

Negotiation and Management Strategies of Street Vendors in Developing Countries: A Narrative Review

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Abstract

The existing literature on the relationship between regulators and street vendors remain fragmented and limited to specific countries and contexts. This article presents a narrative review of the existing literature on the relationship between regulators and street vendors, and through that creates a unified picture of an otherwise fragmented literature and knowledge base. The concepts of negotiation, power, social network, and perception are used to analyze the various strategies street vendors have used in gaining access to urban public spaces in different parts of the developing world. It is revealed that even though city regulators have access to formal power, street vendors possess a variety of negotiating strategies that gives them access to both formal and informal power.

Keywords

street vendors, urban regulators, negotiation, social network, power

Introduction

Street vending serves as a major source of employment and income for urban residents the world over, especially in developing countries (Chen, 2004; Donovan, 2008). Operating from the streets, street vendors may work from permanent locations, or may be mobile, carrying their wares to customers at places of high pedestrian concentrations (Bhowmik, 2005). By their presence and activities, however, street vendors in different parts of the developing world have been in confrontation with city authorities or regulators over space for business, conditions of work, sanitation, and licensing (Anjaria, 2006; Asiedu & Agyei-Mensah, 2008; Milgram, 2011; Popke & Ballard, 2004; Skinner, 2008a). These two groups (street vendors and regulators) have interests that often contradict or compete (Austin, 1994).

As a result of the competing interests between street vendors and regulators, street vending has come to depend largely on a constant negotiation among vendors, buyers, and regulators (Asiedu & Agyei-Mensah, 2008; Recio & Gomez, 2013). Negotiations may be for public space, for economic opportunity, and for power, and may involve the general public, shop owners, and urban regulators (Asiedu & Agyei-Mensah, 2008). Among street vendors, regulators, pedestrians, and the general public, negotiations may occur regarding what can be considered an acceptable and unacceptable use of space, as well as what can be considered rights of the vendor to operate and earn a living from public spaces against the rights of the state to maintain public spaces (Drummond, 2000). These

negotiations for public space and their outcome have important implications for the well-being of street vendors, because having a good space for vending is one of a variety of significant factors that affect the well-being of street vendors (Cohen, Bhatt, & Horn, 2000).

Even though different authors have documented the negotiation strategies of vendors in specific countries, this review presents a synthesized, holistic, and coherent insight by bringing together the various strategies that vendors have used in urban areas of developing countries and analyzing them through the lens of relevant theoretical concepts of power, social networks, and social perception.

Literature Search and Analysis

This section provides a description of the criteria used in selecting relevant articles included in this review. It further discusses the processes used for searching for articles, including keywords and databases used for searching. The section also describes the types of documents included in the review and explains how the analysis was undertaken.

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Criteria for Inclusion and Exclusion of Relevant Documents

First, articles on the World Wide Web, without a clearly specified author or organization responsible, were excluded because information from such documents could not be verified and relied on.

Second, it was required that articles must primarily be a journal or newspaper article, a research report, or a conference proceeding reporting on primary data or primary research. Journal articles were included because journal articles often use primary research data and were, as a result, a good source of primary research on the tension between vendors and regulators in different parts of the developing world. The other sources indicated, commonly known as gray literature, were included because Jones (2004) argues that as a result of publication bias, a lot of information do not get published in journals. Consequently, including gray literature in this review helped to eliminate the potential for such publication bias.

Third, it was required that the document should focus on a developing country context, and must have as, either its primary focus or part of its focus, a discussion of the relationship between regulators and street vendors. The emphasis on a developing country context was to ensure a good synthesis of information on developing countries. Developing countries are urbanizing at a faster rate and street vending is one of the most common phenomena associated with urbanization in developing countries. Thus, the similarity of context (in terms of the vending activity, the use of public space and public space regulation) allows for literature from these contexts to be analyzed in generating a more synthesized knowledge base for street vending, to be used by stakeholders involved in street vending.

This review focused on literature between the year 2000 and 2016. This is because literature from the 21st century provides the best option of gaining a better insight into the relationship between city authorities and vendors. An insight that is more in tune with the present state of the relationship between city authorities and vendors in developing countries. Thus, focusing on literature from the 21st century provides an opportunity for using relevant, up to date information on the negotiated relationship between vendors and city authorities. Finally, this study's focus is not to present a historical review of how this relationship has changed over time per se but rather to provide a narrative review of the nature and dynamics of this relationship as it exists presently. Hence the emphasis on literature from the 21st century.

Types of Documents Included in Review

On the whole, three main categories of documents were used as part of this review. The first category was scientific peer reviewed journal articles. The second category included

reports, working papers, and conference proceedings downloaded from the database of relevant international organizations such as Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO) and the International Labor Organization (ILO). The third and final category of documents included newspaper articles and media reports from different parts of the world. The first two categories may be considered as scientific sources of information, while the last may be classified simply as media.

Searching for Documents: Search Engines, Keywords, Journals, and Databases

As emphasized by Green, Johnson, and Adams (2006), it is important for authors of narrative review articles to clearly indicate the databases and keywords used in searching for articles. For this review, the document repositories of international organizations like WIEGO and ILO were searched to identify articles, working papers, conference proceedings, and technical reports. In addition, the first author subscribed to WIEGO's online news roundup, receiving as a result, a compilation of global news coverage, reflecting print and electronic media coverage on the informal economy, including street vending. This proved to be an important source of information on the discourse about street vendors in different parts of the world.

Research articles included in the review were also identified from journals such as *Environment and Urbanization*, *Geoforum*, *Urban Studies*, *Journal of Development Studies*, *Journal of Modern African Studies*, *Qualitative Sociology*, and *Economic and Political Weekly*. Some keywords and phrases that were used for the article search were as follows: street vending; trading on the streets; street traders; regulating street vending; street vendors and urban regulators; private and public space; and ownership of public space.

Analysis of Documents

Each article was read twice. The first reading was to familiarize researchers with the content of the article or publication. A second more detailed reading was conducted to identify and tag the strategies that vendors use to negotiate for space. Once identified, the individual strategies were summarized by a descriptive word or phrase, with the word or phrase serving as codes for further analysis. For instance, phrases like "court action," "bargaining with votes," "payment of tokens," and "carrying few goods" were some of the codes used to summarize the strategies used by vendors to negotiate for space. Subsequently, the codes were examined, and similar codes put together to form a theme. Thus, within one theme could be found strategies from different studies. For instance, "court action" and "bargaining" with votes were put together under the theme "macrolevel negotiating strategies," while "carrying few goods" and "payment of

tokens” came under the theme “microlevel negotiating strategies.” The main findings were subsequently organized and explored around the main identified themes.

Summary of Data Set

In sum, this review identified 31 relevant articles and reports from three different regions of the world: Africa, Asia, and South America. Eighteen of these were journal articles, six were newspaper and media reports, and seven were policy briefs, working papers or research reports. Refer to Table 1 for brief descriptions of articles and reports used for this review.

Results

In presenting the findings, a review of how street vendors have been portrayed and perceived, and the implications of these perceptions for the livelihoods of street vendors are first presented. This is followed by a review of the key strategies street vendors have used in negotiating for space in urban areas. The various ways in which power, both formal and informal, manifests itself in this negotiated setting will be explored.

Perceptions About Street Vendors

Different stakeholders in different parts of the developing world have perceived street vendors in different ways. Predominantly, however, these perceptions have been positive or negative, focusing mostly on vendors’ occupation of public space and the effects such occupation has on urban residents and urban life (Donovan, 2008). This section discusses how street vendors have been perceived mostly not only by urban authorities but also by urban residents and other urban actors in relation to their use of urban space. It is revealed that even though negative perception of vendors exists, this perception is not limited to the activity of vending itself but mostly on the location of vending. In line with this, this section reveals how perception can be fluid, changing from favorable to nonfavorable during different times of the day and different seasons.

Negative Perception of Vending

First, city authorities and regulators have often perceived and portrayed street vending as negatively affecting the attractiveness and beauty of their cities. In African cities like Kumasi in Ghana, for instance, street vendors are perceived by city authorities as sources of congestion and poor environmental sanitation, and their structures are seen as destroying “the aesthetic quality of the urban settlements” (Solomon-Ayeh, Sylvana, & Decardi-Nelson, 2011, p. 21). Similarly, in Southern American and Asian cities like Mexico city in Mexico, Santiago in Chile, and Mumbai in India,

street vendors are often portrayed as offensive and illegitimate invaders, who inhibit the ability of cities to modernize and achieve a global status (Crossa, 2009; Rajagopal, 2001; Stillerman, 2006; Turner & Schoenberger, 2012). Street vendors are perceived as a sign of chaos and disorder; and a failure of metropolitan authorities to instill order within the cities (Crossa, 2009; Rajagopal, 2001; Stillerman, 2006; Turner & Schoenberger, 2012). Rajagopal (2001) further explains that in Mumbai India, “street vendors are seen as offensive, inconvenient, and illegitimate . . . a symbol of metropolitan space gone out of control” (p. 94). The media plays a crucial role in shaping the negative perceptions of the public regarding street vendors (Rajagopal, 2001). Publications and news items sometimes portray a negative image of street vendors. A search of the print media in Ghana on articles about street vendors reveals how the phenomenon of street vending is discussed in the public arena, and the image of street vendors that emerges out of this discourse. Journalists use terms such as *swarm*, *take over*, *invade*, *flooded* to describe vendors’ occupation of public spaces, suggesting the undesirability of their occupation of public spaces: those “daredevil hawkers” as one journalist simply puts it in the *Ghanaian Times* newspaper (Anyimah-Ackah, 2007; Asare, 2006; Baffloe, 2006; Benghan, 2011). Reporting on street vendors in Belo Horizonte in Brazil, Carrieri and Murta (2011) also cite instances where newspapers argue in favor of city authorities and present a negative image of street vendors to readers and the public. The authors indicate how words such as riots, fear, criminality, violence, and organized crime have been used to represent vendors. As a result of these negative perceptions, street vending in general has become a phenomenon associated with poor level of city or urban development and modernization (Anjaria, 2006). Thus, “by working on the streets, they are engaged in an activity that contradicts the supposed universal ideals of the modern public space” (Anjaria, 2006, p. 2142). Alternatively, street vendors are perceived as elements who do not belong as part of the urban and modern landscape, they are considered as “out of place” urban elements (Yatmo, 2009).

In addition to its negative effects on the image of cities, street vendors have often been perceived as creating a safe haven, through their congestion of streets, for crime to flourish. They are considered as untrustworthy people who, in collaboration with thieves and drug dealers deceive unsuspecting members of the public and pedestrians (Austin, 1994). Thus, for some shop owners in Bogota Colombia, street traders bring only disorder, filth, and the risk of crime and theft (Donovan, 2008). By their congestion of city streets, they are perceived as making it possible for thieves to hide and move among them unnoticed, a situation that adversely affects the activities of more established and formal shop owners (Donovan, 2008). Finally, street vendors are also perceived as creating unfair competition for more established shop owners, subsequently reducing the profits of shop owners by offering pirated and counterfeit goods and

Table 1. Matrix of Articles Included in Review.

Author(s)	Year, place, and type of publication	Title of publication	Description of study	Publisher
Stillerman	2006, Santiago, Chile JOURNAL ARTICLE	The Politics of Space and Culture in Santiago, Chile's Street Markets	The paper relies on primary data and the theoretical concepts of space to analyze the strategies used by street vendors in order to get access to, maintain and use public space.	<i>Qualitative Sociology</i> , 29, pp. 507-530
Solomon-Ayeh, Sylvania, and Decardi-Nelson	2011, Kumasi, Ghana JOURNAL ARTICLE	Street Vending and the use of Urban Public Space in Kumasi, Ghana	This paper used both quantitative and qualitative research tools to explore how street vendors make use of urban public space and how urban authorities respond to their use of public space as a result.	<i>The Ghana Surveyor</i> , 4(1), pp. 20-31
Anjaria	2006, Mumbai, India JOURNAL ARTICLE	Street Hawkers and Public Space in Mumbai	This paper relies on primary research findings to reveal the lived in experiences of street hawkers. It discusses how the hawkers understand, interpret and relate with their occupation of public space and their interaction with state officials on a day to day basis.	<i>Economic and Political Weekly</i> , 41(21), pp.2140-2146
Anyimah-Ackah	2007, Accra, Ghana NEWSPAPER ARTICLE	Hawkers and Traders and Their Game of Tricks and Defiance: Can the AMA Match Them?	This newspaper article reports on the dynamic relations between street hawkers and city authorities and describes some of the strategies that hawkers have used to evade and have access to the use of public space for Hawking in Accra	<i>The Ghanaian Times Newspaper</i> , February 7, 2007, p. 8
Asare	2006, Kumasi, Ghana NEWSPAPER ARTICLE	Hawkers Takeover the Streets of Kumasi as Christmas Approaches	This paper reports on the occupation of hawkers of public space and how the authorities are dealing with them.	<i>Daily Graphic Newspaper</i> . December 20, p. 29
Asiedu and Agyei-Mensah	2008, Accra, Ghana JOURNAL ARTICLE	Traders on the Run: Activities of Street Vendors in the Accra Metropolitan Area, Ghana	This research relies on qualitative semi-structured interviews to explore the operation of street vendors, the challenges they face, and how they cope with these challenges, and their relationship with urban authorities.	<i>Norwegian Journal of Geography</i> , 62, 191-202
Baffloe	2006, Accra, Ghana NEWSPAPER ARTICLE	Street Hawkers Invade National Theatre	This paper relies on interviews with state officials and street hawkers to discuss hawkers' occupation of a public facility in Accra and how state officials have responded to this.	<i>Daily Graphic Newspaper</i> . March 1, 2006
Benghan	2011, Accra, Ghana NEWSPAPER ARTICLE	Extortion! AMA Taskforce Personnel take Hawkers' Cash: 70 Dismissed	This paper reports how city officials use their privileged positions to take monies from street hawkers with a promise of access to public spaces for vending	<i>The Ghanaian Times Newspaper</i> , June 6, 2011, p. 2
Bentil	2008, Accra, Ghana NEWSPAPER ARTICLE	Hawkers Thwart Efforts to Beautify City	This article reports on the activities and operations of street hawkers and how these activities affect the appearance of the city of Accra	<i>Daily Graphic Newspaper</i> , October 13, 2008, p. 25
Donovan	2008, Bogota, Colombia JOURNAL ARTICLE	Informal Cities and the Contestation of Public Space: The Case of Bogota's Street Vendors, 1988-2003	This paper relies on questionnaire surveys to analyze the tension and struggles between state officials and street vendors.	<i>Urban Studies</i> , 45(1), pp. 29-51
Drummond	2000, Vietnam JOURNAL ARTICLE	Street Scenes: Practices of Public and Private Space in Urban Vietnam	This paper used primary data to demonstrate the fluid nature of the boundary between public and private space and shows how this boundary changes or is violated in various ways.	<i>Urban Studies</i> , 37(12), pp. 2377-2391

(continued)

Table 1. (continued)

Author(s)	Year, place, and type of publication	Title of publication	Description of study	Publisher
Kayuni and Tambulasi	2009, Malawi JOURNAL ARTICLE	Political Transitions and Vulnerabilities of Street Vending in Malawi	This research uses qualitative research tools to analyze how changes in political systems have affected street vending in Malawi, focusing also on relocation and its impact on the livelihood of street vendors	<i>Theoretical and Empirical Researches in Urban Management</i> , 3(12)
Milgram	2011, Baguio City, The Philippines JOURNAL ARTICLE	Reconfiguring Space, Mobilizing Livelihood: Street Vending, Legality, and Work in the Philippines	This paper discusses how street vendors use various strategies to protest and to negotiate with city authorities for vending spaces in the central business district.	<i>Journal of Development Studies</i> , 27, pp. 261-293
Mitullah	2003, Kenya; Cote D'Ivoire; Ghana, Zimbabwe, Uganda, and South Africa RESEARCH REPORT	Street Vending in African Cities: A Synthesis of Empirical Findings from Kenya; Cote D'Ivoire; Ghana, Zimbabwe, Uganda, and South Africa.	This is a report that integrates research findings from different African countries about the state of street vending in Africa.	Background Paper for the 2005 World Development Report
Mitullah	2006, Kenya, Cote D'Ivoire, Ghana, Uganda, Zimbabwe and South Africa REVIEW PAPER	Street Vendors and Informal Trading: Struggling for the Rights to Trade.	This article discusses the challenges of street trading and how poor urban planning fails to incorporate street vendors within urban spaces.	<i>Pambazuka</i> , June 1, Issue 25
Rajagopal	2001, Mumbai, India JOURNAL ARTICLE	The Violence of Commodity Aesthetics: Hawkers, Demolitions Raids, and a New Regime of Consumption	This paper discusses the operation of mobile food vendors in Mumbai India, analyzing local perceptions of these vendors and how they contest for space.	<i>Social Text</i> , 19(3), pp. 91-113
Recio and Gomez	2013, Caloocan, Metro Manila JOURNAL ARTICLE	Street Vendors, the Contested Spaces, and the Policy Environment: A View from Caloocan, Metro Manila	This study analyzed the challenges facing street vendors within the context of existing laws and how street vendors negotiate with stakeholders for the right to use public space.	<i>Environment and Urbanization Asia</i> , 4 (1), pp. 173-190
Schindler	2013, Delhi, India JOURNAL ARTICLE	Producing and Contesting the Formal/Informal Divide: Regulating Street Hawking in Delhi, India.	This study discusses the fluid nature of the boundary between formal and informal work, showing how power may be manifested in both vendors and regulators under different circumstances.	<i>Urban Studies</i> , 0(0), pp. 1-17
Skinner	2008a, Cambridge REVIEW PAPER	Street Trade in Africa: A Review.	This paper reviews existing literature from different African countries, focusing on how different authorities have responded to and handled the issue of street vending.	WIEGO Working Paper No. 5
Skinner	2008b, Durban, South Africa JOURNAL ARTICLE	The Struggle for the Streets: Processes of Exclusion and Inclusion of Street Traders in Durban, South Africa	The paper draws on secondary data collected over a number of years on the activities of street traders in urban Durban. It focuses on how different political authorities have responded to street vending since 1920s	<i>Development Southern Africa</i> , 25(2), pp. 227-242
Bass	2000, Dakar, Senegal. JOURNAL ARTICLE	Enlarging the Street and Negotiating the Curb: Public Space at the Edge of an African Market	This research uses qualitative methods to explore the experiences of street vendors, revealing how demographic characteristics of age, gender, and class influences the negotiating power available to various vendors.	<i>International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy</i> , 20 (1/2), pp. 76-97

(continued)

Table 1. (continued)

Author(s)	Year, place, and type of publication	Title of publication	Description of study	Publisher
Boateng	2012, Accra, Ghana. RESEARCH REPORT	A Report on Street Vending in Ghana	This study reports the findings of a research that relied on interviews, focus group discussions, and a review of policy documents to explore the working conditions of vendors including taxation, relations with city authorities, and security and occupational safety.	Labor Research and Policy Institute of Ghana.
Kusakabe	2006, Thailand, Cambodia, and Mongolia. RESEARCH REPORT	Policy Issues on Street Vending: An Overview of Studies in Thailand, Cambodia, and Mongolia	Summarizes findings from three primary research studies on street vending, focusing especially on the legal status of vendors, their access to space, and to social security.	<i>International Labor Organization</i> , Bangkok Office
Horn	2014 RESEARCH REPORT	Collective Bargaining in the Informal Economy: Street Vendors	This research used interviews and participatory action research approaches to explore how street vendors in different countries engage in different forms of collective negotiation around policies and regulations.	WIEGO and the Solidarity Center (Global Labor Program)
Kumar	2012, India POLICY BRIEF	The Regularization of Street Vending in Bhubaneshwar, India: A Policy Model	This brief gives a firsthand account of how stakeholders including regulators and street vendors worked together to develop a mutually beneficial strategy for managing street vending in Bhubaneshwar, India	WIEGO Policy Brief (Urban Policies) No.7
Steel	2012, Cusco, Peru JOURNAL ARTICLE	Whose Paradise? Itinerant Street Vendors' Individual and Collective Practices of Political Agency in the Tourist Streets of Cusco, Peru	This paper is based on both qualitative and quantitative data on the resistance strategies employed by street vendors in dealing with municipal agents.	<i>International Journal of Urban and Regional Research</i> , 37(5), pp. 1007-1021
Crossa	2009, Mexico City, Mexico. JOURNAL ARTICLE	Resisting the Entrepreneurial City: Street Vendors' Struggle in Mexico City's Historic Centre	This paper uses information from interviews, observations and archival data to explore how street vendors negotiated the changes brought about by a newly implemented city wide program.	<i>International Journal of Urban and Regional Research</i> , 33(1), pp. 43-63
Carrieri and Murta	2011, Belo Horizonte, Brazil JOURNAL ARTICLE	Cleaning Up the City: A Study on the Removal of Street Vendors From Down Town Belo Horizonte, Brazil	This research used discourse analysis, interviews, and desk research to investigate the relocation of street vendors to an indoor shopping location.	<i>Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences</i> , 28, 217-225
Turner and Schoenberger	2012, Hanoi, Vietnam JOURNAL ARTICLE	Street Vendor Livelihoods and Everyday Politics in Hanoi, Vietnam: The Seeds of a Diverse Economy?	This paper relies on the concepts of urban livelihoods, everyday politics, and resistance to analyze the various ways by which street vendors in Hanoi, Vietnam have responded to the State's policies and practices against street vending.	<i>Urban Studies</i> , 49(5), pp. 1027-1044
Bonner and Carre	2013 WORKING PAPER	Global Networking: Informal Workers Build Solidarity, Power and Representation Through Networks and Alliances	This paper relies on knowledge of global networks of informal workers, exploring how they differ and how these differences affect their negotiation strategies.	WIEGO Working Paper No. 31, September 2013
Yatmo	2009, Jakarta, Indonesia JOURNAL ARTICLE	Perception of Street Vendors as "Out of Place" Urban Elements at Day Time and Night Time.	This article explores public perception toward street vendors and how this perception changes during different times of the day.	<i>Journal of Environmental Psychology</i> , 29(4), pp. 467-476.

Note. WIEGO = Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing.

commodities for sale at very low prices (Mitullah, 2003). Owners of shops in Mumbai, India, and in Bogota, Colombia, have been vocal in this regard. These shop owners have expressed concerns that street traders provide unhealthy competition and drain the income of more established, registered and taxpaying shop owners (Donovan, 2008; Rajagopal, 2001). Similarly, Steel (2012) reports of more established shop owners in Cusco, Peru, who complain about their loss of autonomy over the sale of products and the competition that vendors bring with them, with its associated declines in sales and earnings.

Positive and Fluid Perceptions

These negative perceptions notwithstanding, Yatmo (2009) explains, based on a research in Jakarta, Indonesia, that the negative perception of street vendors as out of place elements in the urban landscape is not absolute but rather, a fluid phenomenon, changing with time of day. Yatmo (2009) argues by emphasizing that

the evaluation of street vendors as out of place elements change from day-time to night-time . . . suggesting that the generalisation of judgement that the street vendors are out of place in any locations at any time may not be entirely correct. (p. 473)

Yatmo (2009) explains that at night-time, respondents perceived street vendors as more organized with cleaner environments, in contrast with their perceptions of vendors during the days. This fluidity in the perception of vendors describes the attitude of some city authorities toward the phenomenon of street vending. There is evidence to suggest that in some countries, urban authorities' perceptions of vendors and their attitude to street vending in general change during different economic periods (Donovan, 2008). In Bangkok and Thailand, for instance, the financial and economic recession of 1997 compelled people into the Street Food (SF) trade as a source of income and employment (Chung, Ritoper, & Takemoto, 2010). The central and municipal governments of Thailand and Bangkok, respectively, went to the extent of encouraging citizens to take up SF vending as an alternate source of income during this financial crisis (Chung et al., 2010). Harper (1996, cited in Donovan, 2008) also reports that during economic difficulties in the 1990s, the Mayor of Kuala Lumpur reduced regulations on vendor licenses and set aside more areas for street vending to take place. This fluidity in perceptions emphasizes the fact that vending is only problematic during specific periods and in particular locations.

Furthermore, the argument has been made, for instance, that by their mere presence, street vendors serve and act as deterrent of various forms of crimes on city streets (Anjaria, 2006). In Mumbai, street vendors have on occasion protected women against sexual harassment (Anjaria, 2006). Consequently, vendors and street traders are perceived as providing important

security for more established shop owners and the general public as a whole, maintaining a watchful eye over events, and showing up to assist in case of accidents and emergencies on the streets (Anjaria, 2006). Where shop owners hold such perceptions of street vendors, there evolves a special kind of relationship built on trust between the vendors and the shop owners (Anjaria, 2006). This perception of street vendors as capable of preventing crime has also been evident in Durban, South Africa, where street vendors have worked hand-in-hand with the police in preventing crime on the streets (Skinner, 2008). Here, street vendors have been trained by the police to monitor their streets and to inform the police when they feel something is not right (Skinner, 2008). Through such collaborative efforts, Skinner (2008b) reports that there has been a significant reduction in the incidence of crime in the inner city areas of Durban. What is evident is that, despite the fact that street vendors are sometimes accused of promoting crime, there are instances where street vendors have worked to eliminate the same forms of crime they are accused of. There are other instances where more established shop owners perceive street vendors not as offering unfair competition but rather as an avenue for business development. In Mexico City in Mexico, for instance, Crossa (2009) reports that a special alliance exists between street vendors and shop owners, where street vendors sometimes "sell products on the street on behalf of shop owners" (p. 55). However, like the above, the emphasis have been predominantly on the negative effects that street vending have for formal businesses, with very little attention paid to the benefits and opportunities that street vending present for formal businesses.

Evidently, wherever city authorities and other members of the public perceive street vendors positively, the larger urban community benefit through the collaborative efforts and the positive effects that result. Interestingly, these positive effects seem to receive very little attention from city and urban authorities in general. On the contrary, the argument has overwhelmingly been on the negative effects street vendors have on cities and the "illegality" of the street vending activity. It could be argued, however, that the problem is often not with the activity of vending itself but mostly the location that vending takes place. Thus, the negative perception often relate to the space/site for vending and that vending in itself is also perceived positively as an important economic activity providing important benefits for urban residents.

City Authorities and Their Response to Street Vending

In line with the perceptions of a modern and global city, eviction and relocation campaigns are undertaken by city authorities to "clean up" the city and make it more "attractive" (Anjaria, 2006; Donovan, 2008; Milgram, 2011). Where vendors are perceived as a nuisance, a symbol of chaos and disorder, eviction is often intense, involving the use of

bulldozers, and justified as necessary to restore “order” and “sanity” back to city life (Rajagopal, 2001). Examples of such evictions and relocations have been undertaken in India, Vietnam, Mexico, the Philippines, South Africa, and in other developing countries in Africa (Anjaria, 2006; Donovan, 2008; Drummond, 2000).

These evictions and relocations can be conceived as a demonstration of the power of cities and urban areas over residents and street vendors (Skinner, 2008a). This is because, within a social negotiated setting, those who are in need of something are usually constrained by the actions of those who can satisfy their needs (Fine, 1984). Similarly, street vendors, working with limited or no infrastructural facilities and limited access to competitive space for business are often constrained by the conditions laid down by city authorities and regulators who control vital public space. Thus, city regulators have often used the prevailing negative perception about street vendors as a negotiating tool to gain more power, which enhances their claim over crucial public space. Similar to the above, Mitullah (2006) has reasoned that the eviction of street vendors from busy city centers have power implications because the vacation of the streets by street vendors makes these profitable streets and city centers available to large scale and powerful formal businesses at the expense of small scale vendors. The eviction of vendors by force, the destruction of perceived illegal vending stands, and the confiscation and sometimes destruction of goods demonstrate the extent, nature, and effects of the power held by city regulators (Rajagopal, 2001).

Negotiating for Space: Street Vendors and City Authorities

Street vendors, despite the above information, are not “powerless” in the face of eviction and relocation. As participants actively reinterpreting and renegotiating their realities, street vendors have a variety of strategies available to them, a sign of their own power, in the face of eviction and relocation. This section discusses some of the strategies that street vendors, as individuals and as organized groups, have used in securing access to important locations for vending in urban areas of developing countries. Using examples from different places, the section demonstrates how the use of these strategies gives some form of power to street vendors in their relationship with city authorities. These negotiating strategies can be classified under two main categories: negotiations that take place at the macrolevel (between organized groups of vendors and state authorities), and negotiations that take place at the microlevel (between individual street vendors and city regulators).

Negotiating at the Macrolevel

For some street traders and vendors, the use of public space is closely linked with the right to survive and to earn a livelihood, a right that must be fought for and protected. Rajagopal

(2001) reports that in negotiating for a space for business, some street vendors in Mumbai, India have gone as far as fight for this right in the law courts, taking on city authorities and subsequently gaining the right to vend within specific city spaces (Rajagopal, 2001). This strategy is also common among street vendors in other Indian cities like Delhi (Schindler, 2013). Rajagopal, (2001) writes,

Hawkers have also learned to use the courts instrumentally. Some hawkers were thus appealing for injunctions against demolitions or eviction in different courts under different names. When a hawker lost a case in the city civil court, he or she would move to the high court without revealing the details of the earlier case. Sometimes, a wife or a brother would move to another court over the same hawking spot. The hearings and adjournments translated into valuable business time for the hawker. (p. 107)

This strategy of negotiating for space has also been reported among street vendors in Bogota city in Colombia, where vendors have often responded to threats of eviction with a legal action arguing that eviction will go contrary to their right to work and earn a living (Donovan, 2008). What happens then is that vendors begin to make use of the same institutions that legitimizes the power of regulators, they have learnt to use the same tools that the state uses against them to fight back and to gain power (Rajagopal, 2001).

In addition to using the courts as a negotiating tool and source of power, other vendors as a group, have used their votes as a bargaining power in negotiating with city authorities. This is especially significant where the vendor population is large, as it is in Mexico city (Donovan, 2008). In this instance, street vendors vote into power their own nominated individuals who in turn allow them to vend on city streets (Donovan, 2008). In other instances, vendors “. . . secured licenses in exchange for political support during city elections . . .” (Donovan, 2008, p. 35). Voting for people into city councils and other positions has also been revealed as a common strategy by street traders in the northern city of Baguio in the Philippines (Milgram, 2011). The votes of street vendors are important as a negotiating tool, to the extent that it can change policies, albeit temporarily. Thus, Milgram (2011) writes regarding vendors in the Philippines that “since municipal elections were scheduled for May 2010, the then current city councillors hesitated to introduce new bye laws that might arouse the displeasure of their constituents, including vendors, and thus threaten their chances of re-elections” (p. 284). In Malawi in Africa, by voting for “councillors” of local assemblies, street vendors were assured of a protective voice within local authorities as these councillors acknowledged the support of the vendors in bringing them into office (Kayuni & Tambulasi, 2009). Kayuni and Tambulasi (2009) write the following of the councillors in Malawi: “most councillors knew that they were brought into office through mostly the support of the vendors themselves. In this regard, the vendors had, to some extent, an authoritative voice through the councillors” (p. 88). Not only do these

placed officials lobby city authorities on behalf of street traders in securing access to public spaces for business, they also serve as crucial sources of information about the actions and inactions of city authorities regarding impending evictions and raids through the city center (Milgram, 2011). Because knowing when to run or leave a place of business is a crucial part of the negotiation for and use of space among street traders and vendors, well-placed sources in positions of authority within urban areas help street traders to effectively negotiate for and use space to enhance their livelihoods (Milgram, 2011). Milgram (2011) quotes one respondent as saying, "We actively sought friends in City Hall who agreed to tell us when a raid is scheduled if they hear about it in advance" (p. 282). In effect, one major strategy that street vendors have used in getting access to and using city spaces is to either use their votes as a bargaining power or to vote for their own into public offices who in turn will lobby for the street vendors. Once again, vendors are demonstrated as using what they have, their vote, to negotiate and gain power (Crossa, 2009).

One other macro strategy that street vendors have used to negotiate for space in urban areas is through public demonstrations. These demonstrations may take the form of public rallies, where vendors sometimes march on city authorities and hand over demands and grievances, an approach which has been used effectively by vendors in Durban, South Africa, in preventing eviction (Skinner, 2008b) as well as in Caloocan in Manila, the Philippines (Recio & Gomez, 2013). Sometimes these public demonstrations take violent forms, as has been reported in Mexico City in Mexico (Crossa, 2009). Crossa (2009) cites an example from April 2002 where hundreds of street vendors came together in Mexico City, sprayed the police with tear gas, and hit them with sticks when the police attempted to evict them from operating in the city center. Here, street vendors gain power through numbers and use some of the same strategies that city authorities have used against them in resisting eviction and maintaining the use of city spaces.

Another form of public demonstration, as revealed by Milgram (2011) and Recio and Gomez (2013) take the form of letter writing campaigns organized by members of street vendor associations aimed at city authorities, demonstrating against an impending eviction and proving, through their letters, why they should be allowed to operate under certain occasions. Recio and Gomez (2013) report how street vendors in Caloocan, Metro Manila, in the Philippines engage city regulators and authorities in discussions with an aim of bringing their grievances before such authority figures. Alternatively, street vendors in Dakar, Senegal, have used open forums, where vendor associations meet with government officials to discuss their concerns (Bass, 2000).

International organizations and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) also play an important role in macro negotiation activities of informal sector workers in general and street vendors specifically. Organizations such as the Street Net International, International Domestic Workers Network,

International Transport Worker's Federation, WIEGO, Latin American Waste Picker Network (Red Lacre), Global Alliance of Waste Pickers, and Home Net South Asia assist informal sector workers by building a global network and involving in transnational advocacy to promote the rights and well-being of informal sector workers including street vendors (Bonner, 2009; Bonner & Carré, 2013; Horn, 2014). Currently, The Street Net International and WIEGO are among some of the globally recognized organizations concerned about the rights of informal workers in general and street vendors specifically (Bonner, 2009; Bonner & Carré, 2013; Horn, 2014). The Street Net International, a membership-based organization (such as trade unions, cooperatives, or associations), directly organizes street vendors, market vendors, and/or hawkers to negotiate with city authorities and to improve the work conditions of informal sector street workers (Bonner, 2009; Bonner & Carré, 2013; Horn, 2014). They organize bargaining forums with city officials, helping to promote the exchange of information and ideas on critical issues facing street vendors, market vendors, and hawkers. In addition, they help enlighten street workers and other informal sector workers on how to exercise their rights against harassment (Bonner, 2009; Bonner & Carré, 2013; Horn, 2014). In attempt to fight for their rights, informal workers form association and then liaise with these international organizations/NGOs to help them negotiate with government officials to effect changes in policies.

Through these macro strategies, street vendors in different parts of the developing world have sought to stake a claim for their use of public space and to negotiate against eviction and relocation campaigns. It is important to note though that even though the macro strategies discussed above have been demonstrated to be generally effective for all street vendors and to represent their power, there remain considerable within-group differences in terms of its benefits for different categories (age, sex, and class) of vendors. Thus, individual vendors may benefit differently from these strategies depending on their sex, age, and social class. Bass (2000) in a research of the negotiating strategies of street vendors in Senegal draws attention to how the above sociodemographic characteristics define the benefits that particular groups of vendors gain. Using evidence from her research, Bass (2000) makes a strong argument for how gender, age, and class determines the negotiating power of different groups. Bass (2000) finds, for instance, that because female street vendors had less social authority to assert themselves, they were less able to negotiate for their interests, and often made their interests secondary to that of their male counterparts in negotiating with city officials. The concerns specific to female vendors who often sell different products from the males and thus often have some challenges specific to their situation are often left unaddressed during macrolevel negotiations with state officials (Bass, 2000). In addition to sex, Bass (2000) finds further differentiation based on age and class where the needs of older and more established vendors,

for instance, get more attention and promoted in the negotiation process than younger and less established vendors. By so doing, Bass (2000) not only emphasizes the negotiating power of vendors as a group but further draws attention to the power differentials and differences in the ability to negotiate that may emerge among vendors.

Negotiating at the Microlevel

At a more microlevel, street vendors have used a variety of approaches to negotiate for and have access to vend within city spaces and to avoid eviction.

Networking and communication among colleague vendors is one of the negotiating strategies that street vendors have used. This is where vendors communicate with each other and warn each other of impending threats from city authorities. For instance, Crossa (2009), in writing about the resistance strategies of street vendors in Mexico city's city center indicates that some street vendors are: "paid to monitor the streets, watch for the police, and to warn other vendors of police activities through the use of walkie talkies" (p. 56). Alternatively, Crossa (2009) reports that on a day to day basis, vendors warn each other by "whistling to each other to sound the alert about police activities or other impending threats" (p. 56). Another form of networking among vendors in using city spaces is where vendors send messages alerting each other of the presence or otherwise of city authorities. Recio and Gomez (2013) report of what they term as "Quick Response Teams" (QRTs) in Caloocan, Metro Manila, where these QRTs act as a form of early warning system, using text messages to warn colleague vendors of imminent or ongoing eviction operations (Recio & Gomez, 2013). Alternatively, Steel (2012) writing about street vendors in Peru has indicated that street vendors, running from eviction and a raid from one place may warn other vendors at other places of the impending threats. This is a more crude form of the early warning system using mobile phones and walkie talkies. Similar strategies have been reported among street vendors in Brazil as well (Carrieri & Murta, 2011). What has been demonstrated is that street vendors make use of the network of relations among each other as a form of security for each other. This form of security has been termed by Steel (2012) as a "social security network." This security network of relations among vendors is important to the well-being of street vendors and to their continued survival on the streets. Crossa (2009) demonstrates the importance of a social security network through the following statement from one street vendor:

. . . here I feel at home, like with my family. I mean that among us we really help each other. There is more communication here among us than in my own house where I just eat and sleep. This is like one big family . . . (p. 52)

The statement above is a powerful indication of the importance of the network of relations and ties that exist among

street vendors. On the streets, therefore, social networks become key to the survival and continued use of space for street vendors. In relation to this, Milgram (2011) reasons that by relying on social networks to survive and use city spaces, street vendors turn absolute space into relational space.

Interestingly, these networks of relations go beyond fellow street vendors to include more formal shop owners who, in different areas, have protected street vendors from city authorities (Crossa, 2009; Milgram, 2011). In Mexico City, for instance, Crossa (2009) writes, "Shop owners offered refuge to their street vending allies when the police or authorities arrived. In return, street vendors agreed to sell products on the streets on behalf of shop owners" (p. 55). Social networks, thus, become important sources of power for street vendors in negotiations.

Under continuous hostile regulatory circumstances though, street vendors in different parts of the world have also had to modify their mode of operation to sustain their economic ventures. One of the most common of these strategies is for otherwise stationary vendors to become more mobile and to carry few goods with them to sell at any point in time, a strategy that enhances an easy get away in case city authorities approach, and ensures minimal losses in case of confiscation of goods. In places like Baguio City in the Philippines, Milgram (2011) explains that vendors spread a few of their goods on blankets by the streets or on pavements. This way, vendors argue that "if we are pursued by the police, we can easily gather the four corners of our blankets and run to prevent our produce from being confiscated" (Milgram, 2011, p. 280). In addition, Carrieri and Murta (2011) writes of street vendors in Brazil that, as a result of frequent inspections, vendors carried with them "a minimal number of supplies to allow for a fast escape as soon as inspectors were spotted to diminish possible losses" (p. 221). This strategy has also been reported among street vendors in Ghana, Mexico, and Peru (Anyimah-Ackah, 2007; Asiedu & Agyei-Mensah, 2008; Crossa, 2009; Milgram, 2011; Solomon-Ayeh et al., 2011; Steel, 2012). In Ghana, for instance, because there are usually high pedestrian traffic at the city center in Accra, vendors try to blend in by carrying a few wares in their hands, just as if they were pedestrians, but then announce to potential customers in a bid to sell their items (Anyimah-Ackah, 2007). In Peru, Steel (2012) also reports that female street vendors hide their wares in their shopping bags and blend in with the shoppers, creating the impression that they themselves were shopping: "women selling painted gourds hid them in their shopping bags to give the impression that they were shopping rather than vending" (p. 1017). By being increasingly mobile and constantly moving, vendors avoid drawing too much attention to themselves and minimize the potential losses in case city authorities arrest them. Elsewhere, some vendors have completely changed trades and vended low-value items, which offers less losses in case of confiscation of goods (Steel, 2012).

These strategies demonstrate vendors' innovativeness and their abilities to adapt to the changing demands of their job. Similar to more formal corporate entities who are continuously finding innovative ways to become competitive, vendors also modify their modes of operation in response to the challenges posed by city authorities to have continuous access to important urban spaces for business. What has been made evident from the preceding is how street vendors rely on individual agency as a way of sustaining their use of urban public spaces. In a way, this is also a manifestation of their personal form of power. Steel (2012) terms these individual agency strategies as "strategies of resilience" manifested by vendors in negotiating and using urban spaces.

Another important strategy that street vendors have used in negotiating for and maintaining a space for business is to anticipate the actions and inactions of regulators. Street vendors in Baguio city in the northern Philippines, for instance, may sell from 6 a.m. to 9 a.m. in the morning, 12 p.m. to 1 p.m. in the afternoon, and 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. in the evening reflecting the times before the start of day, during lunch break, and close of day when regulators are likely not to be working actively (Milgram, 2011, p. 277). In the same way, street vendors in Brazil, Belo Horizonte, have learnt to operate very early in the morning when regulators have not begun work. Carrieri and Murta (2011) reveal that, "One of the interviewees said that he works informally close to the bus station in the morning; according to him, the inspectors are not yet on the streets at that time" (p. 223). Street vendors in Peru also adopt this strategy. By vending during the lunchtime of regulators or during the evenings where control from the state is minimal because regulators have closed from work, "Other vendors told me that they try to sell their goods while the municipal agents are eating lunch or dinner, or only in the evenings when there is less control" (Steel, 2012, p. 1018). Turner and Schoenberger (2012) also find similar strategies among street vendors in Vietnam.

What this means is that the knowledge of vendors regarding the working culture of the context within which they work serves as an important negotiating tool in negotiating formal regulatory requirements.

Sometimes, space for business is negotiated for sustained use through the payment of daily tokens, in money or in kind, to city authorities and their field officials (Anjaria, 2006; Milgram, 2011; Rajagopal, 2001). This remains one of the most common negotiating strategies for street vendors in different parts of the world. In Mumbai, India, for instance, street vendors sometimes have had to pay these tokens more than once a day to operate in busy public spaces: "in busy city areas, hawkers may be threatened 3 to 4 times a day by city workers, paying up to 4500 rupees a month to keep them at bay" (Rajagopal, 2001, p. 104). It must be emphasized though that regulators and city authorities do not always demand tokens. On the contrary, as vendors in Baguio city in the northern Philippines have demonstrated, it is quite common for these tokens to be offered voluntarily in the form of

food products like fruits and cakes for city officials and inspectors to enhance a vendor's stake or claim to a particular space of business. In Malawi, Kayuni and Tambulasi (2009) write,

Several vendors explained that the police, who are supposed to ensure that no one is plying their trade along the streets, are sometimes very corrupt. The police are given K500.00 or more and they allow these illegal street vendors to continue selling their items discreetly. (p. 92)

Milgram (2011) also cites one vendor in the Philippines as saying, "some officers even overlook our minor selling infractions when we offer them sweet cooked rice cakes or fruit to take home to their families" (p. 279). This practice is also common among vendors in other African countries (Mitullah, 2006), including Rwanda (Nzohabonimana, 2013), Angola (Redvers, 2014), Ghana (Asiedu & Agyei-Mensah, 2008), and Malawi (Kayuni & Tambulasi, 2009). Through the offering of these gifts and the payment of tokens/bribes, relationships are negotiated and established, and infringement of rules and regulations, including the use of public spaces, is subsequently punished or overlooked depending also on the quality of the relationship (Milgram, 2011). Thus, vendors use the gifts they give to regulators as a negotiating tool, a source of power that allows them to influence the decision making of city regulators.

Similar to Bass's revelation regarding the differences in benefits that macro negotiating strategies have for different groups based on sociodemographic characteristics, Steel (2012) notices important differences among vendors in their abilities to negotiate with urban officials and rework the system. Steel (2012) finds that more established vendors had more resources and abilities to negotiate, compared with new vendors:

Established vendors have an extra repertoire of strategies with which to confront insecurity and vulnerability. They have a certain authority and status in the streets because they have learned the secrets of street vending. They are entitled to the best vending locations (i.e., those that are under a relatively low level of surveillance by the municipality) and they have social contacts in and off the street to escape from the hands of the municipal agents. (p. 1018)

The revelations made by Bass (2000) and Steel (2012) pose important questions about the benefits of these negotiating strategies for different groups of street vendors. To what extent do factors such as gender, age, geographical location, time of vending, and time of year affect the negotiating strategies of vendors? These important questions need to be further explored through primary research studies, in the continuous attempt to enhance the street vending sector as a viable and legitimate source of employment and income for urban residents in developing countries.

Conclusion

This article contributes by providing a coherent narrative and a holistic picture of an otherwise fragmented literature base on the dynamic relationship between street vendors and city regulators. Perception has been demonstrated as a much more fluid concept, changing with time and situation. Furthermore, power emerges and exists in interaction, through informal negotiations and strategies, through network of relations, and through individual agency and innovative strategies. Power is demonstrated here not only as a tool of oppression and destruction but, with regard to vendors, as a tool for resistance and resilience. Unlike other research studies, street vendors have been demonstrated as an organized political force who, through various strategies and approaches, resist or avoid the power of city authorities and continue to use public spaces. These strategies have been demonstrated as reflecting the political power of street vendors in developing countries. Because street vendors and regulators possess and use power differently, this research emphasizes the need for these two key stakeholders to collaborate and work together in enhancing the well-being of vendors and cities in general. We recommend that future researchers further investigate in detail how negotiations and strategies vary among different groups of vendors vending in different public spaces. To what extent do factors such as geographical location, time of vending (day-time or night-time), time of year, gender, and age affect and modify the negotiating strategies of vendors? These questions must be explored through research to further deepen our understanding of the negotiated setting of the street in developing countries.

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