

# International Journal of **Public Policy and Administration**

(IJPPA)      **The street vending agenda in Northern  
Uganda: Examining its management praxis in Lira city**



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## The street vending agenda in Northern Uganda: Examining its management praxis in Lira city

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*Accepted: 23<sup>rd</sup> Aug 2023 Received in Revised Form: 6<sup>th</sup> Sep 2023 Published: 19<sup>th</sup> Sep 2023*

### Abstract:

**Purpose:** This study aimed to determine the quality of street vending management in Lira City; specifically focussing on the quality of planning for street vending, the level of organization for street vending, coordination of street vending, and the quality of control for street vending.

**Methodology:** A qualitative approach was adopted and a sample of 100 respondents was realised. The Interview Guide and the Documentary review were used for data collection. Content validity was tested using a research expert's opinion, the research supervisor. To test the reliability, a test-retest technique was employed in which questionnaires were administered to a group of street vendors with similar characteristics as the actual sample size but not included in the final study.

**Findings:** The study reveals that Management of street vending in Lira City had a poor control mechanism given that street vending has no identity in the City. Also, the design for the main Market was not favourable for vending since other lockups were hidden away from customers' easy access. The city authorities gave Stools and Lockups to some vendors who were not active but street vending continues to support members to pay school fees for their children, improving the standard of living, providing employment to the unemployed men and women and they request to be allowed to continue with the vending. On the whole, street vending lacks clear planning, organisation, coordination and control in Lira city.

**Contribution to theory, practice and policy:** It is concluded that the success of street vending in Lira city will continue to depend on how well it is planned, organised, coordinated and controlled by the stakeholders. The study recommends that Lira City should employ four in one management strategies which are planning, Organising, Coordinating and Controlling (POCC); the city should zone all the business where each business is done in specific area so that for one to buy an item, such a person must go and find such a commodity in a specific place gazetted for it, but not anywhere as it is being done; and, it should come out with the uniform rates for renting a lockup or stool constructed by the government or constructed on government land. This study contributes to the understanding of the numerous urban dynamics surrounding the informal business operations and management for a cleaner and well-organised city.

**Keywords:** *Street vending, planning, organising, coordinating, controlling*

## 1. Introduction

Street vending is not a new phenomenon, neither is it restricted to certain geographical location or status. The activity was and is still being done in both developed and developing or less developed countries. Recchi (2021) affirms that, street vending is traditionally widespread studied concerning developing countries. Nevertheless, recently, interest in the study of this practice has also increased regarding specific developed countries; it continues generating controversy in urban planning debates. Many cities experience cycles in which local authorities tolerate, regulate, and then evict street vendors in accordance with economic trends such as election cycles and other urban management pressures. In Latin America, strategies of entrepreneurial urban governance, guided by market-oriented principles that view cities as competitors for foreign investment and “world class city” status have led to the eviction of those involved in street vending from downtown historic centres (Middleton, 2003). Gumisiriza (2021) defines street vending as traders who use their bodies, wheelbarrows, handcarts, bicycles, temporary shades, trees, fences, mats, tables, and racks to carry, display, and sell their commodities. To him, street vending has for long existed and still happening in many cities both in developed and developing countries. It is argued that, if street vending is managed properly, it can provide a meaningful livelihood option, particularly for unemployed and poor urban dwellers. However, others argue that street vending undercut city authority/government revenue collection targets inconvenience the movement and the operations of other street users such as people/traffic, among others. Because of the constantly changing opportunities and challenges that come with street vending, it is an occupation that falls in and out of favour across space and time. According to Nirathron and Yasmeen, (2019), Street vending refers to the “trading of various types of goods on a daily basis, including food items to the general public, along the street or by the road side, sidewalk, footpath, pavement or any other public space along the street from a temporary built-up structure.

Liman (2021) pointed out that in Asian countries such as India, street vending covers 3% of the non-agricultural employment and accounts for 3.1 million vendors and this was also mentioned in (UN Report, 2011). In Latin America, such as Peru, they constitute about 9% of informal employment which account for 240,000 vendors (Herrera et al., 2019) and this was seconded by Schalk (2011) who stated that, most cities in developing nations are characterized by dilapidated structures, which is accompanied by an increase of informal trading. In many sub-Saharan African cities, street vendors are a sub-group of a bloated informal sector which the World Bank blamed on the “Urbanization of people without capital” or population increasing in urban centres without formal or industrial jobs. Yet according to Charmers, as cited by Acen (2012), most of the street vendors across Africa have been driven into the streets due to landlessness, retrenchment, lack of space in the markets, lack of school fees, search for economic opportunity and income, strategic nature of street vending, family influence in form of supporting family member, entrepreneurship, lack of finance for larger business, evading taxation, orphan-hood, widowhood, low level of education and poverty. It has been noted that, Street traders are subjected to ongoing “low-level

harassment” informed by colonial approaches to urban governance (Skinner, 2008) and in many regions, street vendors have been evicted and made to make way for mega events.

Due to limited opportunities in the formal sector of the African economy, people are forced to become hawkers in order to generate an income. Whilst the regulatory environment has been made more conducive in some countries such as South Africa, very little infrastructure is available to hawkers. Without infrastructure hawkers have to re-create a place to conduct business daily, a burdensome routine. Although some hawkers are forced into the occupation by necessity or desperation, many acknowledge that it provides well for essential requirements, including shelter, food, education, and, in the case of immigrants, passage to visit their home Countries (Gamielidien, & Van Niekerk. 2017). Accordingly, Leshi and Leshi (2017) opines that street foods are ready-to-eat foods and beverages prepared and/or sold by vendors and hawkers on the street from pushcarts or baskets or balance pole, or from stalls or shops having fewer than four permanent walls. According to them, it includes commercially produced snacks that are retailed by street food vendors, as well as food items made by vendors on-site or in nearby kitchens. Street foods have become an indispensable component of food distribution systems and mainly contribute to the daily dietary intake of urban consumers in the developing world

In the Tanzania street vending is important in the economy, various public and private stakeholders have engaged in several measures for improving the livelihoods of street vendors through Business Development Service and Support-related aspects such as training and skills development, provision of business locations and infrastructures and development of various related laws and policies among others (United Nations, 2019). Bagumire and Karumuna (2019) confirmed that, Street vending in Uganda emerged out of the need by the travellers to access ready-to-eat food as they travel and this prompted vendors to prepare food at strategic roadside points where vehicles with travellers can stop and get served. The vending involves selling of ready-to-eat foods on roasting sticks or in containers to travellers in vehicles that stop by the road side at the highway. The trade is mostly run by young men and women. For many decades, the Kampala City Council (KCC) tolerated street vending as a positive livelihood strategy for many poor urban dwellers.

In 2010, the Parliament of Uganda passed legislation that changed the management of Kampala city from elected (KCC) to central government-appointed officials. The main argument given for this change was that it would reduce endemic corruption, improve working conditions of very poor groups, and streamline service delivery and as a result, Kampala witnessed an unprecedented increase in the number of street vendors between 2014 and 2019. In response, central government and KCCA officials ordered the vendors to vacate the street and look for a better place for vending, however vendors refused to comply with the order. According to Uganda Radio Network. Street vendors in Lira City protested against the directive by the National Physical Planning Board which was aiming at eliminating street vending from operating in Lira City, this was after it was found out that street vending was making the city congested, untidy and leading to accidents. Therefore, vending is supposed to be carried in a place set aside for it like a Market being daily or auctions

which take place once a week or a month, in Lockups or a house where stocks are displayed but not anyways. When vending, a seller is supposed to pay taxes but in Lira city, Vending is taking place on the street while those inside the Main market and City authorities complaining against those on the street that they are not paying taxes.

### **1.1 Statement of the Problem**

Much as taxes and fees are the fundamental ways through which countries generate public revenues to finance investments in human capital, infrastructure, and the provision of services for its citizens, the efforts by the Government and other development partners to improve on the informal sectors, a major source of Revenue have never yielded any promising fruits toward achieving this. The Government of Uganda through World Bank have constructed stalls and Lockups in many markets across cities such as Lira main market and others constructed with support from Local Revenue such as Kamswahili market, Ojwina Market, Ireda Estate, the rapid growth of urban population is leading to rampant phenomenon of street vending in many cities including Lira city. In Lira city, there are complains that the gazetted market are always empty as street vending continue congesting the roads which are not legally meant for vending, street vending generates garbage which is costing financial losses to lira city. They vending diverts buyers from the legitimate sellers' allocated stalls in the market and shop owners near such roads. According to Local Government Quarterly Performance Report (FY, 2021/22) Street vending has reduced Local revenue of Lira city Budgeted from 5.4 billion to 1.6 billion meaning that only 30% of their projections has realized. If nothing is done to reduce Street vending in Lira City, it will continue narrowing the revenues collected from the main market, slowing down the implementations of many projects in the city including Garbage collections. However previous studies have not proposed clear management strategies of street vending.

### **1.2 The purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study was to determine the quality of street vending management in Lira City. Consequently, for study questions were answered, namely: (i) what is the quality of planning for street vending in Lira City? (ii) What is the level of organization for street vending in Lira City? (iii) How is street vending coordinated in Lira City? And (iv) What is the quality of control for street venting in Lira City?

## **2. Literature review**

Street vendors are an indispensable part of any city and Sharma (2021) proposes some major aspects which should be considered while preparing street vending plan of any city. Mapping for the roadside vendors and hawkers: To prepare any plan or strategy for the street vendors, the urban planners first need to understand the situation. The first should be invested in time and resources to calculate the number of vendors and their distribution in town. Diving cities into zones and distributing the street vendors equitably: Street vendors are randomly distributed in various parts of the cities. They tend to cluster in specific areas forming temporary but heavily crowded markets.

People from various parts of the city travel to these markets and the areas become chaotic. Diving cities into zones and equitably distributing the vendors in those zones would not only ease the burden on city infrastructure but will also create better conditions for the vendors.

Including the street vendors in the initial phases of city planning: Street vendors are an integral part of any city therefore their inclusion in city planning is a prerequisite for the success of any city. City planners should have provisions like temporary kiosk spaces, makeshift markets, public conveniences, places for weekly markets among others to ensure smooth operation of the small but important business personnel.

- i. Intuitive improvisation: Based on the prevailing situations, urban planners should use innovative ideas and time to time improvise to efficiently manage the street vendors.
- ii. Awareness and sensitization: Street vendors often find themselves on the wrong side of the law. More often than not, they do not fault it. Lack of awareness about the rights of street vendors and laws protecting them is the primary reason for this.

According Okoye (2020), economic liberalization and government emphasis on limiting street vending have influenced the current modern markets agenda. Accra's 1958 master plan noted colonial attempts to curtail street vending in the city's central business district (CBD). The plan presented two alternatives: The first option, market redevelopment which was intended to better accommodate vendors. The second option, "special petty trading sites," and these were intended as self-designated spaces created through the agglomeration of up to 20 vendors in high-demand street areas. In exchange for vendors' monthly payments, city government planned to provide floor surfacing, drainage, water points, and trees for shade in these special sites (Ministry of Housing 1958). However, subsequent investments have instead focused on the market redevelopment strategy, in which the government has constructed large-scale, multi-story, enclosed commercial buildings such as Accra's Kaneshie Market which was constructed in 1979 as a "modern planned market" to house hundreds of market vendors, and Cape Coast's 2,500-stall Kotokuraba Market was constructed in 2016 as part of a major redevelopment of the previously existing, open-air market via a \$1.3 billion government loan from the EXIM Bank of China. A study by Were (2022) shows that Kampala City has not had a comprehensive research based on empirical evidence to inform planning, management strategies, policies and legislative frameworks to guide street vending yet there are so many underlying issues in regards to street vending in cities including Lira in particular.

The study by Singh (2020) analysed that management of street businesses by their owners. While not looking at street vending from a managerial perspective according to, planning, Organising, coordinating, leading, and controlling. Again, the business functions such as marketing, purchasing, production, finance, public relations, research and development are the dimensions evaluated in this context. 'The management of street economy' or 'the management in street vending' has different elements. The concept includes the management of the street enterprises by their owners or founders. At the same time, the term also can have the meaning which is linked

with the Governments intervention toward street vending. According to Bhatt and Jariwala (2018) some cities are working with street vendors' organizations to formulate innovative policies, programs and practices. Membership-based organizations help street vendors navigate their relationship with the authorities, build solidarity, and solve problems with other vendors. Several such organizations have developed innovative ways to work with cities to keep the streets clean and safe while gaining a secure livelihood for vendors this is also in agreement with the study by Pena (1999).

Two key aspects of street vending Organization while saying the considerable diversity among street vendors regarding employment relation, gender, age, capital, and assets must be taken into account to design inclusive and sustainable policies. Secondly, the current policies and issuing of identification cards offer new opportunities for vendors to organize and claim their rights, but they need to be unambiguously enshrined in law. According to duo this will improve smooth and fair revenue collection and, importantly, street vendor organization and representation in decision-making processes at various levels of government. The gap in the literature is that it did not show how an organized street vending looks like in terms of hierarchy as well as eligibility for one to join street vendor's organization and the legality of street vending organization. Even an informal sector now days have their representatives but street vendors in Lira city are at large without any one speaking for or on their behalf.

Luciana Itikawa (2013) notes that historically representatives of street vendors' organizations always channelled their demands through city councillors that politically represented administrative perimeters: the regional city hall offices. According to Itikawa, result of this political relationship is the perpetuation of a fragmented, patronage-based relation with State, which is decisive in the disconnection among vendors' organizations. On the side of street vendors' there is a common assumption that their main ally is a councilman. The relation of street vendors' organizations to the executive branch, having always been intermediates by city councillors, established a dynamic of circular dependence on the legislative branch that is, through faithful patronage-based relations, whose actions did not give priority to horizontal networking among workers. The absence of this horizontal relation was decisive in the lack of any collective networking among organizations, much less a unified movement of the category that could take on, with greater force, the arbitrary actions of City Hall. In interviews it is possible to verify that, besides few specifications of vendors' organizations; some points in their political agendas are similar, which would allow for horizontal coordination among organizations. Gaspar Garcia Centre's support for the constitution of a municipal network of street vendors, the Street Vendors Forum, aims for exactly strengthening of the vendors as a wider political subject. Political Analyst Sichangwa (2023) says there is lack of coordination between the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development and the office of the President regarding the issue of street vending. Rina, Caroline and Nunung (2022) look at the coordination of other actors to address the challenges facing street vending.

From the above, it was noted that there is no clear explanation in the coordination between the vendors themselves and the coordination between the vendors and city authorities as well. Yet in a normal circumstance, there should be both horizontal and vertical coordination between street vending and their environment. In Lira city, it looks as if vendors are conniving with few individuals who hold power in their hands to allow them carry on their activities.

Bromley (2000), Provides a general contemporary overview of street vending around the world, focusing on the major issues underlying its permanence as a phenomenon, and the ambivalent attitudes displayed towards it by governments and off-street business communities. Focuses on street vendors as an occupational group and includes arguments for and against their existence, the impact of their geographical and economic location, and role of the government. Street vending faces uncertain state responses in contemporary Chinese cities, though it plays an important role in sustaining the livelihood of urban migrants. Building on the critical perspective that understands informality as a production of the state, this paper explores the nature of the regulation of street vending in Guangzhou since 1949. The state's regulatory practices are characterized by what we call historical ambivalence and geographical ambivalence, which refer to the inconsistency in policies, which fluctuate between soft and hard approaches over time, and the mix of contradictory regulatory measures applied in different urban spaces, respectively. Ambivalence is generated because the state addresses street vending in ways that attain the overarching objective of urban policies. In particular, the exclusion of street vendors in present-day China is not historically natural but driven and sustained by the government's pursuit of a good city image favourable for attracting capital in the context of intensifying inter-urban competition.

Kumar and Singh (2018) stated that much as street vending contributes significantly to the urban economy, they have faced and often continue to experience humiliation, continual harassment, confiscations and sudden evictions. It became imperative to advocate for their rights through the formulation of appropriate policies, the enactment of relevant laws, and the provision of adequate social protection benefits. They gave an example of National Association of Street Vendors of India (NASVI) which played a pivotal and catalytic role in transforming street vendors from non-entities into a formidable force to reckon with. Based on existing published works on the street vendors' movement in India, a series of key informant interviews and national consultation with stakeholders, the paper aims to document the journey of NASVI in terms of milestones, struggles and successes using the theoretical framework of power resources and capabilities. It also makes an attempt to bring out important lessons for social actors interested in Organising informal workers.

In Lagos, Nigeria for example, the authoritarian approach to urban management is manifested in a zero tolerance policy to street vending (Omoegun, Mackie & Brown, 2019). Furthermore, Lefebvre's concept of right to the city, defined as the relationship between the urban space, rights and social justice this is also in agreement with Young, (2018) who argues that for street vendors in the city, economic and social rights are fundamentally rooted in political rights. In his view, de-

democratization has robbed street vendors of their political rights; it has also robbed them of their ability to assert their right to engage in their economic activities, leaving them increasingly vulnerable and marginalized. Barring a fundamental change in the city's political landscape, the hardships that vendors face appear to have no end in sight. The gap in this literature is that all the alternatives used to control street vending only caused harm to vendors than clearly pointing other alternatives which can regulate without causing harms. Street vending existed long time and it will continue to exist though proper control measures should be instituted. In Lira Street vending has taken over some streets such as Note Ber Road, Oyam road, Ogwal Achonga road among others and this therefore calls for control measures.

### **3. Methodology**

#### **3.1 Research design**

Burns and Grove (2005) define research design as a blue print for conducting a study that maximises control over factors that could interfere with the study's desired outcome or findings. Polit and Beck (2008) define research design as the overall plan for obtaining answers to the research question being studied including specifications for enhancing the study's scientific integrity. This means, research design was essentially the architectural backbone of the study. Therefore, in this study, descriptive research design was employed and it offered an opportunity to integrate the qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection aiming at systematically describing a phenomenon, situation, or a population. The study adopted both quantitative and qualitative approaches of data collection; and analysis, presentation and interpretation of results. This mixed method was preferred due to the fact that the researcher wishes to avoid the limitations of a single approach through triangulation of methods to provide opportunities for testing alternative interpretations of data.

#### **3.2 Area, population and sampling techniques**

This study was conducted in Lira City more specifically in three Streets of Note-Ber, Oyam Road, Awange Mola Road and Puti Road respectively since this is where street vending was highly concentrated. According to UBOS (2020) Lira City has a day population of approximately 500,000 people and a Night population of 478500 people; however, the target population in this study were Lira City Authorities both elected and the appointed including vendors of different categories. The choice of this category was applicable because it was the unit for which the findings of this were generalized. The overall target population was 100 people or participants. Since this study was more of qualitative than quantitative, the researcher employed non-probability sampling techniques. According to Valliant (2020) non-probability sampling refers to the techniques for which a person's or event's or researcher's focus's likelihood of being selected for membership in the sample is unknown. Because the researcher didn't know the likelihood of selection, the researcher didn't know with non-probability samples whether a sample represents a larger population or not. While using this sampling technique, the researcher made the best use of

purposive and simple random sampling. The sample population in this study was 100 respondents. This was also supported by Young & Casey. (2018), who said that, Samples in qualitative research should be small in order to support the depth of case-oriented analysis which is fundamental to this mode of inquiry. Additionally, qualitative samples are purposive, that is, selected by virtue of their capacity to provide richly textured information, relevant to the phenomenon under investigation.

### **3.3 Sources of data**

Data was obtained from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data included raw facts which were collected from the field by the researcher and secondary data was obtained by reviewing written literature and records. Primary data provided first-hand information relating to the subject under the study, therefore what were got from the participants in the study were considered primary data in relations to management of street vending in Lira City. According to Bryman (2004), secondary data are data collected from published sources. In collecting secondary data, the researcher used documentary review and analysis methods in this data collection process which were based on reading text books, from the internal City reports, journals, published, previous research work and other documents that gave the researcher several related literatures on the research study therefore the researcher employed all the above mentioned.

In this study, Questionnaire, Interview Guide, and Documentary were used as a tool for data collection with both closed ended and open-ended questions with purposes of enhancing data accuracy and also allow easy data processing. The researchers developed an interview guide for purpose of interviews. Interviews were conducted in a mutual interaction between the researcher and the appropriate respondents. Interviews also had greater flexibility in terms of phrasing of questions and taking note of other non-verbal communications during interaction with the respondents. In looking at management of street vending in Lira City, there were many documents reviewed in line with planning, policies, enforcement mechanism among other related documents therefore both Library, online resources and performance reports were utilized.

### **3.4 Data processing, analysis, and presentation**

Data from the field were sorted, edited, organized, and tabulated to reveal frequencies and percentage scores of the study attributes. The findings were analysed and interpreted using frequencies and percentages in relation to the literature reviewed. Codes were assigned by the researcher such as 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D' to represent various age categories ('F' or 'M') to represent sex of respondents. The raw data from the field were cleaned, sorted, and edited manually which then removed errors and ensure completeness of data. This involved scrutinizing the questionnaires for errors and omissions or ambiguous classifications. For quantitative data and qualitative information, the analyses were separately done. Data analysis is the process of inspecting, cleaning, transforming and modelling data gaining useful information (Vassakis, et al 2018). Thematic analysis will be used in categorizing, classifying, summarizing and tabulating the data.

Braun and Clarke (2019) believe that thematic analysis emphasizes identifying, analysing and interpreting patterns of meaning within qualitative data. This was done by coding responses through labelling and organizing the qualitative data to identify different themes and the relationships between them. By assigning labels to words or phrases that represent important and recurring themes in each response, content analysis was done especially through categorization. Data is presented in a tabular form, graph or pie chart in order to facilitate clear understanding of the findings. This enabled the researcher describe the variables.

### **3.5 Quality control**

On the one hand, validity is the degree to which an instrument measures what it is supposed to measure. (Kothari, 2004) Therefore, the term refers to the extent to which an instrument asks the right questions in terms of accuracy. The content validity of the research instrument for this study was determined through piloting, where the responses of the subjects were checked against the research objectives. For a research instrument to be considered valid, the content selected and included in the questionnaire must be relevant to the variable being examined. The researcher performed the pilot test with a randomly selected sample of fifteen street vendors and city authorities in Lira city. Content validity of the instrument was also tested using a research expert's opinion, who was the research supervisor. The research expert independently judged the validity of the items in the questionnaire in relation to research objectives. On the other hand, reliability of an instrument is the measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields consistent results or data after repeated trials (Cooper, 2003). To test the reliability of the questionnaire as a research instrument, a test-retest technique was employed in which questionnaires were administering to a group of street vendors with similar characteristics as the actual sample size but not included in the final study. The test was repeated after two weeks. This was to establish the extent to which the questionnaire elicited the same responses every time it is administered. The findings were found to be consistent and therefore the questionnaire proved to be a reliable research instrument.

## **4. Results of the study**

### **4.1 Demographic characteristics of respondents**

The researcher employed one hundred (100) respondents that were chosen and the questionnaires sought information on their gender, marital status, Age and level of education as personal information. This information was necessary in selecting groups for testing. The one hundred respondents were asked on their sexes, the results indicated that (43) 43% said they were female and the other (57) 57% said they were male. This implied that equal number of male and female respondents had been randomly selected. All the 100 randomly selected respondents participated in the study. While saying management of street vending in Lira city is the collective responsibilities of vendors and the city authorities. A higher proportion 35 (35%) were in the age group of 25-30 years, and 25 (25%) were in the age group of 18-24 years, 21 (21%) in the age bracket of 35-36years, 09 (09%) representing those who are from 37-42 years of age, 02 (02%)

those in the age group of 43-48 years, 03 (03%) were from 49-54 years and 05 (05%) were in the age bracket of 55 and above. This means that most of the respondents interviewed were matured and probably could give well thought ideas in relations to the study variables. One hundred (100) respondents were asked of their marital status. The study results indicated that (16) 16% said they were married, (40) 40% said they were single, (34) 34% said they were divorced and (10) 10% claimed they were widows. The (40) 40% single were those at the age of 18-34 years of whom; some were graduate from University while others were working class. This therefore implied that most of the respondents were competent enough to provide information regarding their marital status. The study considered the education status of the respondents by categorizing the education attendance and attainment into 'never attended', and attendance of primary, post-primary, and Tertiary education. 03 (12%) had attained primary education, 14 respondents (56%) had attained post-primary education, 8 respondents (33%) had attained tertiary education, and no respondent indicated that they had never attained school.

#### 4.2 Planning for street vending

Planning in Urban Management is arguably, the task of classifying land use and zoning, and the analysis of proposed developments (Son, Weedon, Yigitcanlar, Sanchez, Corchado, & Mehmood, 2023). Management of street vending in Lira City had poor control mechanism. City Authorities can chase street vendors today and tomorrow vendors come back to operate without interference. During the interviews with 40 participants from Lira City Authority, all the 40 participated actively indicating 100% or Total participation of Technical staff of Lira City to the questions regarding planning of street vending. Regarding why some vendors were carrying their business along the road while others inside the market different, it was reported that:

*TA: as City, we also have some weakness by not gazetting our market like we have done with the timber dealers though some of them are still operating along the corridor of the city. After we are done with street vendors, we are going to deal with those in the corridors, we want those corridors to be open even those who have blocked the corridors with walls should be warned because we want those corridors to be open and accessible.*

*In summary, those who gave similar responses like those above were 38 out of 40 representing 95% of that category in part one of city authorities.*

Concerning the plan for street vending in Lira City, it was noted that:

*TA: Another respondent whom was interviewed through phone call said that, out of their budget they always facilitate the Law enforcement officer Safari Day Allowance (SDA) for removing those who are carrying out vending on the street.*

*TC: it is always the Law enforcement officer frustrating our effort because we can make good plans but when it comes to enforcement, we fail. And we fail not because we had poorly planned but because of connivance from street vendors and the enforcement officers. This statement was similar from all the 03 Town clerk as one said.*

On our land as city, we have plotted them and give to the business men and women who are supposed to construct Lockups and stools so that others who cannot afford constructing the can rent them to carry out business. However, these street vendors do not want to go to the gazetted place to carry out their activities. The above responses were very common during interviews and the researcher counted those who gave the similar answers and found out that they were 37 out of 40, meaning that percentage wise they were 92.5%.

On why street vendors prefer operating along specific roads but not all the roads in Lira City, it was noted that:

*These vendors are only funny, they target those one moving along the streets thinking that everyone moving along the street are buyers. Some times by coincidence, they trap those travellers and those who are in hurry end up buying from them.*

*The above answers were given by 15 out of 40 respondents 38% while the rest tasked the researcher to interview street vendors and the best answers for others were “I don't know”.*

Regarding how much they, as Lira city get from street vending as revenue;

*PC: Street vendors are not paying taxes yet they are occupying the street which the city could be getting revenues from those who are packing vehicles where they are now operating as street packing and I think they are operating as street vendors because they want to evade or dodge taxes.*

When asked about the plans they intend to come out with to manage street vending;

After gathering the open-ended questionnaires distributed to 40 participants who were city authorities both the appointed and the elected, the responses were not the same but similar in words with the most common statements repeatedly made being:

*We are planning to remove all the street vendors in the city by conducting regular arrest and prosecution and I think if this is continuously done, they will run away by themselves and find their level elsewhere.*

*We are going to make an ordinance (bye law) to deal with street vending with very high fines payable to the bank and this will again increase our revenue. 36 out 40 responded that street vending would be removed from Lira city by all means and under all cost.*

On their part, the street vendors noted that;

*Here different answers were given with the longest street vending operators disclosing that they have been on the street as vendors for at least 5years. Out of 60 street vendors, 17 (28%) said they have been in street vending for at least five years, 33 (55%) have been in street vending for at least 1-2 years. Finally, 10 (17%) have been street vendors for more than five years.*

This implies that the majority in street vending are new entrance from 1-2 years and only few people stay in street vending for long. Therefore, street vending is seen as a starting point for business in town with minimal operating cost.

*AK: this is when my first business collapse. I was selling scholastic materials when corona came around March, 2020 and I eat all the money which was generated from the sales of books and I remained with nothing completely and I started surviving on friends.*

After interviewing the street vendors, 47 out of 60 (78%) respondents repeatedly said that they are requesting Lira city authorities to give them some period to reorganize themselves since when the city force them to leave the street now, their businesses will collapse and they will have now where to find school fees for their children.

*KS: we are parents and this business you are seeing is feeding very many people as well as paying school fees. Now if Lira City council force us away from this area, where will our children be, where will our dependents be? This is everything for our family and especially I relay on this street business to earn a living therefore I am requesting city to forgive me to carry on with street vending for only this year by next year, I shall have got what to do apart from street vending.*

*DO and 12 others in their response said, we don't have anywhere to go and we should be allowed to continue with our business here on the street. If city removes us from the street, our children will not go to school, they will not eat and we shall have very many problems as a result.*

### **4.3 Organization of street vending**

Majority (88%) answered no; implying that, street vendors in Lira city do not have their leaders while 12 (12%) participants replied yes. Concerning the quality of communication by the authorities of Lira City; to the question to communication of street vendors with the city authorities, different answers were given. Street vendors do not communicate with us in any way. However, they sometimes communicate with some dubious law enforcement officer who always look for bribe from street vendors with the lies that street vendors will be protected from the decisions of the council. This statement was repeatedly mentioned by 25 (42%) respondents who were interviewed at different time and places.

*ED in his response on a telephone call interview said, those street vendors are wasting their times because some corrupt law enforcement officers are deceiving them that they should continue with their vending on the street. Am telling you let them wait and see what will happen to them. We shall begin what is called arrest and prosecute and for those who are very good in athletic, they will lose all their stocks on the street during this period and this is our last warning to them.*

As to whether there are some identities that distinguish you from Market Vendors in Lira City;

Out of 60 respondent who were interviewed, 55 (92%) responded that there is no identity to distinguish them as street Vendors from market vendors. These vendors are the same because the same people selling on the street are the same people with the stool in the market and when they are chased from the street, they go back to the market. These people your calling street vendors are the once you see them on trucks going to outside markets. The street are their resting places.

*I have my stool in the market but that place is very lousy and you can spend the all day without seeing any customer.*

*I have a lock up in the market but that lockup is hidden and very few people reach to my shop. I always receive only those one who know me or who are directed by those ones who know me and my service.*

As to why they would still want to continue with street vending; different answers were given with the most common answer being lack of enough space in the main Market, in Accessible locations of lockups and stools in Lira Main Market and poverty. Out of 60 respondents asked with this question, 45(75%) said that they are carrying out business on the street because of limited space, inaccessible stools and lockup (hidden stools and lockups) in Lira main Market. The other respondents said they are poor to rent lockups to carry on their business and this category were 8 (13%) and 7(12%) said they think you can do business anywhere in the city as long as you are paying market dues.

*KA: I am doing this business on the street no because I want to do so but it is the conditions forcing me, I completed my university degree last year at All Saint University Lango but I have not got a job.*

*SA: the conditions from our families does not allow us to leave street vending because this is where we earn a living. It is where we get school fees for our children, it is where we get money to pay rents, everything to push our children are always got from the street.*

*AM: I am selling here because where my stall is located is much hidden and customers do not reach may stall easily and they always end up buying from other people who are accessible. Event my neighbours who are in the lockup have left and they are now here with us here on the street.*

*AF: the way this main market is designed is not good for business because other stalls and lockups are completely hidden and the way it was allocated is also not good since where retailers of general merchandise supposed to be, are allocated to food vendors like those selling vegetables, fish and others.*

Out of 60 street vendors asked whether they have an association, 47 (78%) said they are under Lira Market vendors association and 07 (12%) answered that they don't belong to any association or grouping while the remaining 6 (10%) said they are not aware and they don't understand the meaning of association but they have a saving group in their village.

Illustration:

*AL: I think I don't belong to any association like street vending you are asking me about but I have a saving group in my village which I used to save my money in and when I want to borrow, I also borrow from this group in the village.*

*If no why?*

*I reason why I don't joint any group here; I was new and nobody introduced me to any leader so I continue like this up to now.*

*I am not in any association because some people who pretend to be leaders are very corrupt. They sometimes force us to make unnecessary collections and contributions which at the end of the day benefits them only at the expense of members.*

As seen from all the above recordings, street vendors are saying they are on the street due to limited and inaccessible Marketing space in the Main Market yet they cannot afford to rent to do business. The interviews have also revealed that street vending in Lira City has no identity and technical staff are saying they are going to forcefully remove all the street vending in Lira City.

#### **4.4 Coordination of street vending**

Concerning the relationship between street vendors and the authorities of Lira City, it was noted that;

*The relationship between street vendors and city authorities was not clear since according to them; we don't have any problem with the city though they always disturb us in our business but there is no where we are running to because this is our source of livelihood. We cannot go and still because securities are very tough, I don't want to be killed. This statement was made by AB one of the 60 respondents.*

When asked who help them in getting the space for vending along the streets, different responses were given out although there were similarities in their responses as seen from these:

*TO: For me I just started by selling for my friend who eventually left for the village and after him going to the village for digging, he requested for some money from me which I even gave. I thought he wanted the profit from his stock, but a few days later he told me I am coming to meet you to discuss the issues of business where he came and count all the stock and told me to refund to him 1,000,000ugx to change the ownership of the business which I complied with his term.*

Another 23 respondents also responded in a similar way like TO while saying, “here you start by selling your friends’ stocks to get familiar with the environment and in doing so, you can get an empty space for your business near or far away only through connections. 36 of the respondents interviewed among the 60 respondents (60%) where asked to explain of how they acquired the space on the street for vending. These were the similar responses got from them:

*The street for everybody what you need to do is going very early and begin displaying your stocks. Apart from the city authorities, none can chase from the business.*

*JK also supported by saying, “the street is for all of us including you if you want” this is a no man’s’ land.*

Street Vendors were asked whether they have their leaders. Out of 60 street vendors interviewed, 40 participants which represent (67%) answered No “we do not have any leader at all”. Here we are living our own life and operating business in this area is very risky and sometimes they grab our stock.

*Who grabs your stock? What about the city, it is the city which normally disturb us in our business, yet they don’t even support us with a single coin. We have very many problems like school fees, food renting and many others and it is only this business which is helping us.*

Regarding the relationships of street vendors with the Authorities of Lira City were investigated from both sides with open ended question;

*These people called street vendors do not pay taxes, they generate a lot of garbage, and they cause traffic jam in the city since they always sell along the street while narrowing the street.*

Concerning, communication of street vendors and the city Authorities;

*Street vendors said they have good coordination with the city authorities as pointed below; we don’t have any problem with our leaders in the city though they (city leaders) sometimes disturb us by chasing us away from where we operate our businesses. We are willing to comply with all the good policies they are coming with to improve the status of our city but they should not use extra force on us as if we are criminals. We always pay market dues every day we display our goods here and the least amount we pay are always 1,000Ugx. This money we pay to the contractor who has been given tender by city authority in the name of Lira Market Vendors Association.*

*We are operating here not because we want to do so, but because of conditions. We are operating on the street because of many reasons; we also want to pay school fees for our children like them. We want to attract buyers who are coming in and going out of the city; from Bus Park, Banks and other official places who do not have time to move around looking for what to buy.*

The design for the main Market is not favourable for vending since other lockups are hidden of which you can stay for even a week when people are not reaching your shop and there is no enough space in the gazetted market. The city authorities have given Stools and Lockups to some people who are not active vendors who even acquired more than one stools are now charging its rents expensively which we cannot afford. To them, they said street vending is supporting them to paying school fees for their children, improving the standard of living, providing employment to the unemployed men and women and they request to be allowed to continue with the vending.

*We are not going out of the street unless city authority has gazetted specific places for specific types of business.*

#### **4.5 Controlling of street vending**

On the recommended distance for vendors to display their commodities by the road side in Lira City, it was noted that;

*TC: There is nothing like recommended distance to display commodities on the streets. I am telling you that street vending is illegal and as leaders we are not going to tolerate this act in Lira City.*

*Nobody should think that street vending is allowed in Lira City, it was the laxity of those past leaders who fail to control traders from blocking the streets with goods for sale.*

*During the period of insurgency people were allowed to find their livelihood from business including street vending and in those previous years the population of the city was not large as the population of today with even very many automobiles which is now calling for a large and spacious street.*

Regarding the policy being used to guide vending in Lira City;

*There are very many policies being used to guide the vending in Lira city and these include Trading and licensing policy, marketing policy, and urban policy among others.*

On whether, they manage garbage produced by street vendors?

*The management of garbage in Lira city are done at the division arrangement. In Lira City East Division, we have contracted the company called Casablanca to do the job of garbage collection from the street and including from residences in the city this was answered by 37(93%) of technical staff in Lira City.*

*MA: when contacted on phone, we are looking for the way forward to contract garbage collection to private companies so that they pay the city certain amount and thereafter they can charge the garbage owners for such collection.*

As to whether street vendors pay taxes;

Thirty five percent, said these people pay market dues ranging from 1000ugx per day for every vendor.

*TA: these people pay market dues at the rate ranging from 1000Ugx and above unfortunately there is no record of street vendors in Lira city which therefore gives advantage to the contractor mandated to collect revenue from vendors. These contractors do collect revenue from all the vendors including those engaged in street vending and at the end of the day complained against street vendors that they are not paying revenue to the city.*

And if they don't pay taxes, what could be the reasons behind this practice; 40% were city authorities only 6 (6%) answered in a negative manner that street vendors do not pay taxes in Lira city and this prompted the researcher to pause another question that why do street vendors refused to pay taxes? These 6% said that corruption is the major reason why street vendors in Lira City will continue evading taxes and this was supported by the following statements.

*MO: Every officer in the city is corrupt and because of this, they will never get rid of street vending. They all look at everything for their personal gain for example, the Law enforcement officer always get some money from us during operation of keep the city clean. This money always ranges from 5000/= and above.*

*TO: one of the technical persons in Lira City also confirms that corruption is the major cause of street vending in Lira City in his statement on 12<sup>th</sup> May, 2023 when engaged in a telephone interview, TO said, "Our politicians are the one prostrating our effort to remove street vending in Lira city". They protect those engaged in street vending for their political gain. Most of them say, "Leave those vendors alone" they are poor people who can't afford renting yet they are the owners of this Government you are enjoying. They voted for us and they should be left freely to operate their businesses without interference. You cannot reward a Voter with the burden of Tax let them look for their daily bread there on the street.*

When City authorities were asked of the control mechanism would use to manage street vending in Lira City? Forty five percent of the respondents when asked about control of street vending, their answers were in affirmative while 20 (50%) gave a controversial response to the question asked during the interviews confirming that there is no control over street vending in Lira City though 2 (5%) did not say either support or deviate from those who were saying there is no control. Therefore, *when linking the results to the objectives of the study, Lira City has a good plan for street vending they are lacking sensitization and enforcement of their ordinances in regards to street vending and urban management. It was also found out that, street vending is the source of livelihood to small and medium enterprises in Lira city and they should be properly handled.*

## **5. Conclusion**

It is concluded that the success of street vending in Lira city will continue to depend on how well it is planned, organised and coordinated by the stakeholders.

### **Recommendations**

- a) Lira City should employ four in one management strategies which are planning, Organising, Coordinating and Controlling.
- b) Lira city should zone all the business where each business is done in specific area so that for one to buy an item, such a person must go and find such a commodity in a specific place gazetted for it, but not anywhere as it is being done.
- c) Lira City should come out with the uniform rates for renting a lockup or stool constructed by the government or constructed on government land.

- d) Those with high skills in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) should come out and design online stores for vendors so that they can receive orders from wherever they are and supply the customers with what they are demanding.

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