The Effect of Street Trading on the Urban Environment

Abigail Temitope, Adeniji[1], Akeem Olawole Muritala[2] & Olayinka Funso Ayanlere

[1,2]Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Federal Polytechnic Offa, Kwara State-Nigeria
[3]Department of Statistics, Federal Polytechnic Offa, Kwara State- Nigeria[3]
E-mail: temitopeabigail07@mail.com; akeemsoftly@gmail.com; oluaiyemth@gmail.com

Abstract

This study examined the effect of street trading on the urban environment particularly in Osogbo city so as to ascertain the causal factors, understand its spatial pattern and the reasons behind the choice location made by street traders. 140 street traders were selected from 6 clusters on the basis of street adopting the systematic sampling technique. Furthermore, 50 non street traders were randomly selected and interviewed for the acquisition of more information on the study. Findings revealed that street trading activities in Osogbo was influenced by several social factors within the Central Business District CBD. The major impact of street traders in Osogbo is the traffic congestion, narrowing of roads, and disobedience to urban space regulatory laws. However, the test of hypothesis also revealed that the level of patronage influences the choice of location made by street traders. Hence, establishing the fact that there is no relationship between involvement in street trading and socio-economic status of street traders. Therefore, the study suggests that building more markets, relocation to a more spacious and off-road sites will solve the problem of accident occurrence amongst other identified effects of the informal act.

Keywords: Street Trading, Street Vendors, Urbanization, Urban environment, Waste Management, urban transportation,

1.   Introduction

The fast and uncontrollable rate of urbanization is a major global concern that many planners and development experts have to grabble with. This problem is more felt and obvious in the developing countries of the world due to the high rate of rural-urban drift. Globally, the trend of human population growth in the cities have been viewed with serious concern, especially, the resultant effect on the quality of life and environment. It is a common knowledge that life in the cities has become very expensive largely due to the high rate of urbanization (Acheampong, 2019). Consequently, many are involved in street trading so as to be able meet their needs, while others take advantage of poor implementation of regulations by the government to perpetuate the act of street trading. These regulations are measures of control put up by the government to order and guide effective trading activities in order to check such excesses as displayed by traders in some cities (Solomon-ayeh et al.,). Another effect of urbanization is the manifestation of informal activities in the city due to poverty, unemployment among other factors. The aftermath of

this is the growth in the rate of informal trading activities in many urban centres of the world and most especially in Nigeria.

The display of goods of different types for sale and other commercial activity is one visible feature of most urban major streets and areas especially in the central Business District (CBD). This act is termed as an informal activity that deforms the glamourous side of most of these cities. Street trading has been observed as a phenomenon that causes city distortion, reduction of city' beauty and orderliness especially at the CBD. Hence, a major concern for Urban Planners, Geographers, Policy Makers, Government, NGOs and concerned Stakeholders.

The act of Street trading is an ancient with a long and varied history which will continue to have a place in modern society (Ouwamanam et al., 2007). This trading activity is viewed as a form of squatting as many of these traders are seen displaying their goods on pavements or streets (Bogoro *et al*., 2012). In some cases, they are also seen displaying their goods and services in illegal and abandon structures. According to Chen et. al, (2005) the income from Street trading enterprise can barely sustain household but these traders engage in it as a means of survival other than been idle. Despite meagre earnings, survivalist enterprises are on the increase which is opted for as a means of coping with increasing food and livelihood insecurity (Rogers, 2000a). Brown (2006) further ascertained that street trading is a representation of the main source of income of the urban poor thereby increasing economic development which is usually overlooked. It was also stated that street vendors are the heart of informal economic sector in Nigeria (Davis, 2007) . Hitherto, street trading phenomenon was thought of as a peculiar feature of large urban enclaves with current realities showing that small and medium cities are fast becoming theatres of intense street trading activities (Mayhofer *et al*., 2003).

Several factors have been identified as causes of street trading; very high and unaffordable rents of market stalls, it is an alien of traditional Yoruba cities, a product of unplanned urban growth (Olokor, 2001, Ouwamanam, et al 2007, Bogoro *et al*., 2015, Solomon-Ayeh *et al.,* 2007). Several causal factors of street trading are high inflation, low wages, unfavourable government policies, the widened gap between the rich and poor, segregation, social exclusion, poverty (Davis, 2007); and unemployment (Olanipekun *et al*., 2012). This informal activity comes with a lot of effects on the urban environment and even on the dwellers alike. It is said to have also contributed directly and indirectly to the urban growth with its impact been felt both positively and negatively (Ajakaiye *et al*., 2020). It builds entrepreneurial skills, serves as a training ground and generates revenue from the taxes collected by city authorities. Cross (2000) identified the advantages as performing social role by generating employment for people, keeping them away from the evils of delinquency, crime and unemployment (Ifeoma, 2005). However, its disadvantages are numerous and monumental. They cause traffic congestion by congregating at points in the city and marketplaces where there are heavy flows of pedestrians and vehicular traffic (Adeniji, 2011, Solomon-Ayeh *et al*., 2007, Solomon-Ayeh *et al*., 2007). Street traders pose potential problem of hygiene and sanitation. They also sources of pollution, disease transmission such as cholera. Environmental wastes generated by street traders lead to obstruction of drainage systems leading to flooding during rainfall, road dilapidation and health issues (Acheampong, 2019, Agunloye *et al*., 2018).

The resultant effect of Osogbo being the state capital, a commercial and tourist attraction is that, over the years, the central business district (CBD) has witnessed an unprecedented increase in the influx of commercial activities with each competing for an accessible location to display their goods, services and access to customers. While it is easy for some activities to pay higher rents at such locations, those who could not afford the rent have been displayed and relocated to places where rents are cheaper in line with the principle of invasion and succession by erecting illegal temporary structures where they display their goods along the roads or streets, within or besides other shop owners or moving their goods in wheelbarrows or on their heads (Ifeoma, 2005).Thus, this study is specifically designed to examine the locational patterns of street trading and its implications on other socio-economic activities and its effect on the free flow of transportation in Osogbo. The major objectives with which the aim of this study will be achieved

are; identify various types of street trading existing in the study area, examine the socio-economic characteristics of street traders and their patrons, analyze the spatial pattern of street trading in the study area and lastly investigate the factors responsible for the occurrence of street trading in these selected areas Olaiya, Station Road, Igbona, Sabo, Oke bale and Oja Oba.
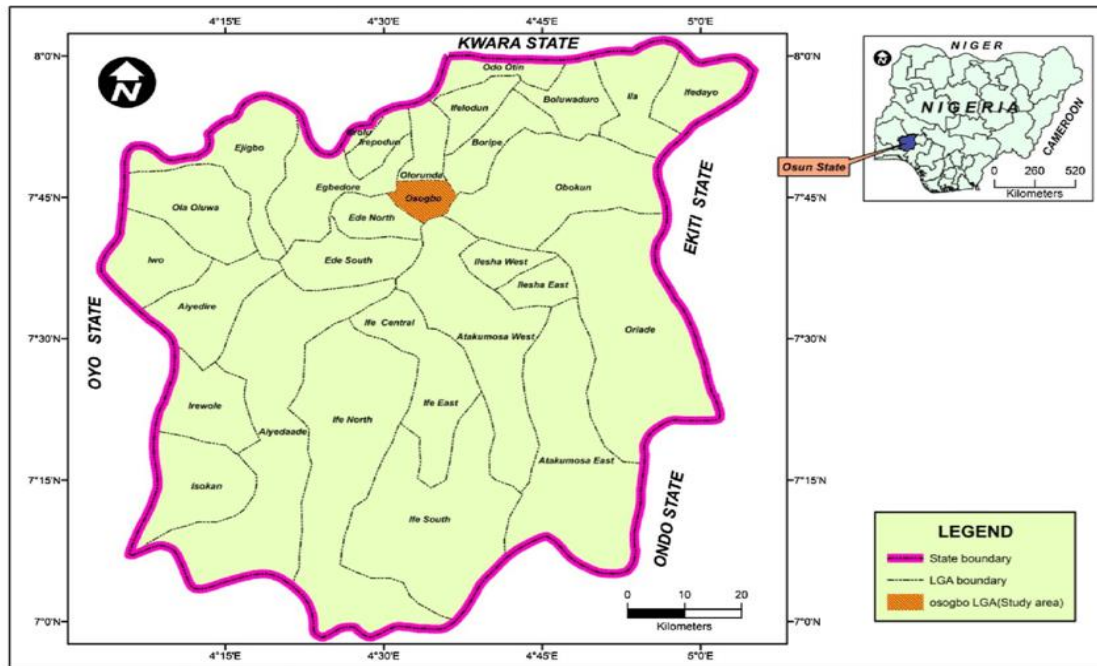

Figure 1: Map of Nigeria showing Osun state and the study area (Adeyemi *et al.*, 2019)

The metropolitan area of Osogbo town lies between latitude 7 46' 00N and a longitude of 4 34' 00E, situated about 96km north-East of Ibadan and about 240km form Lagos (Figure 1). Its 500m above sea level and drained by the river Osun and its tributaries. The effect of the harmattan wide is felt strongly during the dry season with a less humid climate. Yoruba and English are major spoken languages with indigenes belonging to the Yoruba tribe (Ifes, Ijesha and Osun) alongside with other ethnic groups. Their culture finds expression in their arts, literature, music and other social activities. Some of the notable tourist attractions of the state are the Oranmiyan staff, Ife museum, Ile-Ase, Yeyemolu, Oduduwa shrines and grooves all at Ile-Ife while the Osun- Osogbo shrine, Adunni Susan Wenger's centre amongst others (Adeyemi *et al.*, 2019).

Routledge, (2002) observed that over the past few decades there has been substantial increase in the number of street vendors in the major Indian cities. Mumbai has the largest number of streets vendors numbering around 250,000. Kolkata has more than 150,000 streets vendors, Ahmeddabad and Patna have around 80,000 each. The total employment provided through street vending becomes larger when considered to sustain certain industries by providing markets for their products. A lot of the goods sold by street vendors such as clothes and hosiery, leather moulded plastic goods and household goods are manufactured in small scale industries. These industries employ large number of workers, and they rely mainly on street vendors to market their products. In this way, street vendors provide a valuable service by sustaining employment in these industries (Kumar and Bhowmik, 2004). This is unlike the case in Nigeria where street traders are regarded as nuisance rather than a group that contributes to urban

economy as seen in India. Street traders or vendors are mainly those who unsuccessful or unable to get regular jobs. This section of the urban poor tries to solve their problems through their own meagre resources. They do not demand the government to create jobs for them unlike other sectors of the urban population. Majority of them have on ailment or the other related to stress- hyperacidity, migraine, hypertension and loss of sleep (Bhowmik, 2007). A study on street trading conducted on 7 cities in India revealed that the goods sold by street traders are usually very cheap making the poorer society able to meet their basic necessities. Had there be no street vendors, the urban poor would be worse than what it is presently. Hence, they are solution to some of the problems of the urban poor though classified one of the problems of urban governance.

McGee (1979) also identified associated problems of this informal practice as the congregation of street traders at points along very busy roads further leads to traffic congestion and narrowing of the width of traffic lanes, problems of hygiene and sanitation, generate a lot of wastes which are not properly managed, unfair competition with the legal sellers both in public markets and private shops (Cross, 1998), problem of accidents as traders (Solomon-Ayeh, 2007). Despite all these highlighted negative impacts of street traders, McGee (1979) observed that these group of the urban dwellers play a major role in the commodity and service distribution systems of most cities. He stated clearly that they sell goods at cheaper rates when compared with other shop owners, goods can be easily accessed and purchased at any time of the day even at night because they do not have a definite closing time as it's the case of shop and stall owners. In addition, it reduces the rates of unemployment as it encourages a lot of people who otherwise would have been unemployed.

Street trading has been viewed by many as a consequence of several co-morbid factors rooted in socio-economic, political and cultural aspects of the society in very complex dimensions. According to Ayeni (1980) poverty and low level of education has a nexus with the involvement of people in street trading in Nigeria. He also cited unemployment as another contributing factor to street trading. The situation in Osogbo is not restricted to just road junctions and motor parks alone but also at neutral areas along major streets at the CBD. Acheampong (2019), illustrates the cause of street trading with the situation witnessed in Quito where people were left with the option of patronizing places that are less congested and easily accessible. Adeniji (2011), opined street trading as a reflection of the state of affairs in the country where the financial hardship has also contributed to its boom. The lack of patience of Nigerians has also in a way led to the development of this informal activity. But, if the traffic management is efficient and vehicles move without hinderance, hawkers will not be there in the first place (The Punch, Tuesday, 1 July, 2008). The nature of street trading in Osogbo is majorly a stationary form of trading as traders put up all kinds of structures to display their goods. In other words, the situation in Osogbo differs slightly from the one described above.

Bhowmik (2007, 2012), observed from the finding of a study carried out in many cities of India that there is also another section of the urban population that has taken to street trading; are those once engaged in the formal sector such as the textile mills in Mumbai and Ahmedabad and engineering firms in Kolkata and were well paid. Formal sector workers in these three metropolises have had to face large scale unemployment due to the closure of these industries. Many of them or their spouses have become street traders in other to eke out a living. The study revealed that about 30% of these street traders in Ahmeddabad and Mumbai and 50% in Kolkata were once engaged in the formal sector. Similarly, a research carried out by the Self-employed Women's Association (SEWA) in Ahmedabad revealed that half of the retrenched textile workers are now into street trading.

However, there are a lot of arguments being put forward to justify the involvement of people in street trading. It was then suggested by Isaac and Sanusi (2020) that the government must also examine the socio-economic underpinnings of street trading since of the youths involved in street trading were pushed into this illegal business by extreme poverty and joblessness. Some are the breadwinners of their families and not by their own free will but due to the harsh realities of existence. They embark on street trading as a trading as a last resort because of the economy

has excluded them and the government has not provided any form of social security or welfare for these group of its populace (Ogundahunsi *et al.*, 2016).

2.   Material and Methods

The quasi-experimental technique was adopted in determining the effects of street trading on urban environment and cross-sectional survey research design was employed for the choice of the research instruments and sample size. The survey research design approach helped determine the unique characteristics of the large population which is focused on the perception of traders and the public on street trading. Due to the street trader's low level of educational status, an educated field assistance alongside educated customers who are fluent in Yoruba were opted for. The population of those that patronize street traders in the study location was calculated through a direct field observation and measurements on both first and second reconnaissance surveys. Using a stratified sampling technique to obtain the sample size and it was based on 50 patrons and 140 street traders giving a total of 190 sample size. The population was then first categorized into strata according to some unifying characteristics based on their locations. Thereafter, a simple random sampling was used to select the first sample from each of the strata giving every trader within the various strata an equal chance of being selected and included in the sample. In addition, a systematic sampling technique was then used to select every fifth street trader within each of the strata to obtain their average number needed from each stratum to form the sample used for the study.

The data instrument used were a two-time reconnaissance survey, direct field observations and measurements, oral interview and a well-structured questionnaire. The questionnaire instrument had four (4) sections that analyzed the marginal information, demographic and socio-economic characteristics of respondents, income/choice of location/patronage of street traders, harassment from law enforcement agents and the perception of spatial implications of street trading on urban environment. For the data analysis, the study utilized descriptive and inferential statistics, which are presented in the result as Chi Square played a vital role in the hypothesis testing.

From the sample census conducted by the researcher, about 700 street traders were scattered along these six streets. Through a systematic sampling technique, samples were selected of every 5th trader on the street. As a result, a total of 140 street traders were selected from all the clusters and questionnaires were administered on them. In addition, 50 non street traders also selected for the study as shown in tables 1 and 2 below.

Table 1: Number of street traders

Cluster	Population	Sample (5% of Pop)
Olaiya	150	30
Station Road	125	25
Igbona	100	20
Sabo	130	26
Oja Oba	70	14
OkeBaale	125	25
Total	700	140

Table 2: Numbers of non-street traders

Cluster	Sample Size	Percentage
Olaiya	9	18
Station Road	9	18
Igbona	8	16
Sabo	8	16
Oja Oba	8	16

OkeBaale	8	16
Total	50	100

3.   Results and Discussion

This section is categorized into five segments; the first segment presents data relating to the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of respondents in the study, the second reveals the choice of location, the third reveals the level of patronage and income of respondents, the fourth present perception of street trading by traders and non-street traders, the fifth reveals the street traders' attitude to the generation of waste and disposal.

3.1   Respondents' demographic and Socioeconomic Characteristics.

The demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of the respondents include their sex, marital status, tribe, religion, level of education and nativity. These variables are considered important because they help to determine the attitude, perception, behavior, decision and choices of the population under study.

The study revealed that85 of the sampled size are indigenes of Osun state while 55 are non-indigenes comprising of different ethnic groups. Osun state is a mixed religion-state with Christianity and Islam being the predominant religion. The study, therefore, revealed that 72 people are Muslims and 68 Christians the street traders. Secondary school is the highest level of education for many street traders, they attributed a lack of finance to continue their education. About 25% have no formal education, 40% have secondary educational attainment, 16% stopped at primary level with 8% koranic educational level as against 11% who graduates of tertiary institutions. This statistic implies that the majority of those engaged in street trading activities are youth of productive ages who dropped out of school to join the trade or are currently combining trading with schooling at the secondary level. Due to their limitations in education, they possess low skills and lack the requisite education for better jobs in the formal sector. They, therefore, find street trading a veritable sector to engage in since it does not require many skills or mastery as discovered similar to the case in India (Bhowmik, 2007). He noted that in most cities of India, the urban poor survive by street trading due to their low educational skills and financial inputs required to operate such businesses.

3.2   Investigation of factors responsible for the choice of location and income of respondents.

In the course of the research, the researcher observed that in Osogbo city, there is no standard plan for the city in terms of the width of most of the roads, and city land use, among others. Thus, increasing the volume of street trading activities within the CBD on daily basis. The study sought to know the reasons why respondents are attracted to the CBD as opposed to other areas allocated as alternative markets by the government. It was clear that a significant number of respondents representing 44% choose more patronage as their reason for choosing that location. 29% said centrality was their reason for the choice of location, 16% attributed accessibility as their choice of location and lastly, 11% choose transport cost as their reason as seen in table 3 below.

Table3: Reasons for the choice of location

Factors	Frequency	Percentage
Accessibility	22	15.7
More Patronage	41	29.3
Transport Cost	62	44.3
Total	140	100

3.3   Perception of street trading by traders and non-traders.

There is a need to examine the perception of traders about trading along the streets so as know if they kick against it or justify it. The majority (57%) of the respondents agreed that the practice is not proper as seen in. In other words,

they are aware that it is wrong for them to engage in such business along the streets but because they need to fend for a living, they decided to remain on the streets. This is also one of the reasons for the stiff resistance against the government's efforts to relocate them. From the point of view of the respondents, the researcher equally sought to know how the street traders rate the attitude of people generally towards their activities. The responses showed that a significant number of respondents about 51% said they were not satisfied with the people's attitude towards them. Only a very few of them representing 43% said they are satisfied as against 6% who considered the general public's attitude towards them extremely bad. This suggests that people are showing elements of hostility or frowning at street trading activities going on in the city.

The study also investigated the views of non-street traders, it was revealed also that about 70% viewed the act as improper, while 26% viewed it as proper and 4% were indifferent. Some of the highlighted reasons for the majority's views are that street traders cause so many problems such as accidents, and the narrowing of the major roads while the reason given by the 26% group is that some government officials benefit from the act as they are known to extort these traders. This gave more insight into the reason many of their patrons wants them off the streets. It was also discovered that the general public is not satisfied with all the measures carried out by the government of the state as they are seen as unsustainable. Many further suggested that the act of street trading can only be solved if town planners can restructure the city roads in terms of widening the width among which setbacks must be included.

Table 4: Perception of traders about street trading

Factors	Frequency	Percentage
Alright	43	30.1
Not Proper	80	57.1
Indifference	17	12.1
Total	140	100

Table 5: Perception of Non-traders about street trading

Factors	Frequency	Percentage
Alright	13	26
Not Proper	35	70
Indifference	02	4
Total	50	100

3.4   Problems Traders Cause as a Result of Their Location

The study revealed that aside from the problems street traders are encountered, they also pose a problem to the non-street trader. Some of the identified problems in form of traffic congestion, waste management and unhealthy competition over customers and accidents. The findings revealed that 54% of the problems created are related to traffic congestion, this is simply a result of the narrow nature of most of the major roads in Osogbo city, followed by 15% misuse of infrastructure and haphazard development,21% are of waste generation and poor sanitary environment and lastly 10% are for accidents.

3.5   Waste Generation and Disposal by the Street Traders

The occurrence of refuse dumps in our towns and cities has become of primary concern to environmentalists, health officers, planners and managers (Ajakaiye, 2020). This arises from the fact that the urban environment is deteriorating at an alarming rate and the effects are widely increasing. The intensity of this menace presently creates a grip of fear that makes one wonder whether there is a waste management culture in Nigeria. The dirty state of most Nigerian cities is a result of the activities of street traders who only litter but never take part in cleaning up the mess

(Bogoro, 2015). This case in Osogbo is contrary to Bogoro's assertion, it was observed that these traders often embark on daily sanitation of the previous day's generated waste in the places where they display their goods first thing in the morning. This section thereby examines the attitude of these traders towards the management of waste generated.

The findings revealed that 78.5% of the respondents have excellent waste disposal management by putting them in a waste bin for the right authority for final disposal. 2.9% declined to give responses on their method of waste disposal, and 14.3% dispose of their generated waste in the drainages, especially during the rainy season which will be washed away by the heavy flow of water. Lastly, 4.3% leave these wastes for the government road/ street cleaners to clean. These statistics imply that the impression ascertained by many works on waste generated by street trading is not the case in Osogbo. Hence in Osogbo, street traders only deface the glamourous side of the city by causing traffic congestion, accident occurrence, and narrow ways.

Table 6: Street traders' Attitude to Generation of Waste and Disposal

Attitude	Frequency	Percentage
Dispose in dust bins	110	78.5
Dispose in Drainages	20	14.3
I don't pack them	6	4.3
I don't know	4	2.9

3.6 Test of Hypotheses

One of the basic assumptions of central place theory is that the characteristics of the people that engage in trading activity will be the same, with similar tastes and demands.

Hypothesis 1: the reason for engaging in street trading activities varies across the socio-economic strata of the street traders.

Table 7: Results of Chi-Square Test of Variation in the Reasons for Engaging in Street Trading

Socio-economic strata	Statistics	Value	Df	P_level
Sex	Person Chi-Square	23.422	4	0.000
	Likelihood Ratio			
	N	24.451	4	0.000
		140		
Age	Person Chi-Square	124.068	116	0.287
	Likelihood Ratio			
	N	129.244	116	0.189
		120		
Nativity	Person Chi-Square	12.930	4	0.012
	Likelihood Ratio			
	N	13.835	4	0.008
		140		
Tribe	Person Chi-Square	28.308	16	0.029
	Likelihood Ratio			
	N	32.785	16	0.008
		140		

Religion	Person Chi-Square Likelihood Ratio	8.374	4	0.079
	N	8.508	4	0.075
		140		
Level of education	Person Chi-Square Likelihood Ratio	59.307	16	0.000
	N	59.436	16	0.000
		140		

The central place theory assumption of those engaged in trading activity have similar characteristics was proved wrong. From the table above, there is significant variation in the reasons for engaging in street trading in terms of sex, age, nativity, tribe and level of education. Therefore, the hypothesis that there is a variation in the socio-economic strata of those involved in street trading activity is accepted.

4.   Summary of Findings
Based on the findings of the study, the socio-demographic characteristics of the street traders vary. More males engage in this activity than their female counterparts. The group is characterized majorly by indigenes who are married people and several singles within their productive age bracket of 19-35 years. Their level of education attainment varies slightly with the majority having secondary education only followed by those who have no informal education and have decided to choose street trading as their primary occupation for survival. This in a way has solved to a reasonable extent the rate of unemployment in the state as it constitutes a major part of the informal sector. It is worthy of note that even though these groups of people are seen as informal traders they still pay taxes to the local government revenue agency. The level of patronage was discovered as the reason for the location of the traders. That is, the level of patronage plays a vital role in their choice of location as seen by the analysis carried out by the test of the hypothesis using Chi-Square.

5.   Conclusion
In conclusion, the impact this informal activity has on Osogbo urban is more negative than positive which is a function of the rate of patronage. Hence if the above recommendations are adopted with penalties for offenders of the stipulated laws alongside their patrons, the trade will be brought under control with little or no negative impact on the urban environment.

Therefore, the study here suggests further research on the identified problems of street trading using a comprehensive city plan through public participation focusing on the other major cities in Nigeria and developing countries where this informal activity is a nuisance.

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