

Role of Local Government Authorities to Street Hawking Business in Mwanza City Council - Tanzania

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Abstract: *The paper examines the role of local government authority to street hawking business in Mwanza City. The paper dwells on the nature of street hawking merchandised business, the financial contribution of Mwanza City Council to street hawking, the extent of training and education offered and measures taken by local government authorities to promote street hawking. The study adopted case study research design under both qualitative and quantitative approaches. A sample of 150 respondents were used. The study finds that the local government authorities in Mwanza City Council plays a large role in promoting, educating, training as well as providing financial assistance to street hawkers in the area. The study recommends that the local government should provide financial assistance in the form of individual loans and not group loans to the street hawkers. It is also recommends that the local government should put into place better mechanisms for educating street hawkers and provision of health services at business premises of street hawkers.*

Keywords: Street Hawking, Local Government, Financial Support, Training, Promotion of Street Hawking Business

1. Introduction

In developing countries, the term ‘informal sector’ is broadly associated with the unregistered and unregulated small-scale activities (enterprises) that generate income and employment for the poor [3]. Liberalization and privatization have not been able to solve all problems affecting the informal sector. Therefore, the private sector is left to take up this employing responsibility. However, the private sector has not been capable of absorbing the growing number of job seekers. As a result, the informal sector has stepped in to fill in the gap [1].

During the past decade, informal sector in Africa was estimated to account for almost 80% of non-agricultural employment, over 60% of urban employment and over 90% of new jobs [6] (Charmes, 2002). In Sub-Saharan Africa, the informal sector is nothing new; the types of activities carried out in this sector have existed even prior to colonialism [21]. The informal sector in sub-Saharan Africa represents the dominant share of many sectors across the continent, especially in manufacturing, commerce, finance and mining. Activities are conducted on the streets, sidewalks and back alleys of cities and it including petty traders, street vendors, small scale artisans and shoe shiners [14].

In Tanzania, the recognition of the economic value of the informal sector came shortly after the economic hardships in the early 1980s. The economic hardships forced the government to reappraise its perceptions and policies towards local, indigenous technologies and enterprises [25]. The author shows that the informal sector provides employment opportunities for a large number of people and also it is a mechanism to generate and redistribute growth in Tanzania. In 2006, the urban informal sector employed 66% of the people for whom informal sector work is the main activity and only 16% of those for whom it is the secondary

activity [22]. In 2011, the sector was estimated to employ 2,502,327 people in Tanzania [22].

Despite the growing importance of the informal sector, the sector still faces a lot of problems which hinder its growth. It has been found that people working under informal sector are often not registered in official statistics/censuses, and they have limited access to organized markets and credit organizations, as well as to formal education and training. Most of them operate under low levels of production technology, production is labour intensive, and often the infrastructure in the immediate working environment is poor.

In policy context, there is no specific policy for the informal sector but several policies cut across to support the informal sector development. However, Tanzania has undertaken various initiatives to enable the implementation of policies to support informal sector development such as establishment of the Property and Business Formalization Programme (PBFP) and the Business Environment Strengthening for Tanzania Programme (BEST) [24]. These initiatives are normally implemented by Local Government Authorities at the local level.

Local Government Authority work within a parameter set by the central government. The principle underlying role of the local authorities is to provide social, economic and political services needed at the community level [23]. The traditional local government work's is simply liaising with agencies such as the health services practitioners, the school systems, the rural or urban infrastructure, development agencies, among others [11].

Local Government Authority has a major role to play in implementing policies and regulations initiated by government and ability to control several activities conducted under local authority including the informal

sector. Therefore, focusing on Local Government Authorities' support on the informal sector is crucial for development in Tanzania. There should be clear and known information on Local Government Authority's support towards the informal sector so that stakeholders in the sector can be in a position of understanding what support they can get from the Local Government Authority. This paper, therefore, attempts to assess the role of the Local Government Authority in supporting the informal sector in Mwanza City Council. The study will address street hawking as part of the informal sector since street hawking helps many people daily with a wide variety of things that are relatively cheap and easily accessible. Also street hawking activity offers a significant amount of employment opportunities, often to persons who have little education and training [17].

2. Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Framework

The trade and informal sector theory developed by Stolper-Samuelson commonly known as Heckscher-Ohlin (HO) model does best explain the influence of globalization on the developing economies. The theory states that "trade liberalization – a major component of the globalization process – leads to an increase in demand for labour-intensive exportable good in developing countries (assuming that this is the relatively abundant factor) resulting in an increase in its price and wages of those employed in this sector". From globalization point of view this theorem is interpreted as infusion of new patterns of trade, capital transfer and diffusion of technology into informal sector in developing economies which intern increase demand of labour of merchandised goods and services either for export on imported ones. Furthermore, globalization is contended to be one of the factors contributing to unemployment. [16] explain the contribution of globalization on unemployment that it has come with high technology in industrialization replacing human labour, gearing to local cost of production, high turnover and intensifying competition resulting into scarcity of employment in formal sector and pushing people into redundancy and vulnerability.

[16] affirms that street hawking increased immensely from 1980s to 1990s and became the largest employer in Dar es Salaam. This is associated with structural adjustment of economy in the country where the government adjusted its economy from state-owned economy to market-based economy leaving people to fend themselves in labour market. On the other hand, globalization is asserted to minimize ability of local and infant industries in the country to find its way into free market economy thus reducing chances of employment creation. Street vending therefore, remains a coping strategy for survival [16].

The HO Model is adopted in this paper to study the contribution of street hawking in development and how it can integrate into national development agenda as a profitable and taxable sector. Moreover, the Model is used to help in determining the ways in which the LGA can help street hawkers in their immediate environment through the

provision of entrepreneur skills found in the world through globalization.

2.2 Empirical Literature

2.2.1 Meaning of Local Government Authority

The United Nations Office for Public Administration defines local government as: A political subdivision of a nation or (in a federal system) state, which is constituted by law and has substantial control of local affairs, including the powers to impose taxes or to exact labour for prescribed purposes. The governing body of such an entity is elected or otherwise locally selected.

2.2.2 Functions of Local Government in Area of Jurisdiction

The basic functions of the local government in Tanzania are maintenance of law, order and good governance; promotion of economic and social welfare of the people within their areas of jurisdiction; and lastly ensuring effective and equitable delivery of qualitative and quantitative services to the people within their areas of jurisdiction [23]. Another function is ensuring the collection and proper utilization of the revenues of the council. Therefore, it is expected that people will get services from the local government including those involved in the informal sector.

2.2.3 Strategies Taken by Local Government in Promoting the Development of Informal Sector

In Africa local government has tended and still tends to deal with informal economy participants largely on the basis of by-law formulation, particularly in respect of street traders [7]. Tanzania recognizes that a substantial amount of economic activities taking place in the small and medium business are not well recognized and regulated and for that case the government of Tanzania has developed strategies to support informal sector. According to [7], initiatives are in place to ensure gradual transition of economic activities from informal to formal. For informal sector operators to be afforded opportunity to expand, they have first and foremost to be formal. Only then can finances be channelled to the sector to bridge the savings-investment gap in the sector.

According to [12], the Local Government Authorities in Dar es Salaam were found to be vital in providing facilitation to small businesses through licensing, allocation of space for business premises, financial services, health and quality control, setting rules and regulations, and policy management. In South Africa, for example, the government has taken a step forward in recognizing the vital function of the informal sector. The South African authorities have designed policy measures that improve the business environment for the informal operators as well as promote its growth and development [5]. The government is now committed to continue promoting a favourable environment for the informal activities including street hawkers.

2.3 Challenges Faced by Government in Developing Informal Sector

[18] mentioned one of the challenges facing most developing countries including Tanzania is the presence of highly growing informal sector and the presence of this

sector is a challenge for taxation, regulation, financing, reforms, and provision for social services. However, the position from local government towards street vendors is ambiguous. It changes often with every new mayor and political fashion [8].

Other challenges local governments experience with regards to the sector include acknowledging the importance and presence of the sector and facilitating its changes; dealing with the complexity and diversity within the informal sector; bridging the relationship and communication gap between local government and the informal economy; including informal sector issues into local government policies, regulations and planning processes; developing local economic development friendly policies and by-law guidelines for the sector and involving national departments in supporting the efforts of local government to develop and implement a more developmental approach towards the sector.

2.4 Street Hawking in Tanzania

In Tanzania the informal sector is one of the fast growing employing sectors. Street vending is currently estimated to account for 40% of GDP and contributes to 35-55% of total national tax revenue [13]. The sector is estimated to employ 4-5 million people (11% of the total population) in the country. Generally, merchandise of industrial goods and services engineered by street vending accounts for 58% of the total informal sector operations [22]. Presently, informal sector is facing number of challenges and one of the being lack of data of informal sectors [23].

The vulnerability facing street hawking business is lying on the threshold of numerous factors including infrastructure. Poor infrastructure namely dilapidated transport systems, storage facilities, water, electricity, working premises and inadequately physical marketing facilities are cited by [10] and [2] to be some of the infrastructural challenges facing people involved in hawking employment. [2] and [22] mentioned lack of adequate formal schooling, managerial and entrepreneurial skills, limited financial capabilities, excessive government regulations, improper social security schemes, cumbersome taxation procedures and few marketing opportunities are the major factors facing street hawking in Tanzania. Street hawking in Tanzania is also characterized by lack of permanent premises and poor social amenities pushing their business to remain at subsistent level.

2.5 Studies on Street Hawking

A study done in Bangkok found that the opportunity for employment was dependent upon location. Those living near the trading areas were able to sell food and merchandise, provide portage services, and collect used materials for reselling. Those living near factories were able to sell food and beverages. These economic activities were not registered and were highly vulnerable to risks of all sorts, which is why most of the people surveyed indicated that they wanted formal employment.

It has also been that found that the informal sector plays a crucial role in urban poverty alleviation through creating jobs and reducing unemployment [19]. Consequently, many developing countries are recognizing the sector's importance in their economy and trying to put appropriate policies in place to encourage the sector. In view of its contribution to socio-economic development, an enabling environment has to be created for operators in order to facilitate the transition of the sector to formality.

[1] provides that shortage of working capital is the major impediment that the youth have indicated in the sector. In this respect, the author provides that the policy makers need to design imperative measures to solve this hindrance factor, such as through providing access to microcredit and/or special credit services. Lack of working premises is the other challenge that the operators are confronted with, which deserves an immediate attention by the government. Similarly, it is also vital to tackle the problems of an inadequate market and a shortage of raw materials.

Studies by [20] and [1] discuss the main reasons for the existence of informal sector and the main conclusion is that majority of people practicing informal labour are from poor families, less educated and mostly young. They come from less developed areas to the cities trying to survive.

2.6 Research Gaps

Most of the reviewed literature and reports have focused on the significance of informal sector towards urban income poverty reduction in developing economies. This paper investigates the contribution of the local government authorities to street hawking in urban income in Mwanza City and how the sector can be harmonized with Mwanza City Development.

3. Sample and Methodology

3.1 Sample

The target population under this study comprises of three categories: Government officials, NGOs officials who deal with street hawkers as the key informant and street hawkers.

The sample size for this paper is 150 respondents distributed as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents

S/N	Respondent Category	Number Of Respondents
1	Government officials	6
2	NGOs officials	6
3	Street hawkers	138
	Total	150

Source: Researcher Own Design, 2018

3.2 Data Collection Method and Instruments

Data collection for the study involves survey, interview and documentary review. Questionnaires are used to collect data from 138 respondents who are small scale traders. An interview is used to collect data from 6 Ward Executive Officers, 2 and 6 NGOs officials well as 10 street hawkers as these key informants provide relevant and sufficient

information to the study. The method will be used because it is flexible and information could be obtained in detail and well explained. Interview enables a researcher to get immediate feedback from respondents at same time to make follow up by asking extra questions. A documentary review will also be used to collect data.

3.3 Data Analysis and Presentation

In this study both qualitative and quantitative techniques have been used in analyzing data. The qualitative technique have used for description and interpretation of data through logical reasoning, while quantitative approach have used in the analysis. The quantitative techniques have used to analyze data through graphical presentation such as charts, percentages and tables.

4. Empirical Results

4.1 General Characteristics of the Respondents

The respondents in this study were divided in to various categories as follows there were government officials who deal with the street hawkers on a daily basis, officials from non-governmental organization which help in providing loans and training to the street hawkers all these people were included in the study because the information that they have is relevant to the study in one way or another

4.1.1 Gender of the respondents

The gender of the respondents was discussed so as to determine whether in the study there were more male or female respondents. The results are as follows 110 (73.3%) of the respondents were male while 40 (26.7%) of the respondents were female. The results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Gender of the respondents

S/N	Sex	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Male	110	73.3
2.	Female	40	26.7
	Total	150	100.0

Source: Field findings, (2019)

4.1.2 Age of the Respondents

The respondents' ages are shown in Table 3. The majority of the respondents are between 21 – 30 years of age. The implication of these findings is that most of respondents were in the productive age injecting a lot into economically active population. However this is also the group suffering from unemployment that accounts for 11.7% of total labour force in Tanzania. On the other hand, it is realized from the findings that 35.5% of respondents were below 20 years of age. This signifies that there is also child labour in street hawking. Some respondents contended that household economic hardship and poverty is one of the major factors influencing children dropping out from primary school and involved in street hawking. It can therefore be concluded that age is one of the factors influencing people to involve in street hawking as a way out of unemployment in the country.

Table 3: Age of the Respondents

S/N	Sex	Frequency	Percentage
1.	20- below	53	35.3
2.	21 30 years	61	40.7
3.	31- 40 years	20	13.3
4.	41- 50 years	10	6.7
5.	50 years and above	6	4
	Total	150	100.0

Source: field findings

4.1.3 Marital Status of the Respondents

It was important for the researcher to examine the marital status of the respondents and the results are as follows 64 (42.7%) were married, 46(30.7%) were single, 18(12%) were divorced and only 22(14.6%) were single parents. These figures can be reported in Table 4.

Table 4: marital status of the respondents

S/N	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Married	64	42.7%
2.	Single	46	30.7%
3.	Divorced	18	12%
4.	Single parent	22	14.6%
	TOTAL	150	100.0%

Source: Field findings, 2019

From the Table 4 the majority of the respondents are those who are married. The significance of these results are that the socio-economic pattern of married and single pushes them to seek any employment available to make ends meet. This was also discussed by [9] and [22] that household socio-economic hardships forcing married and single to do petty trading including street hawking. Marital status is thus regarded by this study as one of the factors influencing people to involve in street hawking.

4.1.4 Educational level of the Respondents

The respondents were asked to state their education levels and their responses are reported in Table 5.

Table 5: Educational levels of the respondents

S/N	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Degrees	8	5.3
2.	Masters	2	1.3
3.	Diplomas	2	1.3
4.	Certificate	3	2
5.	VETA	16	10.7
6.	Primary	62	41.3
7.	Secondary	42	28
8.	No formal	15	10
	Total	150	100.0

Source: Field findings (2019)

The Table 5 shows that the majority of the respondents have primary education. The respondents' low level of education implies that their capacity to attract desk jobs is low. The only option they have is to involve in informal employment creation such as street hawking. [4] cited that low level of education to be one of the challenges facing a considerable number of Tanzanians to exploited opportunities brought by the presence of free market economy. Secondly, it has also been contended that the current low education level especially in primary education is not effectively preparing informal sector operators to be able to exploit opportunities

therein. This study therefore concludes that low education level among people is one of the factors influencing them to opt street hawking.

4.2 Factors Influencing Street Hawking

There are many factors influencing street hawking in Mwanza City below are some of those reasons as mentioned by the respondents and responses are shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Factors influencing street hawking

S/N	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Financial stability	20	13.3%
2.	Flexibility of time	24	16%
3.	Small start-up capital	40	26.7%
4.	Lack education	36	24%
5	Lack of employment opportunities	30	20
Total		150	100.0%

Source: Field findings (2019)

The Table 6 shows that the majority of the respondents reported that the main reason for them being street hawkers was the small start-up capital needed to start a business.

4.2.1 Start-up Capital for Street Hawkiers

The respondents were asked where did they get the capital to start their business and the responses are reported in Table 7.

Table 7: Start-up capital for street hawkiers

S/N	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
1.	family support	9	6%
2.	Own source	99	66%
3.	government loans	30	20%
4.	microfinance institutions	10	6.7%
	Mali Kauli	2	1.3
Total		150	100.0%

Source: Field findings (2019)

The Table 7 shows that the main capital used to start business was own sources of capital. According to an interview with the local government official he said that the Local Government has been providing small businesses with loans. During the period 2018- 2019 a total of TZS 505,000,000 was given to women, disabled and youth as follows:-

- 1) A total of TZS 41,500,000 was given to small businesses.
- 2) A total of 158 Women-Groups were given loans of TZS 301,000,000/=.
- 3) The Youth groups were given TZS 162,500,000/=. A number of Youth who benefitted from these loans were 606

In view of the above, it can be seen that the Mwanza City Council provide financial support to small businesses. However, the statistics show that very few businesses benefit from the support. Through the interview, it was found that interest rate was the main factor which hinders street hawkers from getting loans from the Mwanza City Council. The interest rates range from 18% to 25%.

4.3 Types of Street Hawking Businesses

The respondents were asked about the types of street hawking business they do the results are shown in Table 8.

Table 8: Types of street hawking businesses

S/N	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Manicure and pedicure	31	20.7%
2.	Selling fruits	29	19.3%
3.	Selling cold drinks	24	16%
4.	Selling second hand clothes	35	23.3%
	House hold utensils	31	20.7
Total		150	100.0%

Source: Field findings (2019)

The findings from the Table 8 show that street hawking carried out a different number of businesses as none of them has a large percentage.

4.4 Local Government Support to Street Hawkiers

4.4.1 Training for Street Hawkiers

The respondents were asked whether they receive training for their business activities and the results are shown Table 9.

Table 9: Different Training Received by the Street Hawkiers

S/N	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
1.	VETA	20	14.6
2.	Entrepreneurship skills	30	21.7
3	No	80	63.8
Total		138	100.0

Source: Field findings (2019)

The Table 9 shows that the majority, 63.8%, of the respondents have never received any form of training concerning their business activities. This means that most of street hawkers surveyed in Mwanza City Council do not have any formal training on their street hawking. Lack of business skills is thus regarded by this study as one of the challenge facing street hawking in Tanzania.

4.4.2 Local Government Training

The respondents were asked if the Government in Mwanza provided training to the street hawkers and the responses are provided in Table 10.

Table 10: Local Government training

S/N	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Yes	86	62.3%
2.	No	52	37.7%
Total		138	100.0

Source: Field findings (2019)

From the Table 10, only 62.3% of the respondents are aware that the Local Government provided them with training so that they can conduct their businesses. During the interview the Local Government officers why asked whether the training being given to the street hawkers was relevant to the activities that they were doing that the rely was that the training being provided was entrepreneurship skills and that these skills once learnt can help the street hawkers to come up with ideas on how to improve their businesses and that the training was conducted every three month to various groups formed by women, youth and the disabled.

4.4.3 Financial Assistance from the Local Government

Financial assistance for any street hawker is important, so the respondents were asked whether the Government

provided financial assistance the answers are provided in Table 11.

Table 11: Financial Assistance from the Local Government

S/N	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Strongly agreed	30	20%
2.	Agreed	50	33.3%
3	Undecided	20	13.3%
4	Disagreed	35	23.3%
5	Strongly disagreed	15	10.1%
Total		150	100.0

Source: Field findings (2019)

The Table 11 shows that the majority of the respondents agree that the local government does give financial assistance to street hawkers in the form of small loans which are given among those traders who have formed small groups these groups are usually those formed by women, youth and the disabled

4.4.4 Special Allocated Places for Street Hawking

The respondents were asked if special places are allocated for street hawking and the responses are provided in Table 12.

Table 12: Special Allocated Places for Street Hawkers

S/N	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Yes	147	98%
2.	No	3	2%
TOTAL		150	100.0%

Source: Field findings (2019)

The Table 12 shows that 98% of the respondents said that the Local Government provides special places for street hawkers. However, during the interview the street hawkers were of the opinion that the places are too far from town center and it is difficult to get customers.

4.5 Challenges Facing Street Hawkers in Mwanza City Council

There are many challenges facing street hawking in Mwanza City and Table 14 provides responses on the challenges facing street hawkers in Mwanza City Council.

Table 14: Challenges Facing Street hawking in Mwanza City Council

S/N	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Lack of legal allocated places	46	30.7%
2.	Inadequate working capital	59	39.3%
3	Unfaithful customers	15	10%
4.	City police	10	6%
	walking long distance	20	14%
Total		150	100.0

Source: Field findings (2019)

The Table 14 shows that the majority, 59.3%, of the respondents feel that the main challenge them is inadequate working capital. The lack of legal allocated places was ranked the second challenge facing street hawkers in Mwanza City Council.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

The objective of the study was to examine the role of Local Government authorities to street hawking business. It has been found that the Local Government support to street hawking is in the form of loans which are provided in groups formed by women, youth and disabled people. It was also found that the Mwanza City Council provides education and training for street hawkers. Finally, the findings show that the best way to promote street hawking was to provide them with financial assistance individually and not only in groups and also that the education should also be provided at individual level, moreover it was said that the street hawker should be provided with adequate premises for them to conduct their businesses.

5.1 Recommendations

The study recommends that the local government should provide financial assistance in the form of individual loans and not group loans to the street hawkers. It is also recommends that the local government should put into place better mechanisms for educating street hawkers and provision of health services at business premises of street hawkers.

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