

ABSTRACT

Street vending is a major employer in the informal sector and has potential for employment if well-planned. Governments see street vending as a nuisance to public order and to general aesthetics. This is an elitist point of view that is out of touch with the reality of urban poverty and urban planning. This study elaborates the motivations, economics and space utilization of street vending activities. The main objective of this study is to achieve the harmonious integration of informal and formal economic activities on commercial and transport land uses with the ultimate aim of formalizing street vending activities.

The research methodology employs a mixed approach utilizing both quantitative and qualitative research designs. The quantitative aspect identifies the demography of the informal traders and their operations highlighting goods sold, sales and profits. The qualitative aspect utilized the opinions of both informal and formal traders about the use of the space in the study area. The major contributors to the increase in street vending activities include lack of tertiary education, inadequate formal employment opportunities, rural-urban migration and lack of adequate markets. The combination of these factors leads to the rise of informality as it is seen as the best avenue for economic inclusion by the informal traders. These manifest itself through street hawking and vending of goods such second-hand clothes, household equipment, food and vegetables.

The research concludes that street vending activities negatively affect the commercial spaces as they sell similar goods while also hindering access to the buildings. The activities also lead to increase in criminal activities that hide among the chaos. The traders also litter and dump waste on the road. Transport spaces are also negatively affected as these informal activities take place on walkways, parking spaces and alleys. Pedestrians are hence forced to share spaces with motorized transport users.

It is then recommended that the government should improve rural development to prevent and decrease rural-urban migration. It also should improve access to education while fostering industrial development and local manufacturing in order to expand the formal economy. Periodic street markets should also be incorporated on major roads in order to foster trader and improve economic and social inclusion in the cities. Finally, adequate markets should be constructed in order to accommodate the surplus amount of traders.