

HEALTH IN URBAN MARKETS: A SURVEY OF SIXTEEN MARKETS IN OSUN STATE *Arc.*

Otitoola, Olufikayo and Arc. Ajibola W. Kareem

Abstract

Marketplace as a socio-economic centre attracts a great number of people and now occupies substantial areas of emerging towns and cities. Sixteen regular markets in Osun State were surveyed focusing on layout and features, drainage, toilet facilities, refuse collection and disposal, electricity and water supply. The survey revealed that the marketplaces brewed conditions that erode the health of users. Toward healthy environment in the 21st century, provision of shelter, proper planning of markets, provision of toilets/washrooms and potable water, illumination and organization of effective refuse collection and disposal among others were recommended. The paper in conclusion recognizes the immense role the market users must play, the necessity of functional administrative structure and the overall desirability of self-financing markets.

Introduction

If development of towns gave ample outlets for markets, the national economic structure since Structural Adjustment Programme of the 80's have turned every (major) street into market. The ancient Yoruba townscapes had a central market often on a vast open space starting from the gateway of the principal chief (Fadipe, 1970) and local markets scattered over the quarters. These markets (whether day, evening, daily or periodic) have always attracted crowds. Clapperton and Denham in their article *Narrative of Travels and Discoveries in Northern and Central Africa* recorded in 1826, the market in Old Oyo where the crowd rolled in like a sea, the men jumping over the provision baskets, the boys dancing under the stalls, the women bawling and enlisting those who were looking after their scattered goods (Clapperton, 1926). Today, markets, as socio-economic centres, still attract men, children and women spending varying lengths of time (minutes to hours) as sellers or buyers. More so with some goods (especially foodstuff) actually passing over long distances before finally being consumed. Since markets are increasingly spreading over substantial areas of our towns 'touching' all (directly or indirectly) and have remained so for over two centuries in developing countries, the study of marketplaces certainly becomes necessary in a collective effort to ensure healthy environment in the next century.

The Survey

The survey area is between longitude 4° and 5°E and latitude 7° and 8°N and less than 500m above sea level with mean annually temperature of 27°C, annually rainfall of 1,000-1,400mm and is in Osun State of Nigeria. There are two distinct seasons, namely rainy and dry. The former is characterized by high humidity and the latter by extreme heat (dryness) with dust-laden wind generally called harmatan. Within this area, sixteen (16) frontline markets were selected (Table 1).

Table 1: Description of Markets

S/N	Name of market and location	Type/average attendance	Goods
1.	OSOGBO Oja-Oba, around Ataoja's Place	Daily 2,000	Food items, meat, goat and rams, cooking ingredients, textiles.
2.	Igbonna, Igbonna Junction along Ikirun Road	Daily (Day and Night) 2,000	Food items, fruits, building materials, household utensils, baby items, meat.
3.	Oluode, Oluode Area	Daily 1,500	Food items, fruits, household utensils, baby items, meat.
4.	Oke-Fia, along Ilobu Road, adjacent to Oke-Fia Garage	Daily 800	Food items, cooking ingredients, fresh meat and fish, household items.
5.	Ota-Efun, along Ikirun Road, Ota-Efun, Osogbo	Every five days 3,200	Food items, cast-iron pots, cooking items, meat, fish.

6.	IWO Isosu, along Oyo Road, close to Mobil	Daily (Day time) 1,000	Food items, fruits, provisions, cooking ingredients.
7.	Kaiola, along Tbadan Road	Daily (Day time) 500	Provisions, food items, fruits.
8.	Odo Ori, Iwo/Osogb/Ejigbo	Five days 5,000	Fruits, fresh meat
9.	Jankara, along Ejigbo Road close to Total Petrol Station	Daily (Day and Night) 600	Textiles, provisions, fresh meat, utensils.
10.	GVONGAN Olufi, along Ile-Ife Road	Every five days 2,000	Food items, fruits, textiles, women mats.
11.	ILE-IFE Odo-Ogbe, along Akure/Ilesha Road, around River Ogbe	Daily and every 15 days 4,500	Textiles, food items, provisions, utensils, cooking ingredients, fresh meat and fish.
12.	Oke-Gada, Station Road between Total and AP Petrol Stations and along Sabo Road	Every five days 2,800	Fish, meat, food items, utensils, cooking ingredients, provisions, fruits.
13.	Alajue, Alajuc Area	Everyday 250	Food items, cooking ingredients, utensils, eggs, fish, provisions, fruits.
14.	Timi Arae round the Timi Place, Ede	Daily (Night) 1,000	Food items, cooking ingredients, utensils, eggs, fish, meat and fruits.
15.	Oje Olofi (Eds), along Elerin Street	Every 17 days 4,000	Locally women textiles Ofi), weaving instruments and thread, food items.

Notes: Usually Great Number of Buyers and Sellers are Found During these Periods; Day (daily market) 6.30 a.m.-6.00 p.m. - Night (daily market) 7.00p.m.-9.30 p.m.

Scope of the Study

Generally soundness of condition of body, mind and spirit of any human being defines health. This survey focuses on factors that affect well-being of the body in markets; and these include condition of clean air, water, balanced diet, comfortable weather condition, exercises for the body and absence of diseases.

In each of the markets surveyed, the following were considered:

- a) The layout and feature: Description of the market layout, form and display methods;
- b) Drainage;
- c) Toilet facilities;
- d) Refuse collection and disposal;
- e) Electricity supply;
- f) Water supply.

Survey Methodology

Sixteen (16) widely patronized markets were selected in Osun State. Visits were made during market periods/days and survey carried out using guidelines itemized under 2.2. Specific details were confirmed and/or obtained from market officials and Local Government functionaries through oral interviews.

Table 2: Summary of Findings (Survey Period - July, 1998)

S/N	Name & Location	Layout & Feature Built	Provision for Display	Toilet Facilities	Drainage	Refuse Collection &	Electricity Supply	Water Supply (e.g. NEPA)
1.	Oja-Oba	Built up shops, open space (traditional)	In shops (shelves, etc.) and on the	None	None except gutters along the roads	Not organized	NEPA overhead cables available and connecte	None except in nearby houses
2.	Igbonna	Linear market: Open stalls and shops	On counter and ground	None	None except gutters along the road	Not organized	NEPA cables available, local candles, lamps and	None except in nearby houses
3.	Oluode Oke-Fia	Linear market: covered stalls, stalls with a wide open space	On counters and ground tables and on ground	None	None except gutters along planned	Not organized	Available in some shops only in shops	None except in nearby houses
5.	Ota-Efun IWO	Open market	Mostly on open, few on counters	None	None	Not organized	None	None
6.	Isosu	Yoruba traditional city centre market: open and lock-up	On ground, counters and shop shelves	None	None	No provision for central collection	Street light and NEPA overhead cables are available	None
7.	Kojola	Lock-up stalls by the Local Government	In shop racks. counters and on open	None	Drainage channels provided	No provision for central collection	Available in shops	None
8.	Odo Ori	Government built market stalls,	On racks, shelves in shops,	None	Gutters in place but not	Refuse centre provided but not	Available in shops	None
9.	Jankara SEKONA	Built up shops	In shop racks and display cases	Yes, drains and drains are now blocked	Yes, some drains are now blocked	Refuse centre provided but no longer used	Available in shops	None
10.	Sekona GBONGA N	Linear open market	On open ground and counters	None	None except drains along the road	Not organized	NEPA overhead line available	None
11.	Olufi Market	Linear open market	On ground open	None	Except along the road	Not planned	NEPA overhead lines available	None
	ILE-IFE							

12.	OdoOgbe	Nucleated market: lockup and open stalls, open	In shops, on open ground, tables and make shift	None	None natural slope towards the	No provision	Available in shops and along the street	None
13.	EDE Oke-Gada	Linear open market	On counters and ground along the road and on open gutters	None	No proper drainage to the partly broken open	No organized systems	NEPA lines available	None except in the nearby houses
14.	Alajue	Linear	On counters and	None	None	No organized	NEPA available	None
15.	Timi Market	Traditional Centre Market	On counters and ground	None	None	No organized one	Street light available (though	None
16.	Oja Olofi	Traditional open market along and on roads and street blocked to vehicular	On counters and ground	None	None	Refuse centre provided but not regularly collected	NEPA lines available	None

Findings and Discussions

The marketplaces were either built up or open mostly along roads and streets. They are 'enclosed' by houses, shops and/or roads/streets. Goods were displayed on shelves, counters and (predominantly) the ground. Only one had toilet facility (though not functioning) and no conscious efforts were made to drain water especially storm-water that carries dirt, etc, in its wake. Refuse collection and disposal were not organized, potable water was not strictly available and illumination during night markets was from lamps and lanterns.

Most activities in the markets were carried out without shelter of any permanent kind (even shades by tree) from intense solar radiation in the afternoons. Some of the built-up stores were closely spaced leaving less than 2 metres between roofs. Dust is a favourable medium for viruses and bacteria spreading pathogenic organisms (causing most communicable disease) when inhaled or deposited on foods.

The body's immunity can always be overcome with sufficient quantities of these pathogenic-laden dust. Saliva, phlegm, urine, human and animal excreta, decaying fruits, animals, etc, from one section of the market or town are transferred by storm-water and dust among others to other sections.

Water is a basic necessity of life and its absence in the market will lead many to use (drink or wash goods with) water from doubtful sources. For example, fruits consumed during transactions in the markets are not washed or are washed with water of doubtful quality. Most sellers spend an average of eight hours in the market during which food will be eaten; urine and excreta passed. This can be made worse by children who may not be able to go far or be conditioned to hold in.

Conclusion and Recommendations

If the findings are similar to what obtains in other parts of the country, the attitude of individuals, market societies and local government toward markets (Not neglecting the 'markets' sprouting all over urban streets) and revolutionary changes.

Extreme hotness*, poor ventilation, exhaust fumes from petrol and diesel engines, lamps, noise from amplified sources, unhygienic/unsanitary practices, absence of drainage, toilet facilities and organized refuse disposal among others erode the health of market users. It has been logically envisaged that there will be a return of old communicable diseases as well as the emergence of new ones and the evolution of anti-microbial resistance resulting from less effective curative treatments for a wide range of parasitic, bacterial and viral infections (Jimoh, 1998).

The following are recommended to ensure that markets contribute to healthy living in the next century.

- i. Planting of trees and provision of stalls.

- ii. Proper planning of markets allowing for drainage, adequate ventilation and provision of raised platforms (250mm high) for display in open markets,
- iii. Organization of effective refuse collection and disposal,
- iv. Provision of adequate toilets and washrooms.
- v. Provision of potable water and illumination for night markets.

Extreme hotness: The mean annual temperature that will result from on-going global warming is not yet correctly estimated. However, recent experiences in the South where humidity is often high approximate extreme discomfort.

These can only be implemented when the market societies and users are recognized as stakeholders. Each market should set up administrative structure and raise enough funds for its operation.

Reference

Clapperton, H. and Denham, D. (1926): *Narrative of Travels and Discoveries in Northern and Central Africa by Major Dohain, Capt. Clapperton and the Late Dr. Oudney*. London: John Murray. P. 12.

Fadipe, N.A. (1970): *The Sociology of the Yoruba*. Ibadan: University Press. P. 12.

Jimoh, A. (1998): Re-emergence of Old Communicable Diseases. *The Guardian*. 20th August, 1998. Science and Health Section, Vol. 22, P. 22.

Oxford/Philip (1979): *Nigeria: South Atlas for Nigeria*. Ibadan: Oxford University Press. P. 2.