Qualitative research methodology mainly is ideal when one is studying a topic that is little known or when there is nothing known about a topic one intends to study as propounded by Choruma (2007) in Mtetwa (2015). The researcher in studying the survival strategies employed by persons with disabilities in the middle of economic depression, utilised qualitative research methodology due to the nature of the topic that sought to have in-depth understanding of lived experience of persons with disabilities. Ritchie and

Lewis (2003) contend that coming up with a precise definition of qualitative research is a daunting task. This is because qualitative research covers many approaches that are found in different research disciplines. However, despite the elusive nature of qualitative research, several scholars (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011; Silvermann, 2011; Flick 2009) have managed to come up with general descriptions of qualitative research. Qualitative research has been described as “interpretive approach”. The approach is also concerned with “what”, “why” and “how” questions. Adding on the characteristics of qualitative research approach, Denzin and Lincoln. (2011) observe how qualitative is more concerned with words unlike quantitative research that is more concerned with numbers. Rubin and Babbie (2002) define qualitative research as any research that is not chiefly based on quantifying findings. Ritchie and Lewis (2003) concur with this as they point out that data obtained through qualitative research is “detailed, rich and complex”. Detailed, rich and complex data is not quantifiable.

Ritchie and Lewis (2003) argue that through qualitative research, one is able have an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon being studied as it considers issues such as experiences and perspectives of the participants. Patton (2015: 24) observes how qualitative data reveals deeper feelings and experiences of participants. Qualitative research produces detailed description and understanding of a phenomenon mainly basing on the views of the research participant in their social setting.

Patton (2015:12-13) outlines several contributions of qualitative inquiry such as illuminating experience of participants, studying how things work and understanding people’s experiences. Taking this into consideration and to understand survival strategies employed by persons with disabilities in the middle of economic crisis, the researcher used qualitative research methodology. With a view to understanding the experiences of participants, qualitative methodology was utilised by Mtetwa (2015) in his study on “participation of persons with disabilities in the formulation of economic empowerment policies”. Qualitative research methodology was also utilised by Mutambara (2011) to study the “cash transfer programmes as a poverty alleviation strategy.”

Some of the advantages of qualitative research include but are not limited to: Giving detailed information that is derived from research participants' experiences and perspectives. Denzin and Lincoln (2002); Ritchie and Lewis (2003) concur that qualitative research enables one to have a holistic understanding of human experiences in their natural setting and this can be done by using an array of epistemological approaches and different research methods to fully understand human experiences.

Ritchie and Lewis (2003) aver that research techniques used when one decides to use qualitative methodology are flexible. Due to flexibility of methods used when one is using qualitative research methodology, one is able to comprehend an intricate phenomenon unlike when using quantitative research methodology that is rigid in nature.

Methods of collecting data used when one is using qualitative research design allow the researcher to have a direct interaction with research participants and direct interaction with participants allows the researcher to collect rich, detailed and complex data (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003) and that is not the when collecting data using quantitative research methods that are very rigid and, in most cases, do not allow direct interaction with participants.

According to Corbin and Strauss (2008), qualitative research design enables the researcher to take note of participants' lived experiences and have an insight on how meanings are constructed and shaped by the participants. This is also in line with critical disability theory that emphasise on the need to consider the lived experiences of persons with disabilities when discussing disability issues.

It is against this backdrop that the researcher decided to use qualitative research methodology to interrogate survival strategies employed by persons with disabilities in the middle of economic depression. The social model stress the fact that the challenges facing persons with disabilities are due to several barriers hence there was a need to have an understanding of lived experiences of persons with disabilities on how barriers are inhibiting them from employing survival strategies employed by person with disabilities hence the use of qualitative research methodology is justified. In addition, Chataika (2007) cited in Mtetwa (2015:81) observes how qualitative research

methodology is the best when one is studying experiences of persons with disabilities. Putting all the discussed characteristics of qualitative research methodology into consideration, the researcher informatively decided to use qualitative research design as it was the most ideal.

The study was carried in Glenview 3. The area is one of the most populous areas in Zimbabwe located in the South-Western part of Harare Province, Zimbabwe. Glenview 3 is 12 km from Harare CBD. The area is surrounded by high density areas such as Budiro, Glen Norah and Highfield. The area is well known for the outbreak of cholera and typhoid. More than ninety-five thousand cases of cholera were recorded in 2008 (WHO, 2009). The outbreaks were mainly common in Glenview and Budiro. There was also a cholera outbreak in Glenview in September 2018 and this left more than sixteen people dead (Dailynews, 18 September 2018). Due to the informalisation of the economy that came as a result of economic depression, Glenview has become the hub of informal economic activities such as hardware, carpentry, barber shops, flea markets, to mention just a few. Some of the notable areas in Glenview is Glenview Area 8 Complex, one of the main hub of informal economy activities in Harare, if not in Zimbabwe. In Glenview, cheap and affordable furniture such as wardrobes, kitchen tables, beds and sofas are produced and some people travel from places such as Chiredzi, Bulawayo, Hwange and Mutorashanga to purchase furniture that is produced there. In Glenview, there are many vendors and, due to competition among these vendors, basic needs are generally found at cheap prices. Due to low-income activities undertaken in the area; the area is inhabited by low-income earners. Persons with disabilities are likely to employ low-income surviving strategies such as begging and vending, hence they are likely to stay in high density areas where services such as rentals are relatively cheap.

Though the study was on survival strategies employed by persons with disabilities in the middle of economic depression, the researcher mainly targeted persons with visual impairment and persons with physical impairment. Mtetwa (2016); World Bank (2016); World Report on Poverty (2018) and Handicap International (1993), all concur that there is a strong relationship between poverty and disability. The prevailing economic situation in Zimbabwe is likely to have more impact on persons with

disabilities particularly persons with visual impairment and persons with physical disabilities due to stigma associated with these disability types.

Due to the nature of the topic that sought to interrogate survival strategies for persons with disabilities in the middle of economic crisis, the researcher targeted both male and female respondents who reside in Glen-view 3 who have reached the legal age of the majority (eighteen years and above). The researcher focused on those that have reached the age of eighteen because this is the age of the majority in Zimbabwe and this is the age that is mostly affected by the prevailing economic situation.

Flick (2014) describes sampling as the selection of elements to be studied to draw conclusions about the population. Booysen (2007) defines sampling as the choosing or selection of elements to be studied. There are several advantages of sampling such as reducing costs associated with studying the whole population, improvement of accuracy and sampling saves time. Flick (2014) avers that when conducting a research it necessary to select a sample due to limited resources such as time and money. Though some scholars argue that studying the whole population improves accuracy of the research, it is difficult if ever possible to study the whole population especially when dealing with large population groups (Flick, 2010). However, considering that collecting data using qualitative takes time due to nature of the methodology as it seeks to collect complex and detailed data (Flick, 2007) therefore it is not feasible to collect data from the whole population hence the need to select a sample. Studying the whole population is also expensive and considering that the researcher was working with a limited budget, it was important for the researcher to select a sample.

Patton (2015) identified probability sampling technique and non-probability sampling techniques as two types of sampling. In conducting the study, the researcher used non-probability sampling procedures in selecting fifteen participants. Although Denzin and Lincoln (2011) argue that non-probability sampling has many weaknesses such as lack of generalizability of findings to the general population, the use of non-probability is, however, justifiable due to many reasons. Ritchie and Lewis (2003) observe how qualitative research methodology is not mainly concerned with generalization of findings therefore using non-probability sampling was justifiable. Snowball sampling

was utilised to select persons with disabilities and persons with visual impairment; Purposive sampling techniques was used to select four key informant informants.

Snowball sampling technique is feasible considering the nature of the topic and currently there is no list of names of PWDs who reside in Glen-view and this makes it difficult for one to use probability sampling techniques. Non-probability sampling is also cost-effective and less time consuming as compared to probability sampling techniques such as stratified random sampling and systematic sampling techniques.

Patton (2002) describes snowball sampling as a technique that is used to locate participants with characteristics desired by a researcher. Patton (2015) observes how when conducting snowball sampling, the researcher must start with a few participants who will then connect him or her with related contacts. The researcher did his attachment at the Ministry of Public, Labour and Social Welfare in the Department of Disabled Persons Affairs. It was through this experience and exposure through that the researcher identified some of his prospective participants. After identifying few candidates, the researcher asked them of any potential participants with similar characteristics. These furnished the researcher with information such as phone numbers and house numbers. After being given such details, the researcher contacted prospective participants seeking for their consent. After procuring informed consent from the participants, the researcher then visited them to conduct interviews. The details given by the few identified participants were also utilised in arranging a focus group discussion.

Etikan *et al.* (2016) posit that purposive sampling is used when the researcher wants to select participants with desired characteristics. According to Rubbin and Babbie (2012), purposive sampling is used to select participants who are experts in the field of interest. Purposive sampling was therefore used to select key informants. Purposive or judgmental sampling was used to select four key informants. The researcher selected social workers who work at the Department of Disabled Persons Affairs (DPA) as they deal with disability issues on a daily basis hence, they have knowledge of challenges facing persons with disabilities and how they survive in the middle of

economic depression. These social workers, therefore, were selected on the basis that they are well acquainted with challenges facing persons with disabilities and survival strategies employed by persons with disabilities. Social workers at the Department of Disabled Persons affairs are also well acquainted survival strategies as they process projects proposals of persons with disabilities. In those project proposals, some persons with disabilities point out how they are surviving hence social workers under the Ministry of Public Service Labour and Social Welfare are deeply in touch with challenges facing persons with disabilities.

Mabvurira (2016: 152) observes how sample size is one of the pertinent issues among researchers. Cohen *et al.* (2011) cited in Mabvurira (2016) argue that there is no one answer on how big the sample size must be when conducting a study. However, there are several factors that determine how large the sample size must be, and these include the aim of the study, size of target population and methodology that is employed in conducting a study. Etikan *et al.* (2016) argue that quantitative research methodology deals with large sample size while qualitative research methodology uses small sample size. Guided by the preceding arguments, the researcher selected fifteen persons with disabilities using snowball sampling techniques and four key-informants using purposive sampling. The sample size was big enough for the researcher to have adequate data for analysis and presentation of data.

Ritchie and Lewis (2003:5) observe that qualitative research design aims to collect 'data that are very detailed, information rich and extensive'. Flick *et al.* (2004) contend that when a researcher is conducting a study using qualitative research, he faces an enormous number of methods of collecting data to choose from. Though the availability of several research methods provides the researcher more choice on the methods to use, there is need for careful selection of the methods so that the researcher will chose the most appropriate research method.

Scholars generally concur that there is no single best way of collecting data. To collect data that is 'detailed, rich and extensive', the researcher used key informant interviews, in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and

documents as methods of collecting data. In-depth interviews and focus group discussions methods were utilised as they allow the researcher to have a direct interaction with the participants thereby enabling him to collect data that is comprehensive (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003). Therefore, documents were also used due to the nature of the topic.

Grey (2009:370) aver that interviews are the most ideal research technique when one wants to study exploratory research. The researcher utilised in-depth interviews to collect data from research participants on surviving strategies that they employ in the middle of economic depression. Willis (2007:247) observes that interviewing is a common research method among qualitative researchers. Willis (2007:7) contends that interpretivists prefer qualitative research methods such as interviews as they lead to a better understanding on how people view the world around them. Legard *et al.* (2003) observe how the term “in-depth interviews” is normally used interchangeably with the term “unstructured interview. Qualitative scholars generally concur that interviews are designed in a way capture attitude, behaviour and perception of participants or research elements. Due to the nature or the way in-depth interviews are designed, the research technique provides participants to say their views on the topic being studied. Patton (2015:14) argues that through interview, one can have in-depth information about participants’ experiences.

Data solicited through in-depth interviews is detailed because in-depth interviews are explorative in nature (Alshenqeeti, 2014). The researcher decided to utilise in-depth interviews as they are ideal to have in-depth understanding of the lived experience of research participants. Unlike research methods such as questionnaires, when using interviews research participants are not limited to express themselves and this enabled the researcher to have more concrete information on surviving strategies employed by persons with disabilities in the middle of economic depression.

In-depth interviews are also ideal when dealing with topics that are sensitive. The researcher sought to explore surviving strategies that are employed by persons with disabilities in the middle of economic depression. Some persons

with disabilities were shy to open up on the strategies that they employ in the middle of economic depression if they are to be asked in a group during focus group discussion hence then need to use in-depth interviews.

Legard *et al.* (2003) argue that through in-depth interviews, the researcher will have comprehensive knowledge about a phenomenon. Utilising in-depth interviews helped the researcher to have comprehensive information on how persons with disabilities survive in the middle of economic depression. Comprehensive knowledge is of paramount importance in policy making as it helps decision makers to formulate relevant policies that are in line with the needs of people. The researcher decided to use in-depth interviews due advantages associated with in-depth interviews.

Focus group discussion is one of the research methods commonly used among interpretivists. Flick (2014) argues how there several types of focus group discussions that include group discussions, group interviews and focus group discussions. In conducting a study, the researcher has to choose the type of focus group discussion in line with the topic being studied. Due to the nature of the topic, the researcher decided to use group interviews whereby he would individually ask a group of people. Merton, Fiske and Kendall started group interviews in 1956 and since then, these have been used by several qualitative researchers. When using group interviews, discussion among research participants is not important as participants are asked questions on individual basis. Pollock (2002); Flick (2014:243) concurs that when conducting focus group discussions, a researcher must have several skills such as flexibility, empathy and good listening skills.

Bailey *et al.* (2011) recommend using of group interviews when one want to collect qualitative data. Group interviews allowed participants to compare their views with views of group members. In addition, in group interviews, group members do not argue with each other as participants only narrate their views hence it reduces domination of other group members. Group interviews are also economic and ideal when participants want to explain a phenomenon hence group interviews were ideal considering the nature of the topic. In addition, Flick (2014:243) observes how group interviews stimulates

interviewees and helps them to remember some issues through responses that are given by fellow participants , something difficult when using one-on-one interviews.

Using focus group guide, the researcher conducted two focus group discussions. One group consisted of eight persons with physical disabilities while the second one consisted seven persons with visual impairment.

Mogalakwe (2006) argues that documentary research is one of the data collection techniques that is often marginalised by researchers or when used, it is only as a supplement or compliment to the conventional social surveys. Documents are one of the most marginalised research methods among social science researchers as they are mainly used to supplement data obtained through qualitative research methods such as in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. There is a misnomer that utilising document research methods is reserved for professionals such as librarians and historians while social scientists rely on research methods such as in-depth interviews, observations and focus group discussions. Documentary analysis was paramount in this research as it helped the researcher to have data on economic depression in Zimbabwe and how people are generally surviving in the current economic depression. The information that was obtained through the documentary analysis formed the background to the study. Furthermore, several publications such as textbooks, journals, newspapers were reviewed by the researcher to have a comprehensive understanding of economic depression and disability. Flick (2014: 55) identifies authenticity and credibility as some of the key issues to consider when selecting documents to use.

Hart (1998) argues that books are one of the main sources of information that is used in qualitative research. Books that were used during the study include textbooks and e-books. Books are crucial when one is conducting research as they give an overview of a topic or discipline highlighting main ideas and reference books are factual in content as they are meant for consultation. Some of the advantages of using books are that they give a thorough overview of a topic and are authentic since the quality is checked by publisher and lastly they are usually well researched hence they can provide the researcher

with enough and reliable information about a given topic of interest. Journals were also paramount in the study. Journals imply a collection of articles about a certain topic. Journals are normally published on regular basis and this implies that they are regular and they show changes of a phenomena. Journals also cover specific topics hence they help a researcher to have relevant literature and data on the phenomena being studied. By using journals in the study, the researcher took note of the trend of economic depression in Zimbabwe. Such information can best be found in journals as they are regularly updated hence, they revealed the trend of economic depression in Zimbabwe, disability issues and surviving strategies in the middle of economic depression.

Reports were also utilised in this research. Hart (1998) observes that report are normally published by organisations with detailed information of a certain phenomenon. Some of the reports that were made use by the researcher include ZimStat (2017, World Report on Persons with Disabilities (2018) and UN (2018), to mention just a few. Reports were crucial as they furnished the researcher with official statistics such as statistics on unemployment of persons with disabilities, statistics of number of persons with disabilities and statistics on poverty of persons with disabilities. Newspapers were also made use of by the researcher. Newspapers have several advantages such as providing up to date information and they can give reliable information. In using newspapers, the researcher was however careful especially on political issues as they can be influenced by political bias. Monographs and theses on surviving strategies, economic depression and disability were also utilised during the study.

There are enormous advantages associated with documentary analysis and these include the fact that they are relatively cheap and when one is using documents, he or she can review documents at home, in the library or over the internet, unlike when using methods such as questionnaires whereby the researcher has to go the field to collect data. Information is also readily available if one decides to use documents as data collection method. Reviewing documents is pertinent as it provides the researcher an insight on research that was conducted by previous researchers, finding and knowledge gap.

Key informants were selected by the researcher using purposive sampling. Using purposive sampling, the researcher selected four social workers who work at the Department of Disabled Persons Affairs. These were selected mainly on the basis that they are well-versed with disability issues as they deal with disability issues on daily basis. The researcher employed interview guide to collect information from key informants. The researcher went to the department to collect data from key informants. However, due to factors beyond his control, the researcher managed to interview three key informants as one of the social workers he had intended to interview was not the department when the researcher went to the department to collect data.

To ensure that instruments capture the requirements of the study, the researcher conducted a pilot survey. In carrying the pilot survey, the researcher wanted to check if the instruments are clear to the participants. The researcher made sure that he did not involve participants who were to be studied in the final study. The researcher interviewed three social workers who were once enrolled at the Department of Disabled Persons Affairs as key informants. He then interviewed two persons with visual impairment and two persons with physical impairment who reside in Glenview I. The choice of the area was mainly based on the fact that the area of study and the area chosen to conduct pilot study have same characteristics such as high informal economic activities. The researcher then conducted focus group discussion with five persons with disabilities whom he had interviewed. After conducting pilot study, the researcher then made minor adjustments on research instruments such as wording.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) contend that when conducting qualitative research, ensuring credibility is the crux of establishing trustworthiness. Credibility is of paramount importance when conducting qualitative research. To ensure credibility and dependability, the researcher used triangulation. Denzin (1970) identifies data triangulation, theory triangulation, methodological triangulation and researcher triangulation as the main types of triangulating. The choice of triangulation depends on several factors such as the purpose of the research and the nature of topic. Triangulation is crucial in qualitative research as it enhances credibility. To improve credibility and dependability, the researcher used multiple methods (methodological triangulation). All research methods have several weaknesses hence the need to corroborate

different methods. For example, weaknesses of in-depth interviews were compensated through some strengths of focus group discussions. The researcher used different methods to interrogate survival strategies employed by persons with disabilities in the middle of economic depression. In-depth interviews, focus group discussions, documentary analysis and key informant interviews were used by the researcher to study survival strategies employed by persons with disabilities in the middle of economic depression.

When analysing qualitative research, it is worth to observe how ‘unlike quantitative analysis, there are no clearly agreed rules or procedures for analysing qualitative data’ (Ritchie and Lewis 2003: 201). After collection of data, the researcher transcribed the collected data. After sorting of the collected data, the researcher put data into categories to make collected data meaningful and easy to use or understand. The transcribed data was further analysed, by doing so the researcher was searching for themes and key ideas that helped him in answering the research questions of the study. Informed by the objectives of the study, the researcher managed to come up with the themes given in the table below.

Table 3.1: Themes from collected data

Objective	Theme
Economic challenges faced by persons with disabilities	Unemployment
	Causes of unemployment
Social challenges encountered by persons with disabilities.	Stigma, Negative attitude towards persons with disabilities, Attitude of parents or guardians, Low self-esteem
Survival strategies employed by persons with disabilities	Begging ,Street vending ,Income generating projects, public assistance, participating in the labour market
Effectiveness of survival strategies	Level of satisfaction with survival strategies that they employ low-income
Sustainability	Unpredictable income, raiding

After the researcher created some theme from the data collected, he then grouped the data that was collected into groups basing on the theme that emerged from data collected. Grouping data with same themes ensured coherence in the presentation of findings. This task took a lot of time as this was done manually by the researcher.

Cresswell (2005) defines ethics as guidelines that protect research participants from being harmed by a researcher. Flick (2014: 14) contends that although ethics are very crucial in medical and nursing field, ethics are generally important when conducting a research in any field. In conducting the study, ethics guided the researcher and the researcher religiously upheld them.

Before collection of data, the researcher sought consent from all participants. Flick (2014) argues how before conducting a study, participants must first agree to participate in a research. Participants were only interviewed after seeking for a consent from them. Patton (2015) argues that language is paramount when seeking consent. The researcher used both Shona and English to seek consent from participants. For participants with visual impairment, the researcher used consent forms that were written in Braille. These languages were used so that participants clearly understand the purpose of the research. In seeking for informed consent, the researcher was also honest to the participants about the purpose of the research and how the information obtained is used. The researcher debriefed the participants the purpose of the study. Considering the nature of the topic the researcher put an emphasis on the purpose of the study, emphasising that there are no benefits that are associated with being a participant.

The researcher upheld confidentiality principles in research and where there was need to present data, the researcher used pseudonyms to ensure identities of participants remain anonymous. In addition, to ensure the identity of participants remain anonymous, the researcher did not disclose any identifiable information of the participants such as experiences of clients, physical address, date of birth, age and physical structure. Confidentiality is paramount when conducting research as it insures that participants freely participate as they know that information they are given to the researcher is

confidentially kept. The researcher assured participants that the information they are giving will only be shared to the academic supervisors.

On the issue of confidentiality, the researcher faced a dilemma as some of the participants wanted their names to be published and some prospective participants refused to take part of the research after the researcher told them that he is going to use pseudo names during the presentation of data while seeking consent.

No harm is one of the ethics that guided the researcher in conducting the study. The researcher made sure that he did not put participants at any risk. Flick (2014) emphasises the need to avoid harming participants when conducting research. Guided by this ethic, no participant was physically, psychologically or emotionally harmed.

The chapter has discussed research design and methods that were utilised by the researcher in conducting the study. Merits associated with qualitative research design were discussed in trying to justify why the qualitative research design was employed in conducting the study. Some of the merits that were discussed include flexibility, allowing the researcher to have in-depth information about a phenomena and ability to allow the researcher to interact with participants. The study area or location was also discussed followed by targeting. Sampling techniques and research methods that were employed by the researcher were also discussed in the chapter. The chapter juxtaposes several advantages associated with research techniques that were employed by the researcher. Data analysis, research limitations and ethical issues that guided the researcher were also discussed.