Alternative Strategy and Innovative Intervention for Street Trader Management in Lagos

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Abstract
Traders line many streets in Lagos and are considered a menace to the city. These traders are a substantial segment of the informal sector, which employs up to 70 % of the working population. Yet traders on Lagos streets are susceptible to risks to health, auto accidents and extortions/multiple taxation. Therefore, based on data from 45 semi-structured interviews among street traders in Lagos, as well as Neil Brenner's Critical Urban and Oscar Newman's Defensible Space, this study examines existing street trader management in Lagos. The findings reveal that over half of the traders are male and make an average of ₦2500 ($6) per day. Also, about half of the respondents crave individual space to sell and believe that this will increase patronage. The results also indicate that traders are sometimes sick and unable to engage in trading activities due to dust inhalation, sunburn and malaria. The study concludes that an important overlooked street trader management solution for Lagos lies in innovative intervention and therefore recommends the adoption of a Sky-Market Concept which integrates the attributes of a pedestrian bridge and street stalls, especially at major transportation nodes where trading activities tend to spill onto the road thereby impeding the flow of vehicular traffic. This study has advanced the literature on street trading by advocating the adoption of a special progressive model for street trader management in Lagos.

Introduction

Street trading is common in many cities around the world and presents a challenge for the organisation of the city. Streets are the blood vessels of cities (Adedeji, Fadamiro & Adeoye, 2014). This is because they facilitate human and vehicular circulation around the city. Traders line many streets in Lagos and are considered

by some a menace to the city. One of the earliest jobs in the world is street trading, and common in Africa and most developing countries (Anetor, 2015; Omoegun, 2015; Skinner, 2008). It is described as '*small scale distribution*' in Keith Hart's 1973 study on Accra, Ghana's unorganised sector (Skinner, 2008). For instance, street traders in Ghana employ spatial game strategies determined by traffic congestion patterns in their effort to distribute their goods, outwit city authorities and escape penalties. As such, street traders adopt different locations in the city at different the best times of day to exploit traffic jams occasioned by the peculiarities of the times of the day. This suggests that trading on the street is a product of the evolutionary process of the city.

Street trading is construed in this study as commercial activities which occur in non-permanent built-up structures on important transit hubs, street pavements, sidewalks and other publicly available spaces (Bhomik, 2005; Mitullah, 2004; Waziri & Umar, 2016). Street traders are a substantial segment of the unorganised sector, which employs up to 70 % of the working population (ILO, 2002). Street trading accounts for a large number of new urban jobs, serves as a buffer for the insecurity of work among the poor in the urban centres, and is the most visible informal work (Chen, 2012; Otekhile & Matthew, 2017; Skinner, 2008). According to Owusu, Abrokwah and Frimpong (2013), the reasons for participation in street trading activities include lack of formal sector jobs and employable skills. This indicates that an alternative strategy is required if government aims to create employment, efforts should be geared towards harnessing all the opportunities that the '*street trading industry*' presents.

Lagos is the commercial nerve centre of Nigeria and the city experiences abundant street trading activities. However, Section 147 (1&2) of the Environmental Management and Protection Law 2017 (The Law to Consolidate all Laws Relating to the Environment for the Management, Protection and Sustainable Development of the Environment in Lagos State and Connected Purposes) defines street trading as follows:

> '*(1) For Sections 143, 144 and 146 above a person is deemed to engage in street trading, establishing or maintaining an illegal market on any occasion whenever selling any goods, or offering services in any place or street; whether or not such person regularly establishes or maintains the business of street trading or illegal market. (2) A person is deemed to engage in street trading, establishing or maintaining an illegal market whether in a statutory position or not if, while engaging in the prohibited act, exhibits any goods, or offers services for sale.*'

Hence, street trading is operating an illegal market.

In an urban centre like Lagos, markets are constrained by land for expansion. That is, a land area of market sufficient in the 1950s is no longer so. Most markets have low-density stalls, which are in high demand. This results in those who cannot afford the stalls spilling over onto the streets with trading activities creating pedestrian crossing at multiple locations in conflict with vehicular traffic. Despite restrictive measures such as arrests by Kick Against Indiscipline (KAI) and Lagos State Environmental Sanitation Corps (LAGESC) Officials, payment of fines and threats of imprisonment, street trading persists in Lagos.

Some studies have analysed the implications of street trading for urban open spaces and examined 'urban citizens, residents, occupants, movements, and experiences as the new political subject' (Adedeji, Fadamiro & Adeoye, 2014; Bogoro, 2016; Ofori, 2007; Roy, 2015; Waziri & Umar, 2016). The pursuit of street trading can be necessity-driven, a result of traditional ancestral activity, rational economic choice, and social or lifestyle reasons (Williams & Gurtoo, 2012). Since, the reasons for involvement in street trading are varied, addressing its challenges calls for a multidimensional approach.

The literature on informal trading on urban streets is vast but there is a paucity of sustainable interventions for street trader management literature (Bénit-Gbaffou, 2015). The paper therefore seeks answers to four main questions (1) What categories of street traders exist? (2) What are the determinants of level of patronage? (3) What challenges confront street traders? (4) What interventions might support the street trading business? Thus, the paper presents an analysis of the social and economic profile of street traders in Lagos; discusses the need to remedy their challenges; highlights some interventions around the world and presents a unique intervention for street trader management in Lagos.

This study is significant because of the prevalence of street trading in Lagos, and the contestation around city governance, right to the city, and sustainable livelihood. The paper consists of seven sections including an introduction; a review of literature on the concept and consequences of street trading; methodology; a discussion of findings; proposed intervention; conclusion and recommendations; as well as limitations and suggestions for further studies.

The Concept and Consequences of Street Trading

Street trading is an important part of the informal sector (Omoegun, 2015). The sector in Lagos as of 2016 had an estimated value of ₦9.87tn and retail trading activities occur in open markets and street stalls (Onigbinde, 2017). This highlights the important role of street trading in Lagos. Street trading was thought to be a momentary phenomenon, which is expected to disappear over time as a result of development (Omoegun, 2015). However, street trading has grown to be an important part of the urban landscape contributing significantly to the urban economy. This calls for an integrative approach to address the myriad of challenges it portends for urban centres.

The need to consider the role of the street trading economy, together with the rights, concerns and adverse experiences of street traders is reinforced by the views of Neil Brenner in the Critical Urban Theory. *The pursuit of growth and development through innovation must be guided by principles of sustainability-driven equity and justice.* The Critical Urban Theory was propounded by Neil Brenner in his article '*What is Critical Urban Theory*' in 2009. Critical Urban Theory (CUT) is about what influences urban spaces. That is the ideals that govern the design of urban spaces. The central idea of CUT is that urban spaces are socially contested and flexible, they are influenced by politics and ideology. This suggests that the design of urban spaces varies depending on the paradigm of the designer. In this connection, CUT criticises power, inequity, unfairness and mistreatment within and among cities; and argues that capitalist urbanisation creatively destroys the world and that this has far-reaching consequences for communal, political, economic and human/nature relations.

Section 144 (2) of the Environmental Management and Protection Law 2017 states that: '*It is an offence under this Law to organise, operate, own, use and sell any item, goods, ware or merchandise of any sort except in any recognised or approved market by the State.*' Similarly, it has been argued that kiosks, sheds, covered display tables, shops, big umbrellas, containers etc. impair the aesthetics of the city (Adedeji, Fadamiro & Adeoye, 2014; Ogunkan, 2019). Furthermore, distribution patterns of markets like Oja'ba and Oje (Oyo State) in different parts of Nigeria have been linked to street parking and on-street trading, which inhibits the flow of vehicular and pedestrian traffic (Balogun, 2013). In the same vein, Adedeji, Fadamiro and Adeoye (2014) and Ofori (2007) maintained that street trading has undesirable effects on the cityscape as follows: mutilation of urban aesthetics, building of unlawful structures, traffic bottleneck, solid waste production and motor accidents etc. Also, Bogoro (2016) argued that the display

of items for sale by street traders is disorderly and advocates the relocation of traders who cause traffic congestion. Conversely, Nyemb (2017) observed that street vending is despised and criminalised by authorities in African countries. Although individuals who are involved in street vending tend to do so as the only means of getting meagre income for survival. Nevertheless, this study emphasises the need for authorities to use the existence of these traders to create and empower an '*alternative economy*' where every actor (government, traders and buyers) wins.

Furthermore, street traders are often displaced and moved to alternative locations (Omoegun, 2015). The concentration of street traders in particular locations is often a result of the peculiarities of the area, which could be a major transportation hub like Oshodi, Ojota and Ketu, or a market split by a major road like Bariga market in Lagos State. Figure 1 is an example showing the street market at Cele Bus Stop in Lagos spilling onto the road.
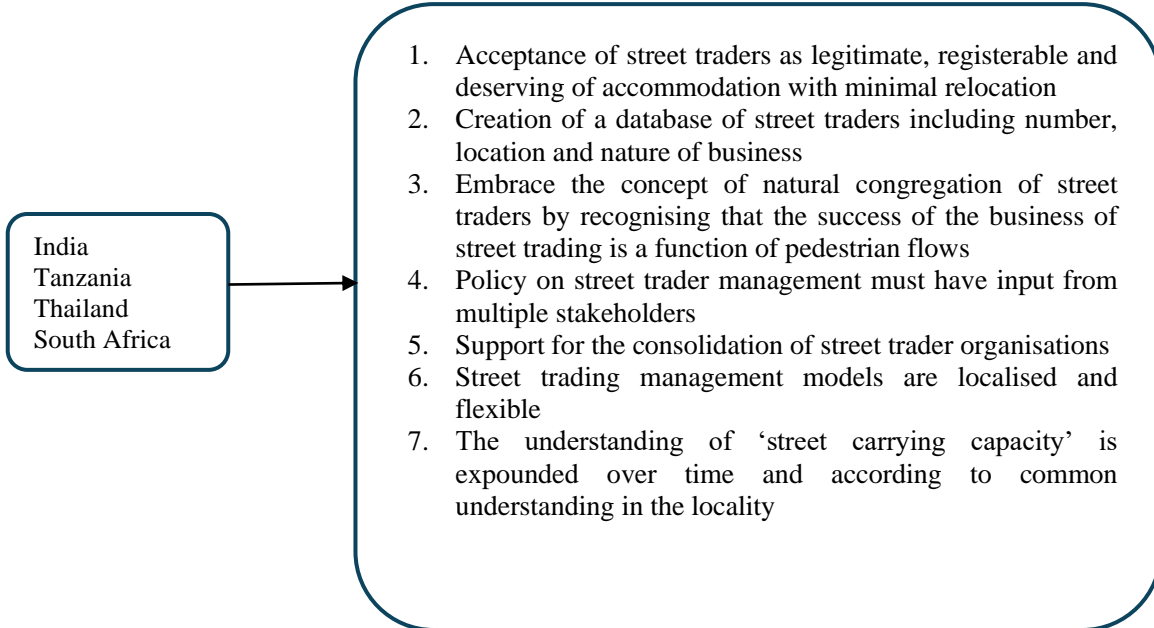
Figure 1– Cele Bus Stop Market, Lagos
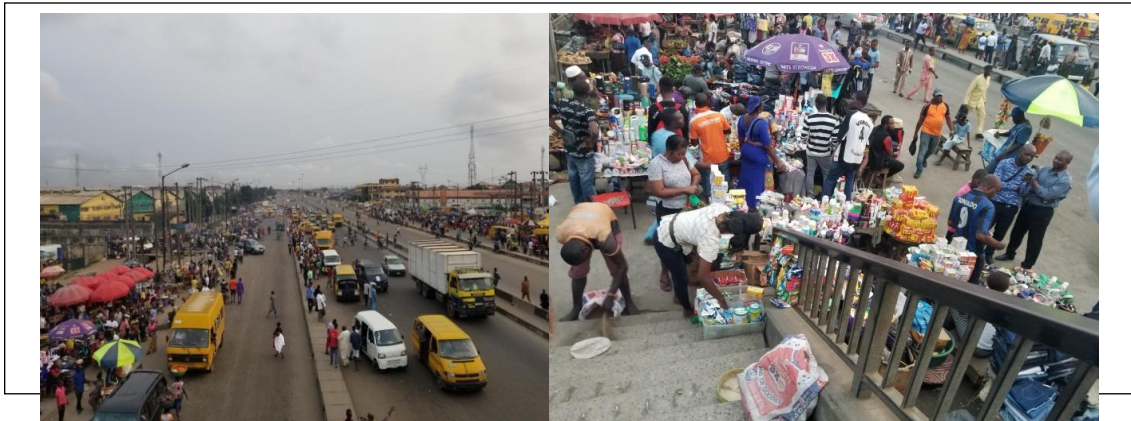
Photos: Dada Kolawole (2019) – (Street market spilling onto the road impeding traffic)

The desirability of treating street traders as co-owners, having a right to the city requires that management strategies in other climes be considered. In this connection, Bénit-Gbaffou (2015) presents certain principles governing street trader management in India, Tanzania, Thailand, and South Africa as follows:

Figure 2 – Street Trader Management Principles: Best Practices

India
Tanzania
Thailand
South Africa

1. Acceptance of street traders as legitimate, registerable and deserving of accommodation with minimal relocation
2. Creation of a database of street traders including number, location and nature of business
3. Embrace the concept of natural congregation of street traders by recognising that the success of the business of street trading is a function of pedestrian flows
4. Policy on street trader management must have input from multiple stakeholders
5. Support for the consolidation of street trader organisations
6. Street trading management models are localised and flexible
7. The understanding of 'street carrying capacity' is expounded over time and according to common understanding in the locality

Source: Adapted from Bénit-Gbaffou (2015)

Figure 3 – Dreyer Street Market, Cape Town

Photos: Olumide Olusanya (2009) - (Organised street trading: provision of furniture - creating unique urban aesthetics)

Figures 2 & 3 show some street management principles applied in four countries and pictures of how the principles have been adopted in South Africa. Contrary to the view of Bogoro (2016) and a host of other authors who advocate the relocation of traders who cause traffic congestion; a common thread in most alternative strategies is the acceptance of '*natural markets*' and encouragement of stakeholder participation in critical decisions affecting the '*place*' of street traders in the city.

Furthermore, Otekhile and Matthew (2017) advocate the building of shopping complexes to house street traders to eliminate the risks associated with street trading. It is generally impractical and unsustainable to take these traders who cannot afford shops in the complexes away from the place of *'natural congregation'*. However, a viable solution might be as demonstrated in the Dreyer Street market at the Cavendish Mall (Figure 3). This is an example of a street market integrated with a shopping complex. Also, Nduka and Duru (2014) suggested that the panacea for street hawking in Nigeria is poverty alleviation through job creation and the implementation of policy against street hawking. Conversely, *this study argues for a change of paradigm which considers that the adult population who are engaged in street trading are already employed but require government policy that will organise the sector rather than prohibit it.* Thus, harnessing the phenomenon of street trading for economic growth and expansion is a desirable paradigm.

Also, Otekhile and Matthew (2017) advocate the provision of low-interest loans to street traders to encourage the emergence of micro businesses. This notwithstanding, if street traders can access loans to scale up their business, without a convenient and profitable location for their activities, they may not generate sufficient revenue to be able to repay the loan. That is, the more tangible the location of the business, the more secure the loan would be.

Table 1 – Restrictive Policies and Outcomes

S/N	Restrictive Policy	Outcomes
1.	Limited licenses or permits	Increase in the number of illegal street traders contributing to corrupt practices by state officials in charge of permits.
2.	Removal of street traders from city centres to fringe trading space	Loss of income for the traders.
3.	Relocation of street traders to markets.	Interim income loss for the traders as a result of change of clientele

Source: Adapted from Bénit-Gbaffou (2015)

Table 1 shows that restrictive policies regarding street vendors, do not address the challenge of street trading holistically. Street trading relies heavily on impulse buying whereas trading in the markets is based on premeditated buying (Bénit-Gbaffou, 2015). Therefore, any form of relocation would be detrimental to the income of street traders. Bénit-Gbaffou (2015) also argued that the best models of street trading management pay attention to '*natural markets*' That is, places where traders congregate as a result of a steady flow of pedestrians/customers. This study argues that governments must adopt novel strategies for the maintenance of order in urban centres. To this end, Table 2 shows some alternative strategies and interventions employed in select cities around the world:

Table 2 - Strategies for Street Trading Management in Select Countries

| S/N	Country	Innovative Strategy
1.	India	◊ Registration of street traders instead of licensing
		◊ Maintain and consolidation of 'natural markets
		◊ Strong street traders' organisations strengthened through legislation
2.	Dar es Salam	◊ The definition of trading areas is based on existing distribution with limited displacement
		◊ Emphasis on stakeholder participation in planning decisions
		◊ Use of metal stands for efficient use of space
3.	Bangkok	◊ Acceptance of street trading as part of the culture and an important element in economic growth and poverty alleviation experience
		◊ Design of pavement 'carrying capacity' to accommodate street trading
		◊ Designated areas of street vending are determined by stakeholders including street traders
		◊ Legalising the activities of street traders facilitates income generation for the state and cooperation with the traders to clean the sites on one trading-free day a week
		◊ The trading permit is used as a tool for securing bank loans
4.	New York	◊ In place of Bye Laws that specify distances street traders must maintain from building entrances, crosswalks, subway entrances, driveways, news-stands, bus shelters, pay-phones, public and private schools, and public markets;
		◊ Street vendors are to maintain an 8-foot (about 2.65m) wide clear pedestrian path along the sidewalk, and not obstruct access to adjoining buildings, police and fire services, not block display windows, signs, and street furniture.
		◊ The new 8-foot rule creates more space for street trading in the city.
5.	Lagos	◊ Trader self-regulation markets (Alaba market model) which leads to adapted and contextualised internal rules.

Source: Adapted from Bénit-Gbaffou (2015)

Common to these strategies presented in Table 2 is the acceptance of '*natural markets*' and encouragement of stakeholder participation in critical decisions affecting the place of street traders in the city. According to Bénit-Gbaffou (2015), a progressive paradigm for solving the problem of street trading will include problem-solving paradigm, the establishment of a permanent multi-stakeholders committee, establishment of street traders' unions/organisations, establishment of a specialist interdepartmental government institution for the management of street trading activities, accommodation of existing street traders through issuance of permits and determination of street trading locations around the city (locations must be determined around '*natural markets*').

Section 146 of the Environmental Management and Protection Law 2017 says '… *As from the commencement of this Law, a person shall not use any pedestrian and overhead bridge as an open day or night as Market*'. The observation as shown in Figure 4 is that traders use existing pedestrian bridges as organised and thriving markets. Since according to the same law (Section 142) '*markets*' must be authorised by the government, it is recommended that one way to consolidate the concept of '*natural markets*' is to integrate markets with pedestrian bridges in select locations around the city where such already exists.

Figure 4: Cele Bus Stop, Lagos
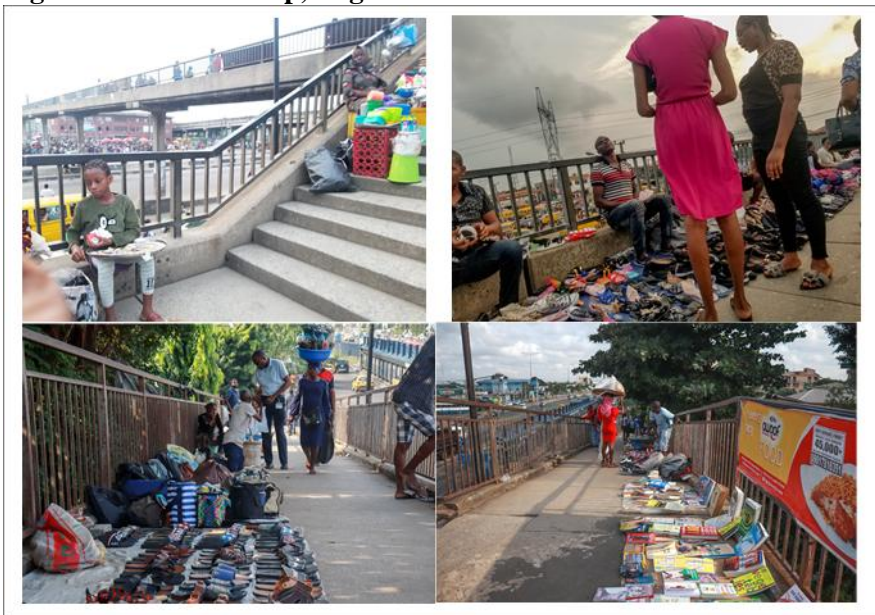
Photos: Dada Kolawole (2019) - (Trading activities on a pedestrian bridge in Lagos)

Methodology

This study utilised primary data from semi-structured interviews conducted among 45 randomly selected street traders in Yaba, Ojota and Ketu axis. This axis has a considerable concentration of street traders congregating around bus stops, which feature pedestrian bridges. A semi-structured interview was used to access data on subtle aspects of street trading to understand the perceptions and experiences of street traders (Blandford, 2013; Cohen, 2007; Flick, 1998). The questions in the interview schedule featured prompts and probes, which facilitated access to rich and comprehensive data (Morrison 1993; Patton 1980). The data were analysed using content analysis, which is useful for compressing, classifying, summarising and tabulating many words of text into fewer content categories to make the data meaningful and useful for decision-making (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012; Denscombe, 2010; Horn, 2010).

As of 2015, Lagos had a population of about 24.6 million whereas, it is predicted that Lagos will have a population of up to 35 million in 2020 (LASG, 2019). Informal employment/economic activities thrive with increased population, poverty and scarce job opportunities in the formal sector. Besides, street trading activities have a low entry barrier and are an attractive choice for the unemployed in need of survival. This implies that a substantial number of the populace who are engaged in the informal economy can be street traders. Similarly, the failure of the zero-tolerance policy of the Lagos State Government to serve as a deterrent for street trading makes it imperative to seek a sustainable street trader management strategy for Lagos.

Discussion of Findings

Categories of Street Traders in Lagos

The categories of street traders are based on the range of products they sell which include household items and services (22%); groceries and edibles (45%); and wearables and personal items (33%). Household items and services totalled 45% in Ketu, 45% in Ojota and 10 % in Yaba. Whereas groceries and edibles amounted to 52% in Ketu, 35% in Ojota, and 13% in Yaba. Also, wearables and personal items in Ketu, Ojota and Yaba equalled 6%, 24% and 70% respectively. The most common products sold across Ketu, Ojota, and Yaba were groceries and edibles. This may be a pointer to the demand from commuters who are headed to their homes at the end of a work day. Household items and services were more common in Ketu (45%) and Ojota (45%) than in Yaba (10%). Groceries and edibles were more commonly sold in Ketu (52%), than in Ojota (35 %) and Yaba (13%). Wearables and personal items were most common at Yaba (70%); Ketu

and Ojota constituted 6% and 24% respectively. These suggest that certain products were most popularly sold in specific areas. Also, the concentration of traders dealing in specific products shows a diverse array of products involved in street trading. This also suggests that products, which are typically sold in conventional markets are also common among street traders. Therefore, street trading appears to serve as an '*alternative market*' for the categories of customers who patronise them.

Modes of Accessing Customers
The typical mode of accessing customers was through customers' approach of stalls/shops/kiosks for patronage (53%). Over half of street traders were patronised by walk-in customers. Whereas advertisements by hailing customers constituted 25%; while those moving around to solicit patronage amounted to 9%. However, 13% did not care about how they accessed customers. Street traders therefore accessed customers mostly through walk-in customers. Similarly, most customers approached traders/stalls in Ojota (42%). This may suggest that traders are more secure in terms of certainty of patronage in this location. The attraction of customers' attention (55%) and moving around to solicit patronage (50 %) was widespread in Yaba. This scenario may be a pointer to the stiff competition among traders and may indicate a concentration of a large number of traders in Yaba.

Information on Street Traders
All the traders indicated that they were Nigerians, most of which were of the male gender (53%), aged 31- 40 years (56%), and from the southeastern (38%) and southwestern (27%) parts of the country. The dominance of the trade by men is incongruent with the findings of Mitullah (2004) who highlighted the dominance of women in street trading in Africa. Additionally, The nationality of the street traders supports the case for an innovative solution to the challenges of their trade given their right to survival as citizens of Nigeria.

Job Background of Street Traders in Lagos
The results of the study show that street trading was not the first job of over half of the respondents amounting to 58%. A majority of them did not hold an alternative job alongside street trading, this is equivalent to 87%. Also, 76% of the respondents liked the job. On the rationale for the choice of job, some respondents chose the job because they liked the job or were trained to do the job representing 31% and 22% respectively. Also, 13% of the respondents chose street trading

because they considered it their only available option for survival. Data from semi-structured interviews on the rationale for job choice show that some of the street traders have only known that one job, some were introduced to the job by their parent or a master from whom they learnt the trade, and for over half of the traders that is the singular means of livelihood. Therefore, the accounts from Ketu, Ojota and Yaba suggest that street trading for some of the traders is a learnt vocation and should be accorded the legitimacy it deserves.

Average Income of Street Traders
Street traders made an average income of ₦2,802 ($7) per day; ₦11,619 ($28) per week; and ₦34,908 ($84) per month based on the exchange rate of the Nigerian naira to US Dollars as of August 2022 at the rate of ₦416 to $1.

The Challenges of Street Traders in Lagos
The traders identified some challenges relating to their business. 53% of them attested to being challenged by setting up trading space. However, 36% of them said that they had no challenge with setting up trading space. This indicates that some areas in the city may be less hostile to setting up trading space. 56% also claimed to have a challenge with getting their goods to the location of trade; whereas 38% of them were able to get their goods to the location much more easily. Also, 45% of the traders had a challenge with getting customers, whereas 36% of them got patronage much more easily. These results indicate that the major challenges confronting street traders were related to setting up locations, getting goods to trading locations and accessing customers. Nevertheless, other challenges include - personal space for trading, the proximity of space to the road, union/law enforcement/area boys, stealing, low patronage, sun, storage, and money. The challenges of proximity to the road, sun, storage, and individual spaces call for an innovative response. Corroborative data from semi-structured interviews on challenges of street trading indicate that some street traders '*wished that they had their own space*' and complained about being bothered by regulatory authorities and '*area boys*' (neighbourhood thugs). Others identified the small size of their current space for trading as a challenge. These challenges are important inputs into decision-making in the adoption of an integrative approach to street trader management. Hence, an innovative solution to the unique challenges of street traders in Lagos is both legitimate and imperative.

Determinants of Patronage Level
The level of patronage and its determinants provide insight into the sustainability of the street trading business. While over half (53%) of the respondents attested

that customer patronage was infrequent, 20% of the respondents opined that expanding the product range would facilitate customer patronage. However, a combined 36% believed that advertisement and product price reduction would facilitate customer patronage. Overall, 62% of the respondents believe that disposable income in the country affects patronage. On the role of exclusive trading space (shop), 98% of the respondents indicated that shop ownership led to more earnings for street traders. Thus, the level of customer patronage is a function of the availability of electricity supply, disposable income, state of the economy, weather, environment and season of the year. Semi-structured interviews on determinants and level of patronage provided additional data which indicate that patronage is a function of money available to the consumer and that consumers do not have sufficient funds to spend on their products. This results in irregular patronage. Nonetheless, the traders believed that they could facilitate consumer patronage by getting trading space that is bigger than what they currently use and selling their products at affordable prices. Furthermore, the narratives on the role of shop/trading space ownership on street trader earnings indicate that traders believe that shop ownership will increase their earnings by easing access to customers; diminishing physical strain associated with occasional hawking of products; granting legitimacy to their business thereby eliminating harassment by city officials; and conferring a sense of security. However, some traders believe that there is a challenge of affordability with owning a shop.

Taxation/Levies of Street Traders
Taxes and levies are important factors to consider when addressing street trader management. Data shows that 33% and 29% of street traders paid levies to the Local Government Council and the Union/Association respectively. Also, 76% of them paid levies daily. While over half, amounting to 62% of the respondents did not collect receipt of payment. Further probe revealed that the shelves of the traders were sometimes marked instead of receipt of payment.

Conditions of Operation and Health of Street Traders
Results show that 78% of the traders worked 6 days a week. Also, 42% took a day off work to rest. The respondents were unanimous about taking a rest or going to church on Sunday. In addition, 80% have had to take time off work due to sickness. 58% of the traders attested that the prevalent nature of sickness is Malaria, Typhoid, Fever or Cold. These are sicknesses common in tropical regions and are water-borne or vector-borne (WHO, 2019). Hence, exposure to weather elements while engaging in street trading may increase the chances of

being sick. Semi-structured interview data on the rationale for the choice of the day show that most of the traders took Sunday off, either to rest, engage in another job or as a panacea for low patronage on Sundays.

Suggested Interventions for the Growth of Street Trading Business
The respondents suggested some interventions that they believed would lead to the growth of their business. 58% of the traders hoped to raise and invest more money into their business. Whereas 38% hoped that family members would invest money in their business. Also, 87% of the respondents would like others to intervene by purchasing more products. While 42% desired the government to build shops and give better/cheaper space for trading. Furthermore, 42% of the traders were indifferent to alternative sources of growth; whereas only 13% of them saw banks as an alternative source of growth. Semi-structured interview data indicate that the government has a pivotal role to play regarding the growth of the street trading business. Thus, street traders rely on the government to facilitate the smooth operation of their trade. It is therefore imperative that the expectations of these categories of Nigerian citizens be given utmost consideration.

A three-pronged approach is hereby proposed to address the challenges of street trading business in Lagos. First is the regularisation of taxation among levels of government to avoid multiple taxation; second is the creation of a dedicated institution to manage street trading as a major sub-sector of the informal economy (*This is not to be an institution to restrict the operations of the sub-sector but one to harness the potentials for job creation and revenue generation*); and third is the introduction of a simple registration system via the trade unions, which does not encourage corruption by the government.

Proposed Intervention: The Sky-Market Concept
Against the backdrop of the challenges of and suggestions from street traders informed by the analysis of wider management strategies, this paper argues for the consideration of the Sky-Market Concept. The traditional markets within the Lagos metropolis have become increasingly overcrowded thereby spilling onto the roads. On the other hand, the economic demands for the optimisation of prime urban land require higher densities. That is, more units of shopping facilities (stalls) per area, which generally translates into multi-storey shopping complexes. The redevelopment of the traditional markets generally results in many traders being priced out of the new complexes and hence forced into informal trading on the roads.

Figures 5 and 6 show the Sky-Market Design Concept for organised street trading in Lagos. Its premise and features are:

1. Air space over the roads is virtually free and almost limitless.
2. Grade separation allows linkages and extension of markets over the highway, thereby retaining them in the place of '*natural congregation*'.
3. Achieving cost efficiency through a unique structural engineering design, utilising pairs of multi-function reinforced concrete spines (Long Span Inverted Tee Slabs) in the construction. These serve as the main structural elements of the bridge integrating concrete stiffeners which double as the locker/counter for trading furniture.
4. This dual-purpose locker/counter for the traders provides an opportunity for revenue generation from token rent for the storage facility, which would help to pay for the bridge over time, making the concept both economically viable and sustainable.

Thus, the feasibility of the concept is based on – free air space above the road; innovative cost-efficient engineering system; visually and experientially exciting architectural concept; functional pedestrian bridge, shopper/trader convenience; and source of revenue generation for all stakeholders. Furthermore, in line with the principles advanced in the theory of defensible space by Oscar Newman presented in Stanley (1977), the value of the design of the Sky-Market includes - the use of symbolic or real boundaries to confer a sense of ownership on users of spaces; clustering of stalls facilitating recognition of users and easy identification of strangers; incorporation of pedestrian bridge crossing ensuring a steady flow of potential customers and prevents under-use of the facility; visibility of the Sky-Market increases natural surveillance, thereby reducing danger; and clear boundaries for each stall in the design helps the trader to have a sense of ownership and spur them to protect their territory.

Figure 5: The Sky Market

Architect - Professor Olumide Olusanya (Design concept for organised street trading in Lagos)

Figure 6: The Sky Market Locker/Counter
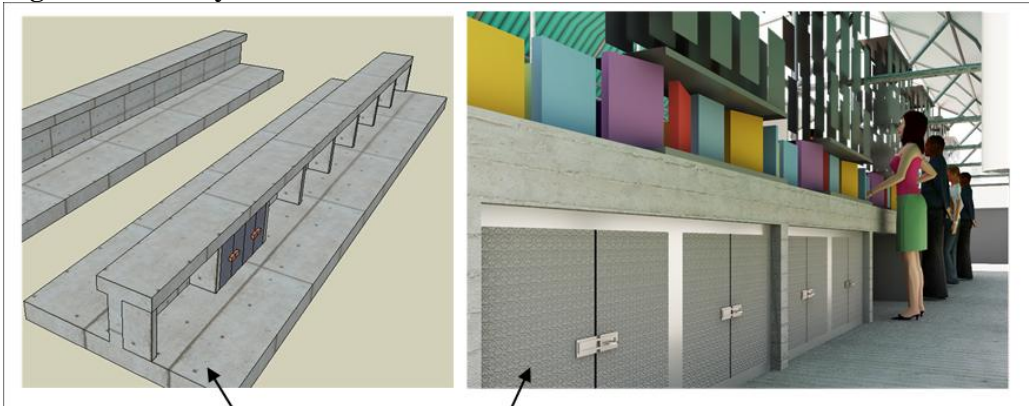
Long Span Inverted Tee Slabs: Concrete stiffeners double as locker/counter integrated as structural elements of the reinforced concrete bridge deck

Architect - Professor Olumide Olusanya (Dual-purpose locker/counter as structural elements)

The case for the Sky Market as an innovative solution for street trading in Lagos derives one of its merits from Oscar Newman's theory of defensible space. (Newman, 1971). The principles in the theory of defensible space are territoriality (which encourages proprietary attitudes from users), surveillance, image, and milieu (which promotes harmless observation of surroundings) (Donnelly, 2010). These principles are useful in the proposed design solution to the challenge of street trading in Lagos. In addition, the more people share a territory the less their propensity to take ownership (Newman, 1996). Impliedly, as long as street traders do not have well-defined allocated spaces to carry out trading activities wherever they use the sidewalks there is no one to protect. Architectural designs capable of fostering behavioural patterns and interaction which leads to a sense of ownership for the users (Stanley, 1977), will address issues of organisation, safety and sustainability.

The Sky-Market Concept (having lockers and counters integral to its structural system) does make economic sense. Traders need to keep their goods close to where they sell (Balogun, 2013). Hence the concept will minimise the challenges associated with getting their goods to trading locations. Besides, the concept of the '*right to the city*', authored by Henri Lefebvre in 1968 lends credence to the legitimacy of every citizen's claim to use urban spaces. The concept justifies providing a means through which the activities of street traders can be integrated into city life in an orderly manner. This study submits that the compelling architectural design of the Sky Market should contribute to the attractiveness of the concept as an alternative to the on-land roadside/street market.

Conclusion and Recommendations
This paper has established that street trading is a product of the evolutionary process of cities and that innovation is required to harness its huge potential for the economic well-being of city dwellers. The Sky-Market Concept is based on the utilisation of virtually free, almost limitless space above urban roads and highways for the provision and expansion of cost-efficient, safe, affordable, revenue-generating, taxable, sustainable, environmentally wholesome, adequate trading facilities at the most suitable and convenient locations; easing traffic congestion, thereby creating visually exciting and experience enhancing cityscape aesthetics. This represents the potential of a win-win scenario for all stakeholders: street traders, pedestrians, commuters, tourists as well as local governments. Furthermore,

Given that the findings of the study indicate that street trading is the singular means of livelihood for over half of the respondents, and given the potential number of dependents who might populate the poverty/below-poverty belt; it is suggested that it will be counter-productive to maintain a prohibitive paradigm to street trading, and that where relocation of street traders is inevitable, it must be organised around '*natural markets*' for it to be sustainable and prevent loss of livelihood. This study has contributed to the literature by addressing the complexities, power dynamics and institutional frameworks that shape street trader management in Lagos and provided new insights into the theoretical debates surrounding informal economies and urban governance.

The attractiveness of the Sky-Market Concept may be limited by the lack of incentive for consumers to climb the bridge if they have no reason to go to the other side of the road. Nevertheless, a significant number of commuters use existing pedestrian bridges and shop along the way. It is suggested that follow-up research be conducted on street traders' perception of the Sky-Market Concept in the specific, and its impact in particular locations as soon as a pilot project is completed. Also, the motivation of those who patronise street traders should be examined. That is, the determination of stimulus for the patronage of street traders, whether it is based on chance or purposive. This should be useful in the organisation of Sky-Markets around the city.

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