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Street Trading and Urban Distortion: Rethinking Impacts and Management Approaches from Urban Planners' Perspective in Enugu City, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

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This study investigates the relationship between street trading and urban planning in Enugu City, Nigeria, within the expanding informal economy of the global South. It particularly focuses on the perspectives of urban planners regarding the impacts and management of street trading. The research employed a mixed-method approach, including personal observation, questionnaires, and in-depth interviews, analyzed through basic statistical methods. Findings reveal that urban planners recognize the socio-economic importance and cultural relevance of street trading, despite its negative spatial externalities. Contrary to prevailing assumptions, planners favour negotiated solutions over forced evictions. This study highlights the need for inclusive urban planning practices that accommodate the socio-economic benefits of street trading while addressing its challenges, contributing to the discourse on sustainable urban development.

Highlights:	Contribution to the field statement:
-Raises aware on the discrepancy in the stance of planning institutions and planners individually on the management of street vending in Enugu city -Reveals more humane approach to street vending management for Enugu city. -Revealed that planners in planning agencies and those in learning institutions can be humane in their approach to urban management	This research assess the stand of urban planners in planning agencies and those in academia on the management approach best suited for street vending activities in Enugu city, Nigeria. This is born out of the fact that previous studies and reports of eviction and relocation of street venders to a formal market in the city have provide unsuccessful. The findings revealed that the stance of urban planners in planning agencies and those in academia does not differ as they (majority) tilted towards a more humane approach towards the management of street vending in Enugu city.

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1. Introduction

Street trading, a significant component of the informal sector, comprises diverse individuals with varying incomes and wealth. It occurs along urban routes such as alleyways, avenues, boulevards, and major streets, and is situated on sidewalks, incidental spaces, and at bus stops (Brown, Lyons & Dankoco, 2010). Though seemingly erratic and unorganized in certain cities, the spatial pattern of these activities aligns with the flow of human and vehicular traffic (Onyebueke & Anierobi, 2014; Steel, Ujoranyi & Owusu, 2014). The socio-economic and cultural importance of these activities, and indeed the entire informal sector, to urban economies, often results in cultural clashes, with itinerant traders frequently at a disadvantage (Rigon, Walker & Koroma, 2020, p. 17; see also Middleton, 2003; Al-Jundi et al., 2022).

Street trading is believed to contribute to traffic congestion, indiscriminate waste generation and disposal, disorderliness, loss of aesthetics, and devaluation of environmental quality (Middleton, 2003). As the lowest level in the retail hierarchy of typical African cities (Onokerhoraye, 1977; Onyebueke & Geyer, 2011), street traders and their activities are a sensitive issue in urban governance (Smit, 2018). Planners and city administrators often inadvisably apply marketplace regulations, excessive surcharges, new or revised planning schemes (master plans), and zoning to discourage many informal business activities (Crentsil & Owusu, 2018; Onodugo et al., 2016). This repressive "planning hammer" includes harassment, permit revocation, prohibitive fines and detentions, confiscation and destruction of goods, and evictions. Crentsil & Owusu (2018) describe the default stance of planners and city authorities on urban informality, particularly in Accra, Ghana:

"…city authorities have been repetitively unwilling to upgrade these slums, seeing these urban residents as nuisances in the urban space, thus denying them—especially street traders and slum dwellers—rights to space... The policy of decongestion has involved razing and burning unauthorized structures and chasing hawkers from streets and sidewalks where many informal economy operators make their living" (pp. 218, 221). As a result, informal settlements, where most street traders live, face double jeopardy. The underlying power relations that demean them compared to favoured formal enterprises remain unexplored and undiscussed (Rigon et al., 2020).

Street trading has been the subject of numerous research studies in urban planning and urban studies. However, these studies often selectively interrogate the opinions and views of the stakeholders involved—planners, city authorities, street traders, other informal sector workers, and formal sector businesses (Middleton, 2003; Onyebueke & Anierobi, 2014). There is an unspoken presumption that urban planners are focused on spatial order and aesthetic goals that lead to forced evictions, shifting research emphasis towards informal traders or vendors (Crentsil & Owusu, 2018; Onodugo et al., 2016; Recio, 2021; Steel et al., 2014), the general public (Al-Jundi et al., 2022), and city administrators/agency officials, often neglecting the views of professional urban planners. Few studies have specifically focused on understanding the planning perspective on this contentious issue, or on whether planning academics and practitioners agree or differ on the matter.

This study explores the viewpoints of urban planners on the dynamics and impacts of street trading in a contemporary Nigerian city, aiming to develop new urban solutions for planning and managing street trading. The study sets three specific objectives:

1. Examine urban planners' views on the current location patterns and the advantages and disadvantages of street trading;
2. Determine if these views are similar or differ between urban planning academics and practitioners; and
3. Collect ideas and solutions for more sustainable planning and management of street trading.

The transition to innovative planning and urban governance concerning street trading, which affects livelihoods and welfare in informal settlements, is expected to make the planning discipline more humane and accommodating. This approach aligns with the New Urban Agenda and the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 11, focusing on making cities inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable (Recio, 2021; Rigon et al., 2020). Such disciplinary shifts are crucial for enhancing the voices and urban citizenship of street traders (Brown et al., 2010; Onyebueke & Anierobi, 2014). Furthermore, distinguishing between the perspectives of urban planning as an institutional practice and as practised by

professionals may shed light on why ideological and ethical positions differ on socio-politically charged issues like street trading in urban planning (Moroni, 2020).

2. Literature Review
2.1 Definition and Characteristics of Street Traders or Vendors

Street trading, a significant part of the informal sector, accounts for a large portion of employment within this sector (Doyin, 2013). Street vendors engage in activities such as repackaging and selling goods including snacks, food items, non-food items (like clothing, recharge cards, household items, electronic gadgets, etc.), and offering services such as hairdressing, manicure/pedicure, and shoe repairs (Nkrumah-Abebrese & Schachtebeck, 2017). Participants in street trading span various age groups, including adults and children, with women making up over 70% of this workforce (Mitullah, 2004; Nkrumah-Abebrese & Schachtebeck, 2017). The decades-old definition of the informal sector by the International Labour Organization (ILO) still aptly describes the nature and structure of these activities, characterized by easy entry and exit, reliance on local resources, family ownership, small-scale operations, labour-intensive methods, adapted technology, alternative skill acquisition outside the formal education system, unregulated and highly competitive markets, and often lacking legitimacy and adequate government support (Onyebueke & Anierobi, 2014). Other attributes of these businesses include minimal capital investment, and low levels of education and skill among operators, many of whom are recent rural-to-urban migrants (Bhowmik, 2003; Bogoro, 2016).

In Nigeria and other African countries, street trading is an integral part of the retail structure. It maintains supply chain linkages with traditional main markets, large industries, and major sales outlets (Recio, 2021; Steel et al., 2014). These businesses are not only socio-economically and culturally embedded in the African urban system but are also physically or spatially entrenched. Street shopping areas are often situated in or near places with high pedestrian and vehicular traffic (Watson, 2018; Nkrumah-Abebrese & Schachtebeck, 2017; Onyebueke & Anierobi, 2014). Unlike larger retail outlets such as urban markets and central super/hypermarkets, street vendors actively pursue potential customers to increase patronage. This practice has led many traders to occupy attractive but unauthorized vacant sites or even to abandon established shopping centers located away from high-traffic areas, as observed in the Azikiwe-Dhamidja Shopping Belt in Enugu, Nigeria (Onyebueke & Anierobi, 2014). The relationship between street traders and urban authorities is often fraught with issues, stemming from the challenging work environment and conflicting uses of public spaces (Nkrumah-Abebrese & Schachtebeck, 2017; Racaud, Kago & Owuor, 2018), which will be explored in more detail later.

2.2 Contributions and Complications of Street Trading

Street trading, a key part of the informal sector, significantly contributes to urban and national economies, particularly in the global South (Bromley, 2000; Mitullah, 2004; Bhowmik, 2005). In Nigeria, for example, over 80% of total employment is attributed to the informal sector, with a large portion of this workforce engaged in street trading (Onyebueke & Geyer, 2012). This vocation is not only a vital source of livelihood but also offers opportunities for entrepreneurship training, household income generation, and potentially mitigating urban poverty and social inequality (Donovan, 2008; Chen, 2012). Steel, Ujoranyi, and Owusu (2014) acknowledge street traders as crucial, cost-effective intermediaries in distributing goods and services, linking the formal and informal sectors to maintain low living costs and expand consumer choices. A study in sub-Saharan Africa also highlighted the growing preference for open-air food vendors, a trend expected to continue (Corrie et al., 2022).

However, street trading also presents various challenges. Matamanda, Kalaoane, and Chakwizira (2023) note the spatial dynamics of informal trading, indicating a mix of resilience and opposition to formal retail stakeholders. Issues include competition with formal shops, the untidiness of trading spaces, and contributions to traffic congestion and obstruction, particularly when situated near road junctions or on major avenues (Bogoro, 2016). These aspects are often cited by opponents of the informal sector as factors that degrade urban aesthetics, image, and economic competitiveness (Donovan, 2008). Furthermore, street trading is associated with the "working children" phenomenon, leading to adverse effects on child operators,

including potential truancy and heightened risks for girl children, such as sexual abuse (Osaiyuwu et al., 2022; Ugochukwu et al., 2012; Bello & Osunde, 2022).

Street traders themselves face several operational challenges. The formal economy's failure to recognize the value of street trading leads to tensions and conflicts in many African cities, particularly regarding permit issuance, taxation, and operational conditions (Bandauko & Mandisvika, 2015; Matamanda & Chinozvina, 2020; Resnick, 2020; Matamanda et al., 2023). The Bellagio Declaration identifies six common global problems faced by street traders: lack of legal status and the right to vend, inadequate space or poor location, restrictive licensing, high regulatory costs, harassment including bribes and evictions, lack of services and infrastructure, and insufficient representation or voice (Mitullah, 2004). Understanding these contributions and challenges is crucial for planning authorities when developing management approaches for street trading in cities.

2.3 Street Traders-Urban Planners Relationships

Street trading activities are usually unregulated and disorganised, and consequently, several physical, social and environmental menaces ensue (Racaud, Kago & Owuor, 2018). City authorities relate street trading with insecurity, congestion, and chaos (Racaud, Kago & Owuor, 2018). These distortions in the urban landscape have informed the repressive measures of evictions, prohibitive fines and detentions, confiscation and destruction of their goods, among others. Potts (2008) opined that there is a lack of distinct regulatory framework and political recognition for street trading by the government, and this makes vendors susceptible to harassment by city authorities in a number of African capital cities. Spire and Choplin (2018) showed how Accra urban management officials have used decongestion and beautification as a reason for the relocation of street vendors from strategic segments of the city. Thus, despite the size and its contribution to decreasing social and economic exclusion, local authorities still refuse to identify with street trading (Chen et al., 2016; Skinner, 2008).

Notwithstanding what appears to be incessant repressions, city authorities have been urged to embrace a more humane approach to the management of street trading and urban informality. In fact, informality has been underlined as one of the the outstanding challenge of planning sustainable cities in the 21st Century (UN-HABITAT, 2009). This report further showed that the traditional methods of urban planning have been unsuccessful in enhancing efficient, equitable and sustainable settlements in both Global North and South (Onodugo et al., 2016; Moroni, 2020). Whether allocating trading spaces or carrying out evictions and relocations, urban planners acting in both institutional and professional settings tend to evaluate their decisions and actions from either two ethical positions – the consequentialist viewpoint that prioritizes the outcome or the deontological equivalent that downplays the outcome but magnifies the intrinsic logic or rationale of the interventions (Moroni, 2020). Whatever the case may be, there is an evolving worldwide consensus as epitomized by the 1995 Bellagio International Declaration of Street Vendors and other global resolutions by street vendors, vendors associations, city governments, and national/international organizations for urban planning to be more inclusive, collaborative and deliberative (Mitullah, 2004; Onodugo et al., 2016; Moroni, 2020). For instance, India has transitioned from a stance of excluding street vendors to one of accommodating and regulating them under the fundamental right covenant of the national constitution through the implementation of the National Policy on Street Trading in 2004 (revised in 2009) (Steel, et al, 2014; WIEGO, 2012). In light of the above, this study investigates the possibility of rethinking the management approach for street trading control in Enugu City by urban planners and academics.

3. Study Area and Methodology
3.1 The city of Enugu, Nigeria
Enugu, the capital of Enugu state in the Southeast geopolitical zone of Nigeria (see figure 1 below), was established from the old Anambra State on 27 August 1991. Its name, derived from the Igbo words Énú and Úgwú ("hilltop"), reflects the city's hilly terrain. Located at 6°30' North of the Equator and 7°30' East of Latitude, Enugu consists of three local governments: Enugu North, Enugu South, and Enugu East. As the state capital, it hosts major economic activities and administrative offices, including the state secretariat and various specialized agencies. The city, with a total land area of 7,161 km², developed following coal mining in 1915 (Onyebueke & Ndukwu, 2017).

Street trading in Enugu is a manifestation of the populace's survival efforts. The growing prevalence and pattern of street trading warrant attention. This includes hawkers along major transportation routes and neighborhoods, and stationary vendors occupying spaces outside designated commercial areas or public spaces. Notable areas like Abakpa, Mkpokiti, Mayor, and the Ogbete market-Holy-Ghost axis are evolving into neighborhood markets. Despite frequent evictions, traders persistently return, diversifying and expanding their trade (Onodugo et al., 2016). Parts of Ogbete layout, Obiagu, Ogui layout, and Abakpa layout have transformed into mini-markets, creating a distinct impression for newcomers. Other places include garriki (agbai road axis) and major (Agbani road axis) shown in figure 2.
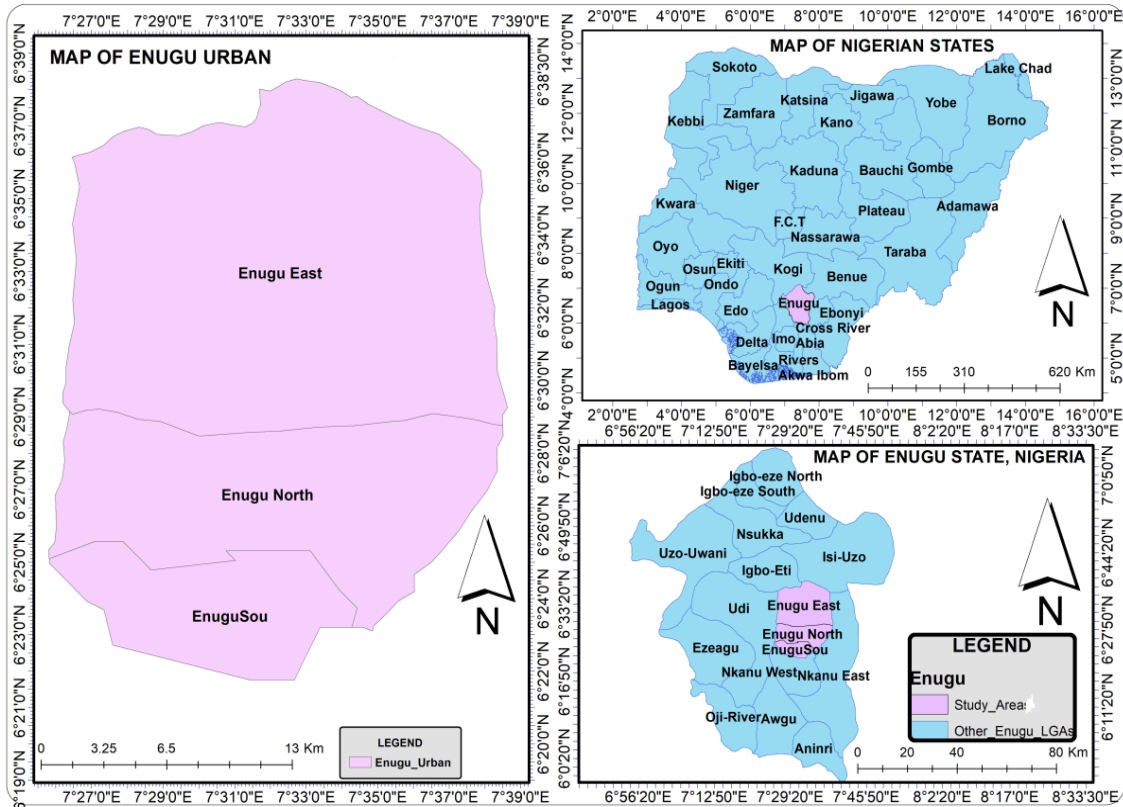

Figure 1. Maps showing the Study Location.

3.2 Study Methodology

The study employs both qualitative and quantitative research methods. The sample frame was drawn from the Nigeria Institute of Town Planning, Enugu State Register. Primary data collection involved semi-structured questionnaires, in-depth interviews, and direct observation. Direct observation helped establish the existing locational pattern of street trading in Enugu Metropolis. Semi-structured questionnaires and in-depth interviews were used to gather town planners' perceptions of street trading activities in Enugu urban.

The sample included 70% of registered town planners from academic institutions and 80% from urban planning agencies, totalling 35 individuals. Of these, 34 questionnaires were returned and analyzed. Respondents were selected based on a minimum of ten years of urban planning experience to ensure knowledgeable insights into street trading management. This approach aimed to consolidate responses from the questionnaire, focusing on planners' awareness, perceptions, and potential planning solutions for street trading. The questionnaire was designed to ensure anonymity, limiting open-ended questions to reduce handwriting recognition risks. A paper-based format was used to facilitate participation without the need for internet access. Consent information was provided as a preamble to the questionnaire, allowing respondents to freely agree or disagree with participation. Ethical considerations for interviews included informing potential interviewees about the research aims, researchers' identities, interviewees' rights, use of recording devices, and consent for interview venue and timing. This information was communicated via social media, adhering to principles of informed consent and transparency (Bryman, 2012; Social Research Association-

SRA, 2003). Privacy and non-disclosure of participant identities were ensured by using pseudonyms. All data collected, from both questionnaires and interviews, were secured from external access.

4. Findings and Discussion

4.1 Profile of Respondents

The analysis of the questionnaire responses from urban planners in Enugu Metropolis provides a demographic breakdown of the participants. The gender distribution among the respondents is predominantly male, with 70.59% male and 29.41% female, indicating a male-dominated profession in this region (Table 1). The age distribution of the respondents is varied, with the majority falling within the 40-49 age bracket (47.05%), followed by 20.59% in the 50-59 age range, 17.65% in the 30-39 age range, 11.77% aged 60 and above, and a small percentage (2.94%) in the 20-29 age group (Table 1).

In terms of educational qualifications, the respondents demonstrate a high level of academic achievement in the field of urban planning. Only a small fraction (2.94%) holds an OND/HND, while a significant portion has higher degrees: 29.41% possess a B.Sc degree, 41.18% have a Master's degree, and 26.47% have earned a Doctorate in urban planning. This composition suggests that the respondents have sufficient academic experience to provide informed perspectives on street trading in Enugu Metropolis. The work experience of the respondents further underscores their expertise in the field. A notable 26.47% have 10-14 years of professional experience, 23.53% have 15-19 years, 14.71% have 20-24 years, 11.76% have 25-29 years, and another 11.76% have 30 years or more of experience in urban planning (Table 1). This distribution indicates that most of the registered town planners surveyed have attained a significant number of years in professional practice, providing a robust basis for their insights and opinions on the subject of street trading and its management in the urban context of Enugu.

Table 1. Background data on Urban Planners Administered Questionnaire.

		Academic Institutions		Planning Agencies		Total	
Sex		**Freq.**	**Percentage**	**Freq.**	**Percentage**	**Freq.**	**Percentage**
	Male	10	76.92	14	67	24	70.59
	Female	3	23.08	7	33	10	29.41
	Total	13	100	21	100	34	100
Age	20-29	1	7.69	0	0	1	2.94
	30-39	-	-	6	28.6	6	17.65
	40-49	4	30.77	12	57.14	16	47.05
	50-59	4	30.77	3	14.26	7	20.59
	60 above	4	30.77	-	-	4	11.77
	Total	13	100	21	100	34	100
Education	OND/HND	-	0	1	4.76	1	2.94
	BURP	2	15.38	8	38.10	10	29.41
	MURP	2	15.38	12	57.14	14	41.18
	PhD	9	69.23	-	0	9	26.47
	Others	-	0	-	0	0	-
	Total	13	100	21	100	34	100
Years in Practice	0-5	1	7.69	2	9.52	3	8.82
	6-11	2	15.38	7	33.33	9	26.47
	12-17	1	7.69	7	33.33	8	23.53
	18-23	4	30.77	1	4.76	5	14.71
	24-29	3	23.08	1	4.76	4	11.76
	30 above	2	15.38	2	9.52	4	11.76
	Nil	-	-	1	4.76	1	2.94
	Total	13	100	21	100	34	

Source: Researchers' Field Survey, 2019.

The interviewees were selected from those who have practised the town planning profession for more than ten years as shown in Table 2 below. Each of the interview session lasted for about 45 minutes. The sessions

were all recorded using a recording device (android phone) and saved into a separate memory for security purposes. This was later written out for clarity and data presentation. However, the recording was listened to over and over again to gain familiarity and an in-depth understanding of the comments and answers. Due to the interrelationship between the questions in the questionnaire and the interview schedule, the presentation of data was married together for a better understanding and coherent conveyance of the findings.

Table 2. Interviewee Profile.

Participant	Organization	Current position	Gender	Total work experience
AC1	University of Nigeria, Enugu Campus	Senior Lecturer	Male	26 years
AC2	Enugu State University of Science and Technology	Senior Lecturer	Male	23 years
AC3	University of Nigeria, Enugu Campus	Senior Lecturer	Male	19 years
AC4	University of Nigeria, Enugu Campus	Senior Lecturer	Male	25 years
AC5	Enugu State University of Science and Technology	Senior Lecturer	Male	17 years
TP1	Enugu State Ministry of Lands and Urban Development	Deputy Director, Town Planning Department	Male	27 years
TP2	Enugu South Town Planning Authority	Chief Executive	Male	15 years
TP3	Enugu North Town Planning Authority	Town Planning Officer	Female	16 years
TP4	Enugu East Town Planning Authority	Town Planning Officer	Male	12 years
TP5	Enugu Central Town Planning Authority	Town Planning Officer	Male	18 years

Source: Researchers' Field Survey, 2019.

4.2 Impact of Street Trading

The study's analysis of urban planners' perceptions of the impact of street trading in Enugu reveals a mixed view. A small percentage (5.9%) of urban planners perceive street trading as having only a positive impact, while 11.8% view it as solely negative. However, the majority (82.3%) recognize that street trading has both negative and positive impacts (Table 3). The identified negative impacts include traffic congestion, an unsightly environment due to illegal and unevenly placed temporary structures (like kiosks, canter tables, umbrellas, etc.), noise pollution, indiscriminate waste disposal from consumed products, encroachment on pedestrian bridges due to uncontrolled goods display, devaluation of properties (as it defaces the environment, reduces aesthetic quality and serenity), disorderliness in the environment, urbanization and overpopulation in city centers with inadequate formal employment, and environmental management problems. Disorderliness was noted as a significant negative impact, with 67% of respondents (both from academia and planning agencies) identifying it. Among planners in academia, 53.85% attributed the majority of negative impacts to issues like traffic congestion, unsightly environment, waste disposal, and disorderliness, along with exposing traders to road accidents and encouraging child abuse (Bogoro, 2016; Racaud et al., 2018). The majority of planners in planning agencies (76.19%) also highlighted disorderliness, along with child abuse (Bello and Osunde, 2022), followed by unsightly environment, waste disposal issues, environmental management problems, and the risk of road accidents to traders, with 71.43% of respondents (for each parameter) agreeing to these impacts.

These findings indicate that street trading activities significantly impact the urban environment negatively. Despite government attempts at resolution through evictions and frequent harassment, these measures have failed to curb street trading, which continues, often more intensively, in public spaces in Enugu City.

Furthermore, statistical analysis using the Chi-Square test revealed no relationship between the responses of town planners in planning agencies and those in planning institutions regarding the impact of street trading activities in Enugu. This suggests that their responses are independently asserted and not influenced by their workplace (Table 3). This finding indicates a broad consensus across different professional contexts in recognizing the multifaceted impacts of street trading in the urban environment of Enugu.

Table 3. Impact of Street Trading.

Constructs	Categories	Academic Institutions		Planning Agencies		Total		Statistics
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Chi-Square
Impact of Street Trading	Economic	9	69.23	10	47.62	19	55.88	1.548
	Social	10	76.92	8	38.10	18	52.94	
	Environmental	12	92.31	17	80.95	29	85.29	
	Nil	-	-	1	4.76	1	2.94	
Dimensions of Impact	Positive	-	0	2	9.52	2	5.88	5.0581
	Negative	1	7.69	3	14.29	4	11.76	
	Both	12	92.31	16	76.19	28	82.35	
	Total	13	100	21	100	34	100	
Negative Impacts	Traffic congestion	7	53.85	13	61.90	20	58.82	0.954
	Unsightly environment	7	53.85	15	71.43	22	64.71	
	Noise pollution from hawkers and trading activities	6	46.15	14	66.66	20	58.82	
	Indiscriminate waste disposal	7	53.85	15	71.43	22	64.71	
	Hinders proper use of pedestrian bridges	4	30.77	14	66.66	18	52.94	
	Devaluation of property value	4	30.77	10	47.62	14	41.18	
	Disorderliness in the environment	7	53.85	16	76.19	23	67.65	
	Unfair competition in the economic industry	1	7.69	5	23.81	6	17.65	
	Ruins the city image	5	38.46	14	66.66	19	55.88	
	Threatens security/ safety in neighbourhoods	4	30.77	11	52.38	15	44.12	
	Encourages informality	6	46.15	11	52.38	17	50	
	Causes urbanization and over population especially in city centres	6	46.15	11	52.38	17	50	
	Poses environmental management problems	6	46.15	15	71.43	21	61.76	
	Exposes trader to road accidents	7	53.85	15	71.43	22	64.71	
	Encourages child abuse	7	53.85	16	76.19	23	67.65	
Positive Impacts	Source of income	6	46.15	5	23.81	11	32.35	1.256
	Means of employment	6	46.15	4	19.05	10	29.41	
	Source of government revenue	4	3.08	4	19.05	8	23.53	
	Easy purchase	5	38.46	5	23.81	10	29.41	
	Offers cheaper goods	5	38.46	5	23.81	10	29.41	
	Fosters self-independence and entrepreneurial skills	5	38.46	5	23.81	10	29.41	
	Gives the trader a sense of belonging	6	46.15	3	14.29	9	26.47	
	Reduces crime rate caused by idleness due to unemployment	5	38.46	8	38.10	13	38.24	
	Causes urbanisation	2	15.38	4	19.05	6	17.65	
	Improves the people standard of living	5	38.46	4	19.051	9	26.47	

Source: Researchers' Field Survey, 2019.

Urban planners, particularly those in academia, recognize the positive impacts of street trading on social relations and the economy. They view it as a vital source of income for the unemployed and an alternative income source for vendors. Additionally, it indirectly contributes to government revenue through the purchase of daily tickets, albeit this is often not properly accounted for. Economically, street trading fosters growth, while socially, it promotes independence, entrepreneurial skills, and a sense of belonging, and can reduce crime rates associated with idleness or unemployment. It also makes goods more accessible and affordable for people across all income levels (Nkrumah-Abebrese & Schachtebeck, 2017; Racaud et al.,

2018). These perceptions align with neo-liberalism theory, emphasizing the sector's ability to support entrepreneurial endeavours with minimal formal control.

Urban planners interviewed about street trading in Enugu city shared various opinions. For instance, AC4 from the University of Nigeria noted that street trading is neither inherently good nor bad, but its impact depends on its operational mode and associated activities. An orderly operation of street trading could lead to greater appreciation and promotion of the activity. Some planners view street trading as an escape route from poverty for the masses, a survival mechanism for those not accommodated by the government or formal sector. High shop rents in commercial areas and the practice of richer vendors using market stores as warehouses while trading in outer spaces exacerbate the prevalence of street trading (TP4, TP2, AC5, AC4, and AC3).

Several interviewees (TP4, TP2, AC5, and AC3) believe street trading compensates for deficiencies in physical development plans. If included in these plans, street vendors might not be seen as a nuisance. The excessive prevalence of street trading is partly attributed to the government's inability to provide adequate and affordable commercial centres. Most urban planners agree that incorporating street traders into physical development plans would change the perception of them from being nuisances to being beneficial. However, others (AC1, AC2, TP1, and TP3) contend that even if included in development plans, street traders may retain their spatial habits and patterns. TP1 and AC2 point out that government reluctance to strictly implement existing physical development plans, often for political reasons, is a significant issue, rather than the insufficiency of the plans themselves.

Figure 2. Street trading on a pedestrian walkway, along Mayor Road and Garriki Areas in Enugu, Nigeria. (Source: Researchers' field survey, 29/ 9 / 2019).

4.3 Planning Panacea for the management of Street trading activities in Enugu city

Street trading in Enugu Metropolis exists in two modes: mobile (street hawkers) who move goods from one place to another seeking customers, and immobile street trading where vendors position their goods at a fixed point, occasionally moving around as needed. According to Table 4, 5.88% of town planners are familiar only with the mobile mode of street trading, 14.71% are familiar with the immobile mode, and a significant majority (79.41%) are aware of both modes existing in Enugu Metropolis (Doyin, 2013). This awareness indicates that most planners recognize the dual nature of street trading activities.

When exploring town planners' perceptions of solutions to the challenges posed by street trading and examining practice and policy dimensions for its management in Enugu, 64.86% believe that street trading should be integrated into planning designs. Additionally, 56.78% suggest that it should be governed by policy, 10.81% recommend segregation, 5.41% advocate for encouragement, and 16.22% suggest eliminating street trading activities. Those favouring retention, incorporation into physical development designs, policy guidance, and encouragement propose various strategies, such as:

- Increasing the setback standard by 3 meters from the fence to the road on both sides to accommodate street traders comfortably, thereby reducing conflicts with other land uses and frequent evictions.
  This approach has been adopted in countries like the United Kingdom and South Africa. This can be in form of providing mini neighbourhood markets to create designated spaces for street

traders.Emphasizing inclusive and participatory planning processes, ensuring representation of the population's interests in development plans.

- Implementing laws, policies, and regulations to effectively manage street trading, including operational modes and timings within the cityscape. Regulating operating hours to ensure street trading activities do not disrupt other urban functions.
- Initiating enlightenment programs to educate street vendors about the negative impacts of their trade and encourage compliance with regulations, while also addressing environmental issues like waste management.
- Emphasizing inclusive and participatory planning processes, ensuring representation of the population's interests in development plans.
- Suggesting policy reforms, such as regulating operating hours, area restrictions, and vendor registration, alongside development control measures to organize street trading activities within designated areas.

The Chi-Square analysis indicates that the stance of urban planners on the regulatory approach to street trading in Enugu city is not influenced by their workplace, with a p-value of 8.1235 (Table 4). This finding suggests that planners' views on managing street trading are consistent and independent of whether they work in academia or planning agencies. The consensus on incorporating street trading into urban planning indicates a shift towards recognizing and legitimizing these activities within the urban fabric of Enugu.

Table 4. Planning Panacea for Street Trading in Enugu City.

		Academic Institutions		Planning Agencies		Total		Chi-Square
Question	**Categories**	**Freq.**	**%**	**Freq.**	**%**	**Freq.**	**%**	1.2617
Location Mode for Street Trading	Mobile	-	-	2	9.52	2	5.88	
	Immobile	2	15.38	3	14.29	5	14.71	
	Both	11	84.62	16	76.19	27	79.41	
	Total	13	100	21	100	34	100	
Planning panacea for Street trading management	Should be encouraged	1	7.69	1	4.76	2	5.88	8.1235
	Should be guided with policy	6	46.15	11	52.38	17	50.00	
	Should be segregated	-	-	4	19.05	4	11.76	
	Should be incorporated in planning designs	9	69.23	13	61.90	22	64.71	
	Should be eliminated	2	15.38	4	19.05	6	28.57	

Source: Researchers' field survey, 29/ 9 / 2019).

Alternatively, other planners (AC1, AC2, TP1, TP3) recommend eliminating street trading. They propose shifting to a production-oriented economy to create jobs for both educated and uneducated individuals, which could absorb unemployment, including among street vendors. Other suggestions include regular and strict eviction of vendors, revising the master plan for functional cities, constructing new market centres, and providing low-cost shops in neighbourhoods to accommodate vendors who cannot afford traditional market spaces. While some of these measures have seen limited success in the past due to the resilience of street vendors and government limitations, they offer a comprehensive approach to urban planning and street trading management.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

This study on street trading in Enugu city reveals a complex interplay of economic, social, and urban planning challenges. Street vendors, employing both mobile and immobile structures, significantly impact the city's aesthetics. Despite efforts by urban planners to manage these activities, street trading remains prevalent and continues to grow, often leading to environmental concerns. However, the research highlights a growing recognition among urban planners of the economic and socio-cultural benefits street trading brings, particularly in light of increasing unemployment and economic hardships.

The study suggests a paradigm shift in approach, akin to successful models observed in countries like India, acknowledging street trading as an integral part of functional mixed land use in developing cities. Key

recommendations include the integration of structured trading spaces in urban designs and the adoption of inclusive planning methodologies. Such strategies aim to mitigate environmental challenges while leveraging the economic and social advantages of street trading. Additionally, the research underscores the potential for applying these findings to other Nigerian cities, aiming for a unified approach to managing street trading. This could involve assessing standards for accommodating street trading in Enugu's physical and socio-economic context.

Conflicts of Interest
The author(s) declare(s) no conflicts of interest.

Data availability statement
The original contributions presented in the study are included in the article/supplementary material; further inquiries can be directed to the corresponding author/s.

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