

University of Calabar Students' Contributions to the Livelihood of Traders in Goldie Market, Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria

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Abstract

There is always a mutual dependence between students and petty traders in university towns across Nigeria. The study focused on the University of Calabar students' contributions to the livelihood of traders in the Goldie Market serving the University. It was hypothesized that the purchasing power of students, their population and level of patronage do not significantly affect the livelihood of petty traders. The study adopted the survey design and accidentally sampled 200 respondents using the questionnaire as the instrument of data collection. Data obtained was analysed using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and a significant relationship between the students' purchasing power, their population and patronage on the traders' livelihood was found. To avoid urban poverty among petty traders, government should support the petty traders and the informal sectors through providing credit facilities with less interest, so they can always have stock of goods to meet student's demand.

Keywords: Universities, Livelihood, Purchasing Power, Patronage, Students, Traders

Introduction

Petty trading is a predominant socio-economic activity that serves the mass of low-income populace in the speedily urbanizing developing countries. In Nigeria, women are the most engaged in petty trading, especially around educational institutions where students are the major patrons. Students usually have very active social lives especially in the university and happily spend the greater part of their budget on buying foodstuff in the market (Laufer, 2009). The purchasing power of students has a positive impact on the livelihood of petty traders. Neil (2000) also averred that the petty trading business strongly depends on the students' purchasing power.

Etuk (2008) reported that the petty trader needs to be aware of the purchasing power of students in his or her target market group. To earn profits, the petty traders follow a market ensuring that their student patrons give money for their wares and services at cost points. To ascertain cost and purchase stock, petty traders deliberate on the buying power of the present market. Having sufficient inventories help them to meet demand at lucrative price points but not a large quantity of goods that cannot be sold by the petty traders given the purchasing power of the market (William, 2001).

Ihejiamaizu (2001) considered the relevance of population in respect to university student population to the livelihood of petty traders in his study. He affirmed that the swift increase in the informal sector is a contribution from the student's populations in prevailing cities. Etuk (2003) found that prices of several goods being sold to student increased as

population of students increased. Within the Calabar environment, the high students' numbers have positively impacted market value in and around the major higher educational institutions. Students want to live as close to their place of study as possible; but where there is an under supply of market goods, demand spills over into nearby neighbourhood.

Ozok (2002) considered patronage in business as the impulses, desire and consideration within the consumer or customers, which induce the purchase of goods from certain outlets or company. Patronage by students arises from diverse motivations, tastes and preferences (Etuk, 2008). They constantly seek solutions to their needs through product offerings, advertisements and promotional messages. For the success of any business, customer satisfaction and qualities of service are critical factors. Customers' satisfaction in relation to their patronage is vital to the petty trading business for the reason that it is normally assumed to be a noteworthy determinant of replicate sales and customers' loyalty (Dominici and Guzzo, 2010). Valdani (2009) points out that the existence of petty trading business is due to the availability of a customer to serve. For high patronage among potential buyers, the development of high-quality service resulting in customers' satisfaction is key. To win customers and encourage them to purchase their goods, petty traders are now more proactive in meeting and satisfying customers' needs rather than being reactive (Etuk, 2008). So high patronage by buyers and high sells by trader have to do with the effort of the traders.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study sought to:

1. Establish the extent to which the purchasing power of students influences the livelihood of petty traders.
2. Determine the relationship between students' population and the livelihood of petty traders.
3. Examine the influence of students' level of patronage and livelihood of petty traders.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The following research hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

1. Purchasing power of students has no significant relationship with livelihood of petty traders.
2. Students' population does not significantly relate with livelihood of petty traders.
3. There is no significant relationship between students' level of patronage and livelihood of petty traders.

METHODOLOGY

Area of study

The study was conducted in Goldie Market, Calabar South Local Government Area, Cross River State, Nigeria. Calabar South has a couple of higher educational institutions and petty trading areas are common around these institutions; notable among them is the Goldie

Market close to the University of Calabar. Therefore, the contribution of the University of Calabar students to the overall livelihood of the petty traders in the study area needs to be determined.

Population of the study

The population studied comprised petty traders, students and others who patronize the Goldie Market. This study population was considered appropriate because of their level of involvement, understanding and experience of the phenomenon under study.

Research design

The study adopted the survey design and the research was performed using structured questionnaire. The sample population comprised 200 respondents from the population of the study selected through the convenience sampling techniques. A questionnaire tagged 'contribution of university students to the livelihood of petty traders (COUSTLPT)' was developed for the study. It was divided into three sections. Section A consisted of the demographic data of the respondents. Section B was designed using a 4-point Likert type scale as follows: Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. It contains items measuring the independent variables of the study including the purchasing power of students, students' population and students' level of patronage of goods. Section C focused on the dependent variables, which was the livelihood of petty traders. It was also measured using a 4-point Likert type scale.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Demographic distribution of respondents

Variables	No. of respondents	Percentage
Sex		
Male	78	39
Female	122	61
Total	200	100
Age		
Below 20 years	24	12
20-24 years	78	39
25-29 years	56	28
30-34years	36	18
35years and above	6	3
Total	200	100
Marital status		
Single	128	64
Married	54	27
Divorced/Separated	14	7
Widowed	4	2
Total	200	100

Occupation		
Students	90	45
Traders	100	50
Others	10	5
Total	200	100
Educational level		
Primary Education	10	5
Secondary Education	50	25
Tertiary Education	140	70
Total	200	100

Source: Field work, 2018.

Data in table 1 revealed that seventy eight (39%) respondents were males while 122 (61%) were females. Twenty four (12%) respondents were below 20 years, 78 (39%) were 20-24 years, 56 (28%) were 25-29years, 36 (18%) were 30-34 years while 6 (3%) were 35 years and above. One hundred and twenty eight (64%) -respondents were single, 54 (27%) were married, 14 (7%) were divorced/separated while 4 (2%) were widowed, and this suggests that the respondents were predominantly single, possibly with little family responsibilities. Also, 90 (45%) respondents were student customers, 100 (50%) were petty traders while 10 (5%) respondents were others like civil servants and artisans who were at the market at the time of the questionnaire distribution. The distribution of respondents by educational level showed that ten (5%) respondents had obtained Primary Education, 50 (25%) had Secondary Education, while 140 (70%) respondents had Tertiary Education.

Table 2: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient analysis of the relationship between purchasing power of students and improved livelihood of petty traders (N=200).

Variables	$\sum X$	$\sum X^2$	$\sum XY$	r-cal
	$\sum Y$	$\sum Y^2$		
Purchasing power of students (X)	1630	14590	11230	0.778*
Livelihood petty traders (Y)	1290	8970		

*Significant at $P \leq 0.05$, critical $r=0.196$, $df=198$.

Table 2 shows a summary of the relationship between the purchasing power of students and livelihood of the petty traders. Since the calculated r value of 0.778 is greater than the critical r value of 0.196, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternate hypothesis which states that purchasing power of students has a significant relationship with livelihood of petty traders is accepted. This implies that the purchasing power of students contributes significantly to the livelihood of petty traders in Goldie market. It also means that high purchasing rate of goods among students helped in improving the livelihood of petty traders in the study area. This result is consistent with Laufer (2009) who found that students usually have very active social lives, especially in the university and will happily spend the greater part of their budget on buying foodstuff and other items in the market. Neil (2001) also asserted that the purchasing power of students serves as a means of providing earnings to petty traders.

Table 3: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient analysis of the relationship between students' population and livelihood of petty traders (N=200).

Variables	$\sum X$	$\sum X^2$	$\sum XY$	r-cal
	$\sum Y$	$\sum Y^2$		
Students population (X)	1680	14820	11190	0.522*
Livelihood petty traders (Y)	1290	8970		

*Significant at $P \leq 0.05$, critical $r=0.196$, $df=198$.

Table 3 summarizes the test of the hypothesis that students population does not significantly relate with the livelihood of petty traders. The results revealed a calculated r-value of 0.522 and a critical r-value of 0.196. Therefore, since the calculated r-value is greater than the critical r-value, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternate hypothesis, which states that students' population is significantly related with the livelihood of petty traders, is accepted, implying that students' population has a significant relationship with livelihood of petty traders. This is understandable because the higher the population the greater the patronage of the traders, which is relatively good for business and the overall livelihood of the petty traders. This finding is in agreement with Ihejimaizu (2001) who considered the relevance of population in respect to university students population to the livelihood of petty traders in his study. He affirmed that the swift increase in the informal sector is a contribution from the student's populations in prevailing cities. Valdani (2009) also pointed out that most petty trading business succeeds best when there are many customers to serve.

Table 4: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient analysis of the relationship between students' level of patronage of goods and livelihood of petty traders (N=200).

Variables	$\sum X$	$\sum X^2$	$\sum XY$	r-cal
	$\sum Y$	$\sum Y^2$		
Students level of patronage (X2)	1682	15526	11370	0.557*
Livelihood petty traders (Y)	1290	8970		

*Significant at $P \leq 0.05$, critical $r=0.196$, $df=198$.

As shown in Table 4, there is a significant relationship between students' level of patronage and livelihood of petty traders in the market under study since the null hypothesis is rejected because the calculated r-value of 0.557 is greater than the critical r-value of 0.196. This also means the higher the level of patronage the better the livelihood of the petty traders.

Conclusion

This study was designed to investigate the contributions of university of Calabar students to the livelihood of petty traders in Goldie Market, Calabar South. To give direction to the study, three null hypotheses were formulated based on the three major independent variables of the study, namely: purchasing power of students, students' population and students' level of patronage. All the three had significant relationships with the livelihood

of petty traders in Goldie Market. Since students positively impact market value, there is need for the traders to develop high quality services. This is also imperative due to the contribution of the Goldie market to the state and local government revenue.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made in the study:

- 1). To avoid urban poverty, the government should support the petty traders and the informal sectors through providing credit facilities with less interest so they can always have stock of goods to meet students' demand.
- 2). There should be regular and timely payment of salaries so that parents and the self-sponsored students who are employed can provide the needed resources to enhance student's patronage of petty traders
- 3). Students patronage should not be taken for granted by the petty in Goldie Market. There should be civil in their dealings with their customers
- 4). Student's satisfaction must be ensured by the petty traders to boost continuous patronage.

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