



## Investigating the hazards of hawking as a marketing strategy among traders of Ashaiman and its environs

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### Abstract

The study investigates the hazards of hawking as a marketing strategy for trader who hawk their wares in Ashaiman and its environs. The qualitative research design was employed. Face-to-face interviews were organised around semi-structured interview guides. The interview guide was made up of three specific sections, of one question each. Thirty street hawkers participated in the study. The study uses the thematic analysis to analyse data within the specific themes in view of the meanings attributed to the themes. The data was analysed by coding using Nvivo 11 software. Sales increase, goods are bought easily, to meet sales target and to meet people who normally will be difficult to reach were found to be the reasons why respondents engage in street hawking. Also, vehicular accident, fatigue/tiredness and sexual harassment were found to be the most compelling health hazards encountered by street hawkers in Ghana. Policy implications as well as suggestions for future studies have been presented.

**Keywords:** Street hawking, hazards, marketing strategy, Ashaiman

### Introduction

In today's world of competitive business environment, adopting the appropriate marketing strategy to increase sales and profit has become consequential. According to Ofosu-Boateng (2020) <sup>[20]</sup>, firms have no option than to embark on various marketing strategies to maximize profit, lest, they wind up in business. Aaker & Moorman (2023) <sup>[1]</sup> defines marketing strategy "as a comprehensive marketing mix that addresses the demands of consumers, with the price being competitive, adopting effective communication channel and placing the product at strategic location for a purchase. Various types of marketing strategies such as word-of-mouth marketing, direct marketing, personal selling and hawking have been elucidated by extant literature (Ofosu-Boateng, 2020) <sup>[20]</sup>. According to Aaker & Moorman (2023) <sup>[1]</sup>, some of these strategies may be offensive or defensive. Notwithstanding, Sudirjo (2023) <sup>[26]</sup> shared that most of these marketing strategies are very aggressive and have a lot of health and occupational hazards on the personnel who carry out these strategies. According to Somis (2020), hawking is one of such marketing strategies embraced by most firms globally.

Hawking has been conceptualized by the 1960 Public Health and Urban Services Ordinance of Hong Kong as "any person who sells, or exposes for sale his wares or offers for hire his labour in a public place; or any person who itinerates for the purpose of selling or exposing for sale his wares, services or labour" (Lan, 2021) <sup>[15]</sup>. Hawking as a marketing strategy could pose a lot of occupational health hazards for personnel who use this strategy because of the nature of the activities involved in the process (such as a hawker been knocked down by a truck, hawkers inhaling of fumes from cars, a hawker falling in the process of running after vehicle to make a sale etc) (Basorun, 2021) <sup>[5]</sup>. Hawkers sometimes run after moving vehicle without concentrating on other vehicle coming from behind, which can subsequently knock them down. Hawking entails displaying products by the roadside, carrying head pan or raising a sample of products to the commuters (a person

who regularly travels from one place to another, typically to work) while these vehicles are moving (Basorun, 2021) <sup>[5]</sup>. Thus, the road is being shared between sellers and the motorists. Although, the congestion emanated therein could slow down vehicular speed, the ensuing hustling and bustling in the midst of seemingly uncontrollable 'traffic jam' is likely to be dangerous for hawkers (Taiwo, 2023) <sup>[27]</sup>. The health hazards involved in running after a moving vehicle in an attempt to sell goods to the buyers is risky in nature taking into consideration that they (the hawkers) have no control over the traffic (Taiwo, 2023) <sup>[27]</sup>. A work hazard is a potential damage, harm or an adverse health effect the worker experienced from working or exposure to certain working conditions that include the materials, substance they use, the process and the practice involved in that job (Lu, 2021). Hawkers are exposed to several work hazards that includes physical injury (accidents), diseases, changes in the way the body functions, growths, decreases in life span, change in mental condition resulting from stress, traumatic experiences, to mention but a few (Nyorere & James, 2024) <sup>[17]</sup>.

Ashaiman Municipal District is one of the twenty-nine districts in Greater Accra Region, Ghana. Originally it was formerly part of the then-larger Tema Municipal District, which was created from the former Tema District Council, until two parts of the district were later split off to create Adenta Municipal District (from the northwest part) and Ashaiman Municipal District (from the north central part) respectively on 29 February 2008; thus the remaining part was elevated to metropolitan district assembly status on that same year to become Tema Metropolitan District. The municipality is located in the central part of Greater Accra Region and has Ashaiman as its capital town. The district is bordered to the north by Kpone Katamanso District and to the south by Tema Metropolis District. The total area of the district is 45 square kilometers. According to the 2021 census, the population of the district is 302,512. Interestingly, the district is deprived of factories and Government office and so the inhabitants resort micro and

small-scale enterprises, particularly in trading. A lot of them have resorted to hawking their goods to avoid competition from traders who sell similar wares and are most often concentrated at the town centre and the market places.

Owing to long tracks of slow vehicular moments resulting from constant traffic jams, several of these traders sell their goods on the streets and along roads. There have been instances of accidents such as vehicles running into the traders as they fail brakes or traders and pedestrians crossing streets at the wrong points and without checking both left and right to see if the roads are safe. The challenges continue to escalate as a result of people seeing the informal sector activity as the only means of survival and as such they leave their villages to settle in Ashaiman.

However, several occupational and health hazards have been known to be associated with hawking. There have been rumors of traders being knocked down by vehicles, attack by thieves and rapists, among others. For instance, the study of Sackey *et al.* (2023)<sup>[22]</sup> and Prakash (2024)<sup>[21]</sup> confirmed these. Despite the frightening hazards, several traders are seen hawking varieties of product in Ashaiman and its environs. One thus keeps wondering whether there are no such occupational and health hazards in these localities. If the traders in these localities experience these hazards, why are they still using hawking as their only market strategy? These and other problems are what the study seeks to find answers to.

The outcome if adopted will assist first traders in diverse ways, including coming out with effective ways of hawking and reducing the hazards of hawking. The study will also be beneficial to government, particularly the Municipal Chief Executives in Ashaiman to look critically at the way these hazards occur or are likely to occur as a result of using hawking. This will help find better ways of handling the problems. To consumers, the findings will be able to know how to find a better way of participating in the goods and services of the traders so that the challenges will be minimized.

### **Aim of the Study**

The primary aim of the study is to investigate the hazards of hawking as a marketing strategy by traders in Ashaiman and its environs. Specifically, the study aims to

1. understand the reasons for traders adoption of hawking as a marketing strategy and;
2. examine hazards respondents encounter as they hawk their goods in the selected locations in Ashaiman.

### **Delimitation of the Study**

An investigation of the hazards of hawking among all types of business organizations in Ghana can be quite involving and demanding. Therefore, this study will be restricted to traders in Ashaiman and its environs. That is, street hawkers and businesses who use hawking as their marketing strategy.

### **Literature review**

#### **Concept of Street Hawking**

Many scholars had expressed their view about the concept of street hawking / child street hawking from different perspective. Street hawking is a common type of market trading system in African and Nigeria in particular. Street hawking has been given different names by different scholars. In related literature, (Ansah & Ahmed, 2023)<sup>[4]</sup> refer to it as “small and medium scale trade, street trading

while (Salamandane *et al.*, 2023)<sup>[23]</sup> refers it to street vending, among other names. However, all these names as synonyms to each other and can be used interchangeably. There is no single universal definition of the concept street hawking; it has been defined differently by many researchers but portraying the same meaning. Iwuoba (2020) sees street hawking as an act of selling retail goods directly in busy city street, while to Senna (2022)<sup>[25]</sup> is displaying of wares to the road side, carrying head pan or raising a sample of wares to the commuters while the vehicle are moving. Obuzor & Gabriel-Job (2022)<sup>[18]</sup> define street hawking as the selling of things along the roads and from one place to another. The above definitions give a picture of what is visible in the pattern of present day hawking.

Street hawking has its roots in the informal economy, where people work for themselves in a variety of capacities to support themselves. Selling fresh vegetables, snacks, drinks, apparel, accessories, and home goods is one possible activity. Other options include providing services like car cleaning and shoe shining, as well as entertainment like fortune telling and street acts. According to Nyorere & James (2024)<sup>[17]</sup>, hawking, or street selling, is a distinct practice that emerged in Nigeria and throughout Africa as a response to issues with access to consumer goods, unemployment, and poverty. In spite of numerous official initiatives to eradicate it, the burgeoning informal sector has shown to be tenacious.

Ghana and many sub-Saharan African countries have been experiencing rapid population growth and urbanization from both natural increase and high rates of migration into the cities and large towns. The contemporary situation in Ghana is that of the migration of young people from the hinterland into the main centres of commercial activity (Sackey *et al.*, 2023)<sup>[22]</sup>. In the cities and towns, most of these young persons have difficulty finding jobs in the formal economic sectors due to their often-limited education and lack of skills for formal employment. In their quest to make a living, many of these persons, have no other choice than to take to the streets to fashion out a living. In fact, some of them virtually live on the streets and are exposed to the vagaries of street life, including rape, commercial sex work and crime (Sackey *et al.*, 2023)<sup>[22]</sup>.

#### **Nature of Street Hawking in Ghana**

Street hawking on the streets of Accra, Ghana is characterized by traders selling various types of goods, which may consist of: fruits and vegetables, newspapers, cosmetics, jewelry, watches, ladies' bags, wallets, second-hand clothes to shining of shoes on the streets, highways, sidewalks, avenues etc. street hawkers are found virtually in all major cities of the developing world; they are present in India (Prakash, 2024)<sup>[21]</sup>, Mahuadanr Block of Latehar district of Jharkhand state, Lagos in Nigeria (Nyorere & James, 2024)<sup>[17]</sup>, Nairobi in Kenya (Kimani *et al.*, 2021)<sup>[12]</sup> among others.

In Ghana, the issue of street hawking has also enjoyed immense attention both within the media and in academia, due to the ever-increasing numbers of street sellers in almost all major cities of the country (Sackey *et al.*, 2023)<sup>[22]</sup>. Concerns expressed include the street congestion they contribute to, the negotiation for power and the resultant friction that ensues between these street hawkers and city authorities (Nyorere & James, 2024)<sup>[17]</sup>. However, street

hawking in the major cities of Ghana and particularly in Accra is not a recent phenomenon (Sackey *et al.*, 2023) <sup>[22]</sup>, although the spatial configuration and its impact on city dynamics has intensified since the dislocations in the Ghanaian economy in the 1970s and further entrenchment by structural adjustment, economic recovery program and globalization in the early and late 1990s. Given that the Ghana Government has no backup plan to savage local economy, many nationals thinking of daily survival see street hawking as an immediate avenue for meeting one's daily survival needs. circumstantial evidence suggest that Accra's daytime population exceeds five million, most of the inflows originate from the city's outlying towns and villages, and converge at the city centers to engage in commercial activities including hawking but return home after the day's economic activity closes (Senna, 2022) <sup>[25]</sup>. Street hawking in the Metropolitan City of Accra occur in different parts of the urban landscape. Hawkers employ various media to display their goods which may include: wheel burrows, handcarts and bicycle seats. Others display their goods on the ground, over a mat or gummy bag, whilst others carry their commodities on their heads, hands and shoulders. There are also others who hang their goods on walls, trees and fences. The business of street hawking however exhibits some temporal dynamics. Street hawking

generally has its peak periods which is synonymous with that of vehicular and human traffic peak periods. The morning peak period (rush hour) is usually between 7am and 10am whereas the afternoon experience is between 1.00 pm and 3.00pm. The evening rush hour is between 5.00pm and 8.00pm (Senna, 2022).

The population of hawkers edges up in response to the human/vehicular traffic peak rush hour periods locating at strategic points especially routes where pedestrians come by, while others walk from one place to the other frantically in the lookout for buyers. Other hawkers also alternate with the signal of the traffic light. When the red light switches on for the vehicles to stop, hawkers then take their turn to move onto the streets, meandering between the vehicles advertising their products and selling as quickly as possible (Senna, 2022) <sup>[25]</sup>.

The competition among hawkers as well as the approach to attract customers create conflict with vehicles and sometimes make them vulnerable to vehicular collusion. City authorities classify these hawkers as violators of city rules and by-laws who deserve to be evicted and punished. They violate land use codes by selling in open spaces not designated for that and above all, congest the city and impede traffic flow in the city (Senna, 2022) <sup>[25]</sup>.



Source: "Ghana Districts - A repository of all districts in the republic of Ghana

Fig 1: Depicts some traders hawking their wares in Ghana

### Occupational and Health Hazards Associated with Street Hawking

Street hawking irrespective of who (age and sex) engages in it, is associated with major hazards (Senna, 2022) <sup>[25]</sup>. This includes sexual assault which increases the vulnerability of the hawkers to diseases such as HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections, increased risk of unwanted pregnancies and unsafe abortion (Salamandane *et al.*, 2023) <sup>[23]</sup>. Other hazards include physical assaults, mobbing, involvement in road traffic accidents, kidnapping and ritual killings. Street hawking leads to increased exposure to antisocial activities like smoking, drug and alcohol abuse, cultism and crime. (Obuzor & Gabriel-Job, 2022) <sup>[18]</sup>, hawkers are exposed to harsh weather conditions, insect and reptile bites and hunger. When children are involved, in addition to these other risks, they are deprived of education and sound health and these constitute child abuse (Kimani *et al.*, 2021) <sup>[12]</sup>.

Street hawking defaces the environment from littering by people who buy the goods sold by the hawkers (Sackey *et al.*, 2023) <sup>[22]</sup>. This adds to environmental pollution when the available drainages are blocked leading to flooding and increased breeding of vectors especially during the rainy season. The health of residents who live around these areas

is jeopardized due to the increased prevalence of communicable diseases. There is an increased risk of physical injuries sustained by the hawkers when they carry their goods on their heads or hands and run after moving vehicles in an attempt to ensure their sales are completed. This in addition contributes to the impediment in the flow of traffic as they flood these major roads and junctions (Basorun, 2021) <sup>[5]</sup>. The incidence of street hawking has been related to the high rates of unemployment, poverty, inflation, poor school performance, unstable families, peer group influence, large family size and poor parental care (Ansah & Ahmed, 2023) <sup>[4]</sup>. Poverty has been given as a major factor for engaging in street hawking due to the need to compensate for the family income (Taiwo, 2023) <sup>[27]</sup>.

### Marketing Strategies and its impact on Business Performance

Marketing strategy is the marketing logic by which the company hopes to create customer value and achieve profitability customer relationship (Ferrell, 2022) <sup>[9]</sup>. Aaker & Moorman (2023) <sup>[1]</sup> review of definitions, concepts and boundaries of strategic marketing found that there are five interrelated elements of marketing strategy: market selection; product planning; distribution system(the

wholesale and retail channels through which the product moves to the people who ultimately buy it and use it); overall communications strategy, employs advertising to tell potential customers about the product through radio, television, direct mail, and public print and personal selling to deploy a sales force to call on potential customers, urge them to buy, and take orders; and pricing (prices should be set differently for various classes of customers).

Empirically, various studies have been conducted to examine the effect of marketing strategies on performances of small, medium and large businesses or organizations. The main idea for any marketing strategy is to maximize profit/income and boost sales growth. Ali & Anwar (2021)<sup>[3]</sup> found that long-term differentiation marketing strategy, R&D as a percentage of sales, and years in business are positively associated with a small firm's business performance in China. Mukonza & Swarts (2020)<sup>[16]</sup> results revealed that the employment of various marketing strategies has positively impacted the performances of the firms even though it is evident that the relationship between the marketing strategies and corporate performance is somehow positively low. Marketing strategy variables such as product positioning and sales force expenditures were found to be statistically significant explanatory factors of variance in business performance. Boateng (2019)<sup>[7]</sup> results show that the independent variables (i.e. Product, Promotion, Place, Price, Packaging and after sales service) were significant joint predictors of business performance in terms of profitability, market share, return on investment, and expansion. ( $F(6, 97) = 14.040$ ;  $R^2 = 0.465$ ;  $P < .05$ ). The independent variables jointly explained 46.5% of variance in business performance

## Methodology

### Research design

A research design is a systematic investigation to collect information on a subject to establish facts. Saunders *et al.* (2009)<sup>[24]</sup> assert that research design is overseen by the concept of 'fitness for purpose' and the purpose of the research determines the methodology and design of the study. This research followed a qualitative approach, as it systematically worked to solve the research problem and achieve the research aim. The chosen design was considered appropriate in that research into hazards of hawking as a marketing strategy among traders of Ashaiman and its environs is not yet profound, hence, a more invitational, open-ended question options had the tendency to provide relevant information on which future studies in the area could be built on.

### Design of interview Guide

Face-to-face interviews were organised around semi-structured interview guides. The interview guide was made up of three specific sections, of one question each. In all three major questions were posed to the respondents, one on their demographics and the other two on the reasons for choosing hawking as a marketing strategy and the hazards respondents encounter as they hawk their goods in the selected locations in Ashaiman. In addition to the literature review which laid the foundation for the development of the interview guide, a two-step procedure was followed to assess the appropriateness and rationality of the interview guide. A content validity test was first conducted using fifteen traders in Accra with in-depth knowledge on

hawking as a marketing strategy. The comments from these traders aided in revising any of the questions that were not clear. Based on the revision, a much-modified version of the interview guide was arrived at and further administered to the proposed respondents. The researcher explained in details to the traders reasons for the conduct of the study.

### Conducting the interview

The purposive sampling technique was employed in the study. To ascertain in-depth knowledge on hawking as a marketing strategy, traders who adopt hawking as a marketing strategy to market their wares in Ashaiman and its environs were considered. At the end of the exercise, 30 traders participated in the study. The traders were asked to answer questions on their reasons for choosing hawking as a marketing strategy and the hazards they encounter for using hawking to market their wares in Ashaiman and its environs

### Data Analysis

As mentioned by Cohen *et al.* (2007) several analytical tools such as content analysis, grounded theory, data matrix analysis and thematic analysis which can be used by researchers for qualitative data analysis. This study however uses the thematic analysis to analyse data within the specific themes in view of the meanings attributed to the themes. The data was analysed by coding using Nvivo 11 software. Nvivo software was used because it is an effective manager of text as well as analysis. Coding is the process of gathering data by themes or cases in Nvivo. Data obtained from the interview was analysed using the procedure outlined: the recorded data in a form of audio was transcribed using MS Word 2017; the interviewees were traders who use hawking as a marketing strategy to market their wares in Ashaiman and its environs. The data was transcribed separately in a word document and saved in their respective names; the transcribed data were cross-checked with the audio recordings to ensure that they were exactly the same as the audio recordings from the interview; the transcribed data were imported into the Nvivo 11 Pro; deductive approach of thematic analysis was used; the themes in the interview guide were coded in new nodes. Node allowed the researchers to gather related materials for emerging patterns and ideas; responses from all the interviewees were grouped under their respective themes or nodes; the responses under each node (themes) were coded separately and analysed; and the coded data were discussed and supported with literature in order to give meaning to the results. The results of the analysis formed the reasons traders choose hawking as a marketing strategy and the hazards traders encounter as they hawk their goods in Ashaiman and its environs

### Results and Discussions

Table 1 shows the detailed background of interviewees. For the purpose of anonymity, the names of interviewees are represented with codes; A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, A6 in that order. Table 1 further shows that all participants are traders who hawk their wares in Ashaiman and its environs for various years, with the years of experiences spanning from 5 to over 10 years. The experiences of respondents indicate the in-depth knowledge and the level of involvement in using hawking as marketing strategy. Interestingly, 30 interviewees were willing to take part in the research. This is an indication that there was quality and adequacy in information given hence reliable for analysis.

Interviewee (Code)	Years of hawking experience	Willingness to participate in the study	N
	More than 5 years		
A1		Willing	30
A2		Willing	30
A3			
A4			
	More than 10 years	Willing	30
A5		Willing	30
A6		Willing	30
A7		Willing	30
A8		Willing	30
A9		Willing	30
A10		Willing	30

Source, Fieldwork, 2024

**Reasons why Traders adopt Hawking as a Marketing tool**

The study sought to examine the reasons why traders adopt hawking as a marketing tool to sell their wares. The reasons identified were specific to marketing strategies. The specific reasons identified listed by the respondents include: *to increase sales, goods are bought easily, to meet sales target and to meet people who normally will be difficult to reach.* The verbatim responses of the respondents are further presented under each barrier listed to include.

**To increase Sales**

Ofori-Boateng & Agyei (2020) [20] identified advertising as an essential element during brand promotion. The authors posit that advertising helps to bring the attention of potential and current customers to the brand. It reinforces consumers’ attachment to the brand by depicting satisfaction, strong imagery, pride and positive experience. In view of this some of the respondents gave a typical scenario where hawking serves as a good advertising platform to showcase their wares to consumers to enhance sales. Respondents A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, A6 and A7 intimated as follows:

“We do not have money for radio, television or any form of advertisement since it involves money. Our meager income would not permit us. Sitting at one place hurts sales unless at a good location which is also not for free.

It is either you have your containers set up at the place or you rent a store at that location. This, we cannot afford. We then resort to the best way of reaching consumers in the street with our wares”. It helps a lot in increasing our sales for the day (Interviewees A1, A2, A3, A4, A5 and A6, 2024)

**Goods are Bought Easily**

As posit by Boerman & Smit (2023) hawking as an promotional strategy helps in creating product awareness in the minds of consumer to take purchasing decision. Majority of the respondents have this to say:

“We are able to attract consumers’ attention to our products during hawking which actually makes it easy to accept it. In most cases, consumers have not decided to buy, however, once they witness the product before them, they get attracted to it and buy which might not be the same if we stayed at one location” (Interviewees A1, A2, A3, A4, A5 and A6, A7, A8 and A9, 2024)

**To meet Sales Target**

Another reason which was also spoken about by some respondents is the need to meet sales target. According to majority of the hawkers, they have to meet sales target of the day to be able to continue in business since the products are given to them with a target. Some of the respondents averred as follows:

“Our madam has given us sales target to meet for commission to be given. If you don’t meet sales target, your commission dwindles, you don’t make enough commission. But if you are not lazy to hawk, you can meet your sales target and sometimes exceed it. Most of us exceed it almost every day. But sitting at one location will not help as we might find it difficult to meet our target for the day” (Interviewees A1, A2, A3, A4, A5 and A6, A7, A8, A9 and A10, 2024)

Based on the responses of the respondents hawking strategy seems to work for most of them and hence, the desire to leave their places of hawking for a permanent place will prove to be very difficult. With increasing unemployment in Ghana, the government is morally handicap in dealing with them. This stems from the fact that the government is unable to provide employment or suitable market place for this group of persons who are used to hawking and most of them are the bread winners of their families.

**Hazards Hawkers encounter as they Hawk their wares in the Street**

The study further sought to determine the hazards respondents encounter as they hawk their goods in the selected locations in Ashaiman. The hazards respondents enumerated were corroborate findings of extant literature. Several health hazards were reported but the compelling ones are delineated below: vehicular accident, fatigue/tiredness and sexual harassment

**Vehicular accident**

The involvement of vehicular accident is obvious granting that these hawkers hawk their wares in the street. In the study of Ogungweru (2023) [19], street hawkers were found to be exposed to vehicular accidents. Indeed, street hawkers are at a higher risk of being involved in a vehicle accident because they sell their goods on the road. Many street hawkers are left with life-altering injuries or die after being involved in a vehicle accident. Ogungweru (2023) [19] posit that they can be hit by vehicles while crossing roads, or by vehicles that have lost control or are running through traffic.

With an in-depth discussion, some hawkers narrated as follows:

“At times, in the process of carrying out our duties we are involved in an accident where you slip and fall in the middle of the street which causes huge traffic because other motorists have to stop for other hawkers to come to our aid and collect our items on the street. Sometimes, the accident causes fear so we close from our hawking activities at the spot” (Interviewees A4, A5 and A6, A7, A8 and A9, 2024)

### **Fatigue/tiredness**

Fatigue/tiredness is reported in prior studies as hawking hazard faced by street hawkers (Abdullah *et al.*, 2020) [2]. Fatigue as stated by Behrens *et al.* (2023) [6] is a feeling of extreme tiredness, exhaustion, or lack of energy that can interfere with daily activities. Fatigue is perceived to be one of the commonest hazards associated with street hawking. This is because, hawking is associated with perilous behaviors such as chasing buyers in moving vehicles, selling in-between moving vehicular traffic and street fighting among others. The long hours spent on the street and in traffic also expose hawkers to fatigue/tiredness. Majority of the respondents asseverated as follows:

“You know, if you are not physically strong, you can't work in the street. Yes, sometimes, when the vehicle is about moving, the passengers call for our items. You have to chase the vehicle by running and this makes us get tired. Most of us know how to run very well, they smile here. The sun is also not friendly at all. If not in the rainy season, the weather is always hot in the street and, this compound our problem” (Interviewees A1, A2, A3, A4 A5 and A6, A7, A8 and A9, 2024).

The researcher also observed with surprise the infighting among hawkers in trying to sell their wares to persons on board vehicles. Once a call is made, a number of the hawkers run to the vehicle with the aim to get their ware sold to the passenger. This results in fighting.

### **Sexual Assault**

Studies have shown that female hawkers are sexually assaulted (Ezenwoko *et al.*, 2024) [8]. In their study, the authors found 24.5% prevalence of sexual abuse among female hawkers. This assault certainly increases the vulnerability of the hawkers to sexually contracted diseases and unplanned pregnancies and unsafe abortion (Obuzor & Gabriel-Job, 2022) [18]. Also, the study of Johnson *et al.* (2019) [11] reported 18.0% of intercourse due to enticement and 12.3% of rape of the female street hawker in Nigeria. Most of these street hawkers are school dropouts and are oblivious about the possible consequences of sexual intercourse. A study in Anambra State, Nigeria reported low level of awareness of risks of pregnancy (43.1%) and sexually transmitted infections (STI) (54.3%) as consequences of intercourse among female hawkers. Some of the respondents shared as follows:

“Yes, some of our members suffer rape and other sexual assault but it depends on the area you hawk your wares. Sometimes, you encounter a bad person who pretends to be good to you and will request for your phone number which could lead to another thing. There

have been reports of abortion leading to death in this area but few. You know, the older ones among us keep advising us. But, it depends on the individual. Sometimes, if you do not make good sales and a customer invites you to his house, you are tempted to go. It's dangerous but we do” (Interviewees A5, A6, A7, A8 and A9, 2024).

### **Conclusion**

The study investigates the hazards of hawking as a marketing strategy for trader who hawk their wares in Ashaiman and its environs. The qualitative research design was employed. Face-to-face interviews were organised around semi-structured interview guides. The interview guide was made up of three specific sections, of one question each. Thirty street hawkers participated in the study. This study however uses the thematic analysis to analyse data within the specific themes in view of the meanings attributed to the themes. The data was analysed by coding using Nvivo 11 software.

Sales increase, goods are bought easily, to meet sales target and to meet people who normally will be difficult to reach were found to be the reasons why respondents engage in street hawking. Also, vehicular accident, fatigue/tiredness and sexual harassment were found to be the most compelling health hazards encountered by street hawkers in Ghana

### **Policy implication and suggestions for future studies**

#### **Policy Implication**

The study has some implications for policy makers

Policy makers are to enforcement and streamlining appropriate laws on street hawking in order to integrate a human phase into its enforcement, as well as safeguarding human life and maintaining clean environment. This is because for some of the hawkers that is their source of livelihood and hence, their relocation and prohibitions should take this into consideration.

Training the youth on handy work whose mode of marketing does not involve street hawking and empowering those on the streets with information on how to transform and re-engineer their products to catch the eye of many through professional packaging and innovative marketing (through distributive routes such as shops, malls and online). Also, institutionalizing boundaries for hawkers in terms of areas where hawking is prohibited and enforcing such laws with appropriate sanctions.

Finally, policy makers are encouraged to provide informal education on the dangers and consequences of sexual intercourse to these street hawkers to help forestall unwanted pregnancies and STIs.

#### **Suggestions for Future Studies**

The study investigates the hazards of hawking as a marketing strategy for trader who hawk their wares in Ashaiman and its environs. Future studies could focus on other geographical area of Ghana where street hawking is prevalent. Also, future studies could be quantitative since this study is predominantly qualitative

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