EFFECTS OF STREET TRADING ON URBAN AREAS IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Street trading is a form of squatting that involves perpetual movement that may occur within established market places or around road intersections which results to several negative impacts on physical environment such as traffic congestion, environmental pollution, and aesthetically unpleasing environment. This study looks at the effects on cities in Nigeria. Three urban areas Bauchi, Lagos and Port Harcourt were sampled to study the impact of street trading in Nigerian urban areas. 100 questionnaires were administered to each of the three urban centers selected. It is found that 40.59% of streets traders are migrants from the rural areas The study discovered that most of the streets traders indiscriminately disposed of their refuse by burning and dumping in the drainage there by blocking the drainage channels causing flood during rainy season and 24.75% dumped their waste right on the roadside. There is disorderliness in the arrangement of different methods used in displaying of items by street traders there by making the study area appear as an insightful and unpleasant urban environment thus displeasing visual effect and 28.71% of streets traders encroached into the road with up to 1-1.5m and above causing serious traffic problem. The paper recommends development of rural areas to reduce rural-urban migration, relocating those that encroached to in the road, and the provision of moveable refuse collection points

Key words street trading, congestion, urban, environment, and waste management

INTRODUCTION

Street trading plays a great role in the distribution of goods and services of many cities/town of the world and has been defined by scholars based on their perspectives. According to Crosss J., (2000), streets traders are those people who offer goods and services for sale on primary streets or pavement. Bogoro A. G., et al. (2012), defined street trading as a form of squatting; it involves perpetual displaying of goods along roadsides which may occur within established market places or outside, the intersection of major roads. In the same view, Ouwamanam M. Ac, et al (2007) defined it as the act of engaging commercial activities in illegal structures or open spaces (ground) within the building line. Accordingly, a building line is a line set parallel to the center line of a road within which no building or structure, permanent or temporally is permitted to be erected by the local planning authorities. Informal economic activity being an umbrella of street trading activities has been a subject of controversy. There is hardly any unique universally accepted definition of the sector because the classification of activities is a subjective and qualitative judgment. However, there are some common indicators in most definition namely unregistered enterprise, those without permit, or license, as well as the underground economy of drug, gambling, smuggling and other vices. Street or roadside trading is a characteristic of most urban centers of the developing countries like Nigeria. Majority of the traders are migrants to cities with low educational level, and street trading for them represent a desperate means of survival when the hopes of getting *white color job* which brought them from the rural areas have been delayed or dashed completely Bogoro A. G**.,** et al. (2012). As a phenomenon, it has attracted scholars and researchers to its domain. The causes of street trading are attributed to low educational level or illiteracy, low involvement of capital. Unemployment is another contributing factor and most people are engaged in such activities, since formal employment opportunities are no more abundantly available Olanipekun J.A, et al. (2007).

In the view of Olokor C.O (2001), he believed that the inability of most streets traders to afford the rent of charges of market stalls is another possible cause of streets trading. Ouwamanam M. Ac, et al (2007) observed that street trading was alien to the traditional Yoruba city and perhaps to pre-industrial cities. It is a

product of unplanned urban growth, which failed to provide adequate space and accommodation for retail traders as well as appropriate locations Bogoro A. G., et al. (2012). Notwithstanding the problems constituted or caused by street trading, it plays a major role in the economic development of the third world countries. It has also contributed directly and indirectly to the urban growth and its impact is been felt both positively and negatively. Crosss J., (2000): observed that street traders play an important role in the commodity and service distribution system of most cities of developing countries. He identified the advantages to among others to include performing social role by generating employment for people, keeping them away from the evils of delinquency, crime and unemployment. A street trader serves as a training ground for entrepreneurial skills and generates revenue from the taxes collected by city authorities, However, its disadvantages are numerous and monumental. Street trading causes traffic congestion by congregating at points in the city and market places where there are heavy flows of pedestrians and vehicular traffic. Street traders pose potential problem of hygiene and sanitation. They could transmit disease such as cholera as regards to food or fruits sellers. Streets traders burn the waste generated by their activities, thereby lead to air pollution. Streets traders also cause noise pollution like those who sell traditional medicines and sometimes clothes because they use loudspeakers.

With regards to public attitudes towards street traders, Crosss J., (2000): noted that they are mixed, he noted that the most positive attitude towards street traders prevailed in Malaysian cities where street trading is seen as a profession that offers job opportunities and contributes to development. Olanipekun J.A, et al. (2007).observed that in the downtown of Singapore, congestion of traffic was experienced with an average attainable speed of only 18km/hour. They noted that the congested streets were further blocked by an increasing number of street traders. The estimated number of street traders in central Asia was given at about 15,000 in 1975 but in 1979, the number had reduced to about 6,200 probably as result of the relocation attempt made. Olokor, (2001) "As at 1989, the estimated number of street traders Singapore was 27,000 and 23% was still on the street". Mabogunje, (1993), also noted that a programmed was being carried out to clear all street traders of 1984. This programmed was geared towards achieving certain objectives such as improving the sanitary condition of the street where they are found, improving the traffic flow, estimating a better turnover of street traders for

tax purposes and also transforming them for an informal to formal sector. World Bank (2001).

The situation is far from what is attainable in this country (Nigeria) where street traders are harassed by the government agencies, which gives the impression that the government is out for total prohibition of street trading, for instance some states in Nigeria have prohibited street trading as can be seen from the following news captions: " street traders defer Marwa "(tell magazine, April 26; 1999); " curbing the menace of street trading, edicts tragedy fail to free Idumota from street" (Daily sketch newspaper, February 20, 1984). In conclusion, street trading as a process of selling goods on major Nigerian cities is obvious especially within the commercial areas e.g. Mudal Lawal, yet not much has been done to singularly define the special component of trading and the attendant problems of environmental pollution.

In Nigeria, street trading has reached an alarming stage that it is now a subject of concern to physical planners and city managers. Street trading causes different problems such as encroachment on right of way by the traders, traffic congestion as vehicles cannot pass smoothly on time and defacement of aesthetics appearance of the street. As the street traders continue to litter or dump their wastes on the roadsides, it seriously pollutes the environment resulting in health problems and reduction of the road width or in drainage systems which block the water ways leading to flooding whenever there is high rainfall which a times causes loss of lives and properties and so on. In view of the above problems this paper is set out to investigate issues like causes and effects of street trading, and suggest possible solutions to the identified problems.

METHODS AND MATERIALS

Nigeria is the most populous black nation with over 170 million people, it is located in the West African region and it has 36 states with the federal capital

territory Abuja. Nigeria has over 200 major cities with similar problem of street trading

Map of Nigeria

Nigeria is divided in to six geo-political regions. This study sampled three urban areas one from the north-east region (Bauchi), one from the south-west region (Lagos) and one from the south- south region (Port Harcourt) to study the impact of street trading in Nigerian urban areas. 100 questionnaires were administered to each of the three urban centers selected from each geo-political region using random sampling giving a total of 300 questionnaires. Factors considered in selecting the study areas are the spatial distribution of the cities, the economic and physical status of the cities and political disposition of the cities

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The study shows that, in the northeast, majority of streets traders are male accounting for 62.07% within the ages of 15 to 35 years, while 37.92% are female which indicated that male engage in street trade more than female. But in the south- south and the southwest, the ratio of participation between male and female is within the range of 45% to 55%. The survey indicated that 51.96% of the streets traders stop at secondary schools, 29.42% went to tertiary institution 8.82% had informal education while the rest had either primary education or are illiterate. It implies that the traders are relatively educated and had basic education.

Based on the questionnaire administered, the highest daily income generated by street traders is N1, 200 and above, and the low income is N300 - N599.as in figure 2 below
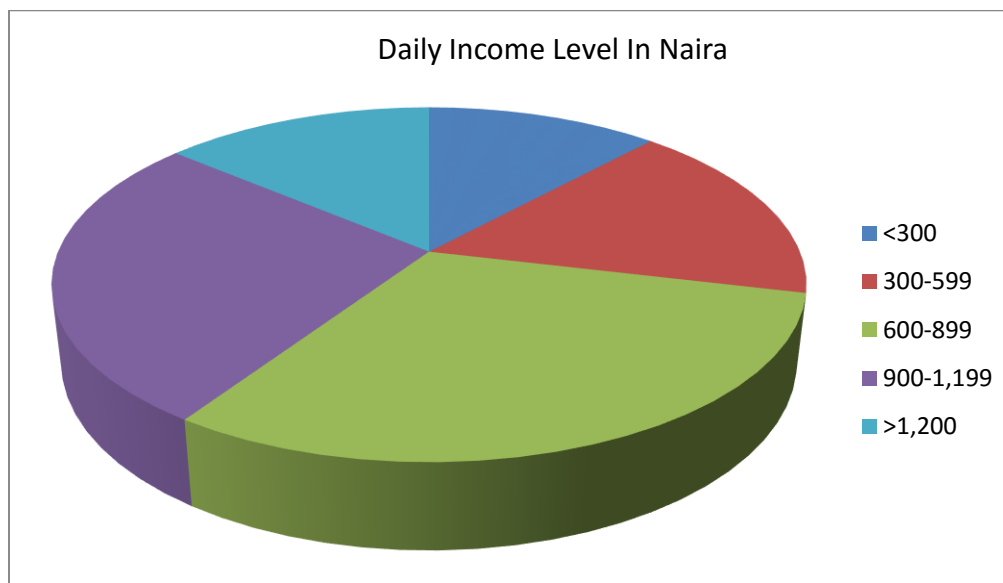

Figure 2 Daily Incomes of Street Traders

60.78%t of the respondents claimed to have sourced their capital mainly from private savings 17.65% got their capital from family loans, it shows that they saved money towards investment. None of them mentioned that they received any loan from the government as in table 1 below

Table 1   SOURCE OF FINANCE OF OPERATORS

Source Savings	percentage
Private Savings	60.78
Family Loans	17.65
Government	-
Others	21.57
Total	**100.00**

Table 2 shows that streets traders engaged in selling fruit/vegetable which accounts for highest percentage i.e. 33.66% followed by food stuff which is 27.72% which calls for proper refuse collection system and appropriate treatment before final disposal.

Table 2 Categories of commodities

Items	percentage
Food stuffs	27.72
Fruits vegetable	33.66
Clothes	14.85
Furniture	13.84
Building materials	6.96
Cooking fuel	2.97
Total	**100.00**

In determining the reason for engaging in street trading, It is found that most of streets traders are migrants from the rural areas which carry the highest percentage of 40.59% followed by low level or education which calls for improving the rural areas in terms of utilities and infrastructure services and educational facilities as in table 3 below.

Table 3 Reason for Engaging in Street Trading

Reasons	percentage
Unemployment	28.71
Retire civil servant	2.97
Low level of education	23.76
Lack of good capital	3.96
Migrants	40.59
Total	**100.00**

Figure 4 below shows that up to 40.59% of the streets trader couldn't occupy a shop because there are not adequate shops which calls for provision of more shops at a subsidized rate so that street traders can afford it.
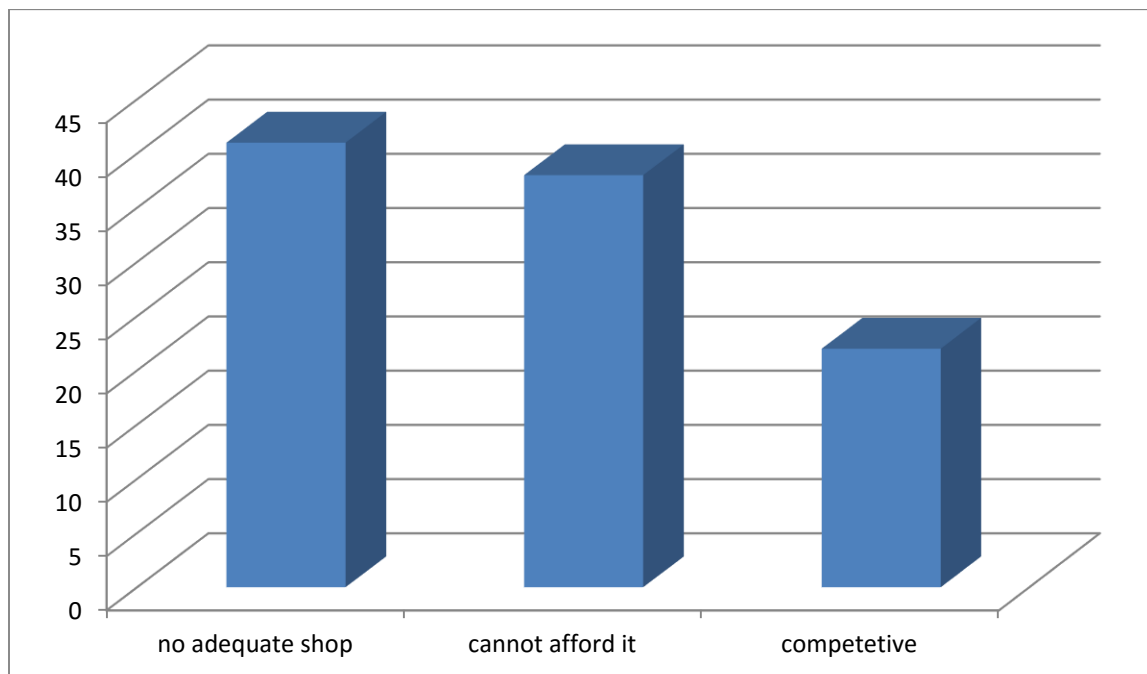

Figure 4 Reasons for Not Occupying a Shop

Table 4 indicates that almost half of the refuse generated by street are disposed of by burning, followed by dumping in drainage which is 31.68% and dumping on ground which causes serious air pollution, breed mosquitoes and depredate the environment and this demand for proper methods of waste disposal.

Table 4 Methods of waste disposal

Methods	Percentage
Incineration	40.59
Drainage	31.68
Refuse collection	2.97
Dumping on ground	24.75
Composting	-
Recycling	-
Total	**100.00**

Table 5 shows that 28.71% of streets traders encroached into the road with up to 1-1.5m and above which creates parking problems and traffic congestion respectively and these problems need to be taken care of as in the table and plate 1 below

Table 5 Rate of encroachment street traders

Distance	Percentage
<1metre	34.65
1-1.5m	36.63
1.5-2m	28.72
Total	**100.00**

Plate 1 Encroachment on Roads by Street Traders in Port Harcourt City

he following were identified as the major impacts of street trading in Nigerian cities Though Streets trading provide job opportunities especially for the unskilled and strangers in Nigerian cities and people earn a living from streets trading. However, In terms of Traffic congestion up to 78% street traders cause obstruction to traffic flow of vehicles and pedestrian movement, this is because up t0 28.72% of the streets traders encroached into the roads with about 1-1.5m and above It also causes accidents to the buyers, the sellers and even passer byes. The study discovered that most of the streets traders indiscriminately disposed of their refuse by burning and dumping in the drainage there by blocking the drainage channels causing flood during rainy season and 24.75% dumped their waste right on the roadside as in the plate 2 below

Plate 2 Environmental pollution caused by dumping of refuse by the roadside

This greatly reduces the aesthetic quality of the whole area and usually pollutes the environment which may lead to ozone layer depletion and causes diseases to human being. There is disorderliness in the arrangement of different methods used in displaying of items by street traders there by making the study area appear as an insightful and unpleasant urban environment thus displeasing visual effect.

Inversion of commercial activities into circulation land use 20 percent of the carriage way has been encroached by roadside traders, this is against town planning principles where land use are meant to complement each other than intruding into another the by reducing the efficiency of the road and also causing competition of space between land uses

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

Since majority of streets traders are migrants from different areas, so there is need to develop the rural areas because there is high regional inequality in the distribution of resources, facilities and utilities by government. Those found encroaching the road causing traffic congestion should be relocated and the urban managers should embark on serious development control to ensure penalty on defaulters. An orderly pattern of arrangement of commodities should be enforced' Moveable refuse collection points should be provided at convenience locations in the road right of way within the study area for dispose of solid waste this will reduced the problem of waste dispose and improved aesthetic and environmental condition of the area and the street traders should pay for the waste management. Government should create employment opportunities that does not require many skills as most of the streets traders did not further their formal education.

All the recommendations given should be followed sequentially with all urgency as this will greatly mitigate or solve the problems of streets trading in Nigerian urban centres leading to accidents, environmental pollution caused by street trding

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