

# **Prospects for Circular Economy Adoption in an Urban Open Market: Case Study of Mtapu Open Market, Gweru**

Beauty Dzawanda, Tariro Letty Maderera & Mark Makomborero Matsa

## **Abstract**

The research developed a circularity framework that can be adopted at Mtapu urban open market in Gweru, Zimbabwe. The market has experienced a significant increase in vendors since many smaller open markets were closed in 2020 during covid-19 pandemic in a bid to clean up the city. However, rapid development and overcrowding have led to challenges in waste management which pose health risks to vendors. To address these challenges, the research utilised a descriptive case-study design combining both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis methods. Data was collected using questionnaires, semi structured interviews and direct-field observation. Analysis was conducted using soft wares such as Microsoft Excel and Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Content analysis was used to analyse qualitative data. A relationship between level of education and participation in circular initiatives was tested, yielding a chi-square p-value of 0.001. This indicates that a lack of knowledge among vendors is a significant barrier to the adoption of circularity practices. The lack of waste recycling infrastructure was also a major barrier for waste management and waste recycling at Mtapu Open Market. The study highlights the importance of implementing circularity through developing a framework which lays out measures that can be adopted to enhance sustainability and address waste management. Therefore, the study concludes that there is need for circularity at Mtapu Open Market, that has opportunity for market growth and revenue generation. The study recommends the need for waste utilisation, recycling and adoption of circular economy with involvement of major stakeholders such as the Gweru City Council, Environmental Management Agency and Mtapu Open Market vendors.