

al Activities. A Case of Food Kiosks in Nairobi- Kenya. By nyabuti, Jeremiah Ayonga

With the pressing unemployment situation in the country, the role of the informal sector as a possible alternative for provisions of employment and incomes cannot be underestimated. The Government of Kenya's emphasis has been on the creation of an enabling environment so as to achieve growth in the sector. Paradoxically, theory and practice shows that the informal sector is still confronted with various impediments. Of interest here, is the activities location in space. The Food Kiosks sub-sector of the informal sector, lack allocations in space. As a result, the Food Kiosks operators are confronted with frequent harassment, ranging from wanton eviction, to sheer relocation from the chosen sites. Efforts made in the past to allocate the Food Kiosks in space have also met resentment from the kiosk operators, occasionally leading to bloody confrontations between the kiosk operators and the city authorities. The action then clearly shows that there is a difference in locational desires between the kiosk operators and those in authority.

Thus, this study set out to determine an optimum location for Food Kiosks in an urban space. An optimum location must by necessity consider the locational desires of all the parties concerned in spatial planning for a Food Kiosk. These parties were identified as the entrepreneur of the kiosk, the patron and the planner who organizes these activities on space.

It was found out that kiosk entrepreneurs are profit motivated and therefore chooses sites where they would have accessibility to their patrons. The entrepreneur looks for these conditions by alternating on different sites of the city. The t-test statistic applied between the average profits obtained in the three zones of the survey indicated a strong significant -difference between some' zones. This study therefore, established the rationale in the entrepreneurs locational desires. The kiosk patrons were found to prefer accessibility to the kiosk and therefore, their locational desires were found to concur with those of the entrepreneurs. The patron's locational desires are justified by the fact that they bear the burden of cost to the kiosk and therefore they tend to reduce the cost by going to the nearest centers. Planners, however, object to the location of these kiosks on accessible sites because of three main reasons:-

- (i) The Food Kiosks like any other sectors of the informal sector system are not recognised in the official existing plans and therefore the procedural planner does not recognise them.
- (ii) Secondly, the accessible sites where the entrepreneurs and patrons seem to prefer are areas of very high land values. Activities located here must generate high incomes so as to pay the high rents that would commensurate with the high land values. The Food Kiosks which are largely owned by relatively poor entrepreneurs may not afford the rents on these accessible locations.
- (iii) Thirdly, the Food Kiosks are mostly built of temporary structures, which lack aesthetic value. The town planning profession has tended to safeguard the principle of aesthetic value since time immemorial.

Based on the above considerations, the city planners have tended to locate the Food Kiosks in inaccessible sites of the city. Since the entrepreneurs and Patrons' locational desires are often ignored in the process of spatial planning for Food Kiosks, the selected zones for the operation of these activities has met resentment from the entrepreneurs. The demarcated locations then fail to meet the desires of the entrepreneurs and the patrons, and this was found to be the cause of the existing conflict. This criterion of choosing sites for informal activities was, therefore, found to be a hindrance not only to the parties concerned, but also mitigated against the objective of achieving growth in the sector.

In view of the above, the study recommends a framework for locating the Food Kiosks in space and this is done in Chapter six. The recommended framework can only work, however, if space is allocated for the operation of Food Kiosks and, indeed, other sub-sectors of the informal sector. The suggested framework for locating Food Kiosks



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of the planners and that of the entrepreneurs. These would include designs.