Your Mess, My Life: The Junction between Land Use Planning and Street Vending in the Accra Mall Enclave

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my children Israel Jason Nii Tettey Quarcoo, Enoch Kekeli Papa Nii Quarcoo, and Joseph Dennis Nii Mensah Quarcoo. You inspire me to be a better man and fight for a better world where eager and vibrant souls like yours can relish their potential and thrive.

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TABLES OF CONTENT

Contents

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

ABSTRACT

City managers and planners in the global South, particularly in African cities are confronted with an unprecedented urbanisation fraught with complexities such as urban sprawl, jobless growth, and informality. Urban planning practice in Ghana has retained colonial legacies that outlaw informality, be it economic, such as, street trading or housing, such as, slums. This has led to the marginalisation of the urban poor, who make up the majority of urban dwellers. Consequently, the masses invent ways to survive in the city and thus reshape the materiality of urban spaces. Most planners and state officials consider the activities of street vendors as a nuisance that mar the beauty of our cities. For this reason, 24% of the Ghanaian labour force who work on the streets are targets of misaligned and officious controls that include but are not limited to evictions. However, when evicted, most generally return to the streets.

Building on existing work on urban planning in the global South and feeding into Southern urban theory, the research focuses explicitly on the Accra Mall Enclave (AME) as a microcosm of African cities. It explores how various players – planners/vendors/politicians – interact and navigate the dynamics of daily experiences. The research asks, how are planners navigating the tensions between planning regulations and the reality of street trading around the Accra Mall Enclave (AME)? What are street traders' logics, strategies, and experiences? How are vendors negotiating their interactions with state actors such as police, planners, city guards, toll collectors, etc.?

The questions were answered through qualitative research methods; field observations, interviews, and a review of planning regulations and policies. The results of the study contribute to our understanding of how cities are being built in Africa, particularly Accra, Ghana. As a case study, the focus on the AME assisted in exposing the role of planners in this mode of urbanisation, while also uncovering meaning associated with space and place.

Findings show that the state is reluctantly, if not unwillingly, coming to terms with vending within the AME. This could however change quickly if politics change, so still precarious. There are no viable alternatives to relocation, and vendors have established significant relationships and tactics that somehow entrench their position howbeit insecure. Besides all these, state officials, when

acting in their individual capacity side with the vending profession because the state has not created jobs. Despite this personal understanding, the system, specifically state bureaucracy, generates obstacles, and as a result existing state structures frustrate the planning practice. This is complicated further by politics. Hence, planners themselves feel helpless, marginalised, and trapped. Further, spatial plans do not adequately provide access to the land needed by informal sector actors. The state resorts to occasional evictions when there is an adequate budget for this action. Imaginations of world class cityness dominate perceptions of the space. This is a candid depiction of the do-nothing scenario – the active contribution of the state in the creation of informality within the AME and the city of Accra, Ghana.

Key Words: Accra Mall Enclave, Street Vending, Informality, Urban Planning, Accra

CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Over the past decade, critical urban thinkers have questioned the universalisation of urban theory (Bhan, 2019; Cirolia & Scheba, 2019; Derickson, 2015; Frediani & Cociña, 2019; Lawhon et al., 2020; Robinson, 2013; Watson, 2014). The core strand of these emerging arguments is that the urban studies canon based on the urbanisation experience of the global North does not fully explain the urban phenomenon of the South. One of the key characteristics of urbanisation in the South is the ubiquity of informality, in varied forms and a variety of typologies, across cities of the South. As Pieterse & Simone (2013: 21) points out, "to be sure, African cities and towns are marked by profound crisis… the shanty city is by and large the real African city." Understanding and transcending the urban condition characterised by informality and its ensuing challenges demand critical studies of the phenomena in its varied forms – hence the need for Southern theory brought forward through bold methodological experimentations and plural perspectives (Pieterse & Simone, 2013).

The Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11 and the New Urban Agenda (NUA) seek to attain sustainable, more equitable, and inclusive cities and neighbourhoods with decent housing, healthy environments, and better quality of life for all, leaving no one behind (Bharad, 2017; Halisçelik & Soytas, 2019; Satterthwaite, 2016; Watson, 2014). Ghana, together with 192 countries, adopted the SDGs. Consequently, the Ghanaian government has incorporated the SDGs into its policies, included them in strategic programmes, and further plans to allocate part of the state budget to enhance accountability (National Development Planning Commission, 2019). Four years into implementation, a Voluntary National Review (VNR) on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was conducted to analyse "progress made, identify areas where we fall short, and crucially to put in place urgent policy and programmatic actions to accelerate implementation on the Goals" (National Development Planning Commission, 2019: i). However, a critical area that has not been assessed is whether there has been a shift in perspective towards a more inclusive urban structure. i.e., embracing and working with informality is crucial to attaining SDG 11 and the collective 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets since they are "integrated and

indivisible" (Bharad, 2017: 3). Given the wider SDG ambition of integrated and indivisible goals and targets, and the focus of SDG 11 to "make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable" has the traditional position on informality shifted?

While there are arguments for planning in Africa to embrace informality, (e.g. Bigon & Njoh, 2017; Lund & Skinner, 2004; Myers, 2018; Parnell & Pieterse, 2014; Swilling & Annecke, 2012; Watson & Agbola, 2013), most cities and countries reject the idea of incorporating this informality into their plans and programmes (Brown et al., 2014; Fält, 2016; Lindell & Ampaire, 2016; Lindell et al., 2019; Morange, 2015; Roever & Skinner 2016; Watson, 2009). Watson (2014) points out that most African cities are motivated to build world-class cities modelled after Dubai, Singapore, and Shanghai, devoid of any traces of informality. Is this ideal attainable, and advisable, by 2030 or even 2063 if we consider the African Union's "Africa We Want" Agenda?

In 1950, more than two thirds (70%) of people worldwide lived in rural settlements. In 2007, for the first time in history, the global urban population exceeded the global rural population, and since then the number of the world's city dwellers has continued to grow faster than the rural population. Towards the end of the Agenda for Sustainable Development in 2030, the share of the world's population living in urban areas is expected to reach 60%. It is projected that by 2050, the world will be more than two thirds urban (68%) and for Africa 59%, urbanising at an average rate of 3.6% (UN-DESA, 2019).

Africa's urban transition can be attributed to three things namely natural increase i.e. the excess of birth over death, rural-urban migration, and reclassification of formally rural areas as urban based on spatial planning policies and national definitions of urban space, hence enlarging the size of urban areas (Bodo, 2019; UN-DESA, 2019).

Managing population growth and the rapid rate of urbanisation remains a significant challenge in most developing countries, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, a trend (population growth and rapid urbanisation) that will continue until mid-century (PD, U. D., 2017). Official statistics by the Ghana Statistical Service [GSS] indicate that as of 2012, 50.9% of the 24.6 million population of Ghana, was urban with the country set to become increasingly urbanised (Cobbinah & Erdiaw-Kwasie, 2018). As of 2021, out of the 31.73 million Ghanaian population, about 57.99% is urban (O'Neill, 2022). The level of urbanisation is high considering the relatively low trends of the past:

9.4% in 1931, 13.9% in 1948, 23% in 1960, 28.9% in 1970, 31.3% in 1984 and 43.9 in 2000 (Cobbinah & Erdiaw-Kwasie, 2018).

At the continental level, in 1950 Africa's urban level was about 14.4%. This figure increased to 35.7% in 2000 and 39.2% in 2010. It is projected that by mid-century Africa's urban population will be about 57.7%. The uneven urbanisation trend across the continent is worth noting. For instance, in 2010 the most urbanised regional block was southern Africa (59%) compared to Northern Africa (51%), Western Africa (44%), Central Africa (41%) and 23% for Eastern Africa (Cobbinah & Erdiaw-Kwasie, 2018). The proportion of the African population under 35 years forms three-quarters of the continent's total population (Bharad, 2017). The population cluster under 25 years was almost 60% as of 2019 (Mo Ibrahim Foundation, 2019) and is growing rapidly. However, the rapid urbanisation and population growth are not matched by economic growth and decent job creation. Hence, like other developing countries, Ghana has a large informal economy. The jobless economic growth and the inability to provide for a growing urban population further amplify the transfer of inappropriate and ill-suited planning approaches to urban development in Ghana. This lack of fit is evidenced in the fact that planning approaches have generated little dividend as 'indiscipline' persists in the form of informality of all kinds, including street trading and erecting building structures without permits (Skinner, 2008; Steel et al., 2014; Watson, 2009).

The dominant informal sector, its activities, and practices, have arguably come to stay and require appropriate attention from the state and its actors. This is apparent from population projections, fast-paced urbanisation due to rural-urban migration and natural increase (high fertility rate), as well as the inability of the formal sector to absorb the available labour (Cobbinah & Erdiaw-Kwasie, 2016). Street vending is one of the most visible occupations within informal self-employment (Roever & Skinner, 2016). In 2014, the Ghana Trade Union Congress published that although the total number of street vendors in Ghana is unknown, the sector is perceived to be growing (TUC, 2013). Reports by the Ghana Statistical Service suggests that since year 2000, Ghana's informal economy has employed more than 80% of the labour force; 80% in 2000 and 86.1% in 2010. (Haug, 2014). Drawing on the 5th Ghana Economic update data of the World Bank, the Business and Financial Times (2021) indicated that 24% of the Ghanaian labour force works on the streets, 35% on farms, and 11% work at home. According to the 5th Economic update data, the official youth unemployment rate based

on the Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) definition is 17.6%. Only 18% of the 11.6 million people in the Ghanaian labour force work in offices, stores, or factories. The data reveals that the Ghanaian economy remains informal (82%).

Many liberal-oriented economists hold the view asserted by Koto (2015) that players in the informal economy in Ghana have low levels of education with limited employable skills. For many, street vending and other informal economic activities are a means of survival and not necessarily an attempt to defy formal sector regulations (Koto, 2015). The informal economy is more than the liberal views suggest. It is an actual economy, something deeper and more permanent (Haysom, 2021; Joubert, & Mistra Urban Futures Realising Just Cities Team, 2021; Pieterse, et. al., 2019; Watson and Agbola, 2013). Many seek a living in the absence of formal jobs, despite the uncertain working conditions and environments of informality. Work in the informal sector has mostly been perceived as transitional at the onset but inevitably becomes permanent (Osei-Boateng et. al., 2011).

There is a need to situate what city managers and planners think of informality (e.g., street vending) in Accra (Ghana), how they navigate the tensions observed, and how street vendors negotiate their interaction with the state. This will help us offer a critical evaluation of the positionality and rationale of city managers and planners, and produce context-relevant work that contributes to southern urban theory and practice. Also, do planners/state officials perceive street vendors in the same light? Are there conflicting rationalities (Watson, 2003) that emerge among planners and between planners and vendors? That is, to what extent do planners/the state and street vendors think alike or apart?

Street vending is a common sight in Ghana, particularly in cities and locations with high foot and vehicle traffic. In 1973 Hart Keith coined the term *informal economy* through his observations in Ghana. However, the act of vending on the street is abhorred by planners and city managers who perceive it as a dissonance to city planning and proper urban development (Andoh et al., 2020; WIEGO, 2020). Planning in the global South has been based on the urban studies canon, brewed from the urbanisation experience of the global North (de Satgé et al., 2018, Pieterse, 2011). The Eurocentric notion of city-making has informed Southern urban planning practice (Parnell & Pieterse, 2014; Watson, 2003). This is evident in Ghana, and in particular, Accra. Roy (2005) has argued that planners and the planning practice play a crucial role in the

production of informality. Informality is perceived as a nuisance, yet it is so pervasive and dominant in the normal life in the city (Bamhu, 2019; Ghana Trade Union Congress, 2013; Osei-Boateng et. al., 2011).

As a planner working in these spaces, the author understands that though urban practitioners and policymakers acknowledge the existence and crucial role the informal economy plays in urban livelihoods (Addi, 2021; Haug, 2014), there is still a sense of antagonism towards it. This aversion is observed particularly during policy discussions and formulation as evidenced by hash by-laws and state neglect of the informal sector. It is a conundrum that most planners and policy stakeholders (ministries, local governments, agencies, and media) cannot seem to realise that the principal reason for poor execution of urban plans (considered a significant challenge and back-lash on planners) is the disregard for the behavioural component. Working with informal sector actors and incorporating the culture and practice of informality into city planning may enable different responses and different forms of engagement between planners and informal operators, enabling more equitable and meaningful use of city spaces without the state's brutal show of force (Bigon & Njoh, 2017; Koto, 2015; Lund & Skinner, 2004; Myers, 2018; Parnell & Pieterse, 2014; Roever & Skinner, 2016; Swilling & Annecke, 2012; Watson & Agbola, 2013).

1.2 Description of Study Area

The Accra Mall, described as Ghana's busiest shopping Centre (Amarteifio, 2019) is located within the shared boundary of the Ledzokuku Municipal Assembly (LEKMA) and La Dade-Kotopon Municipal Assembly (LaDMA) (Figure 2).

There is an ongoing boundary dispute between these two local government authorities over the Accra Mall Enclave (AME). Vendors within the AME have resisted and endured several evictions. There is a sustained cycle of clean up and evict, followed by a return of vendors. In July 2017, vendors and hawkers who operate within the AME were ejected and their structures demolished (Hawkson, 2017). The operation which started at 4 am was led by the Municipal Chief Executive (MCE) of LaDMA and the La Police Commander. Mrs. Gladys Mann-Dedey, the then MCE, described the vending activities as "disgraceful and an indictment on the President's vision to make Accra the cleanest city in Africa" (Hawkson, 2017:1). The President's vision is yet to be realised. Despite the 2017 evictions, vendors returned, and the space thrived again. However, more recently,

further evictions have been actioned, such as the 'Make Greater Accra Work' April 2021 campaign.

1.2.1 Study Scope

This study defined the Accra Mall Enclave (AME) as the 7,084 square meters of space starting from the footbridge to the bus terminal entrance (*trotro station*) and the space to the north of the Accra Mall. For easy navigation, the AME has been categorised into five (5) sections – A to E and three (3) segments (LEKMA, Ayawaso West Municipal Assembly (AWMA) & LaDMA) (Detailed in red highlighted numbers in Figure 2).

Figure 1: Scope of Study (Accra Mall Enclave)

Figure 1: Scope of Study (Accra Mall Enclave) Source: Google Earth
**The research area is drawn out with the yellow line (7,084 square meters)
5 Sections of the research area – A to E. | *3 segments* of the research area – AWMA, LEKMA, LaDMA

Section A is the West-base of the footbridge, which falls within the jurisdiction of the Ayawaso West Municipality (AWMA). Section B is the **E**ast-base of the footbridge and the connecting pavement/stretch, which falls within the jurisdiction of the La Dade-Kotopon Municipal Assembly (LaDMA). The curve/bending side of the pavement leading to the *trotro* station is Section C. Section D is the straight pavement segment leading to the *trotro* station. Both sections C and D fall within the jurisdiction of LaDMA. Section E is the pavement at the Northern side of the Accra Mall. This section falls within the jurisdiction of the Ledzokuku Municipal Assembly (LEKMA). This implies that the Accra Mall proper falls within the authority of LEKMA whereas the *trotro*

station falls within that of LaDMA. The Spintex road separates these two municipalities. To the north of the Accra Mall facility is the road that connects to the Tema Motorway and Spintex road from the roundabout. This road separates the Ayawaso West Municipality (AWMA) from LEKMA.

The area beyond Liberation Road (a highway) falls within the jurisdiction of the AWMA. The footbridge allows pedestrians to cross over the busy highway to the Mall area and vice versa. There is a spill over of vending activity from the Accra Mall, through the footbridge to the West-base of the footbridge at the Ayawaso West side. This study, therefore, defines the AME as covering the layer of vending activities at the West-base of the footbridge (Section A), to the East-base and the connecting pavement (Section B), then the curving pavement (Section C) through the straight side (Section D) to the edge of the *trotro* station. Then the northern side of the Mall (Section E).

Figures 2 to 6 offer an aerial and pictorial view of the study scope in the business-as-usual situation.

Figure 2 (A & B)

Figure 2C ▶
Section A at night
Left-base of the footbridge.

The night market is precious to vendors.

Source: Researcher

Figure 2(D&E) ▶
Section B at night
Right-base of the footbridge.

Products sold: Apparel, sneakers, Leather Shoes, Provisions, kebabs etc.

Figure 3A ▶ Section C (LaDMA)

The curving side of the pavement towards the trotro station.
The walkway from Section B leads you to Section C.
Products sold: Apparel, sneakers, Leather Shoes, Provisions, kebabs etc.

Source: Researcher

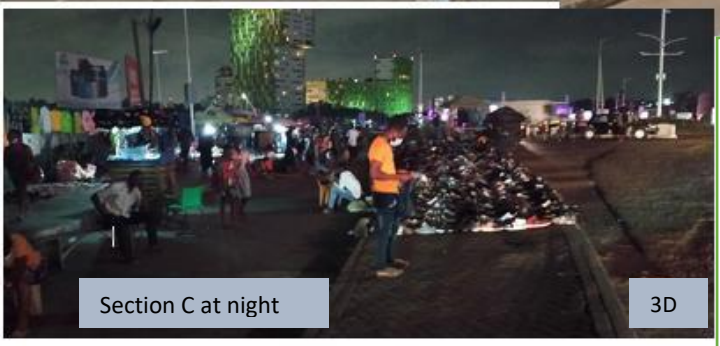


Figure 3(B-D) ▶ Section C (LaDMA)

3B&C shows Section C during early morning.
It's Part of the most active vending side. A respondent likened this side to the busy Makola market in Accra.
3D shows this side at night.

Products sold: Assorted, ladies shoes & sandals, everyday essentials, food, Mobile money, phones & accessories, etc.

Source: Researcher

Figure 4 (A-C)

(4A) Section D

(4B/C) Section D at night

Figure 4(A-C) ▶ Section D (LaDMA) Source: Researcher

5A shows Section D during the day. It's part of the most active vending side.
5B&C shows Section D at night. *Products sold:* Assorted, Provisions, fruits, food, Mobile money, phones & accessories

Figure 5 (A-C)

5A

5B

5C

Figure 5(D-E) ▶
Section E (LEKMA)

5A-C: Section E, day.
5D&E: Section E, night.

1.3 Why the Accra Mall Enclave?

The Accra Mall is located in a prime area called East Legon, a high-income residential area (Lartey, 2020). It is less than 10 minutes away from the Kotoka International Airport (KIA), three minutes away from a former president's house, and close to several plush hotels and properties. It is strategically located near three highways – the Liberation Road, the Accra-Tema motorway, and the Spintex road. Thousands of people ply these routes daily.

The Mall and businesses around it have flourished, despite several attempts to evict vendors. The state-planning apparatus is in a stalemate because colonial-derived policies, post-colonial framings, and logics on which evictions are based and carried out have not worked. Furthermore, the state has not shown a readiness to incorporate informality or street vending within the AME and across the country. This complexity impacts all vending spots in Ghana because by-laws of local governments still outlaw street vending and other expressions of informality in Ghanaian

cities (Bamhu, 2019; Local government Bulletin, 2015; Reviewed by-laws, 2019; Roever & Skinner, 2016). Consequently, lessons from this site can be transferred to other locations in Accra and Ghana, with potential relevance to other African cities.

Ghana's adoption of the Structural Adjustment Programme and other International Monetary Fund (IMF) loan conditionalities resulted in high privatisation in Ghanaian cities (Ayitio et al., 2014; Hoedoafia, 2019; Korah, 2020), particularly in Accra. Most open space has since been privatised. The urban poor can only access limited open or public spaces for their business. Unfortunately, there are few such open spaces in Accra (Laari et al., 2019). Public spaces are limited to pavements, walkways, parks, roads, and bus stops. So, most street vendors locate their businesses along the shoulders of roads and any vacant spaces available, regardless of how small the space is. It is worth noting that some characteristics of the AME are unique to the site. For example, the Accra Mall is located along a ceremonial road[1], which may not be the case for many other vending sites. Also, the *trotro* (mini-bus) station and the Mall offer unique opportunities that are not present in other vending locations. The affluent suburb status of the location influences product prices in the enclave.

Planners perceive the presence of informal traders as a blight on the area. Further, shops within the Accra Mall have complained of low sales due to poor economic performance, lack of promotional activities by management of the Accra Mall and the adverse impact of COVID-19 (Abbey, 2017; Bruce, 2020; Cititv, 2020; Daily Graphic, 2019). The presence of street vendors selling similar products to those sold in the Mall is therefore considered a threat to business.

There are several reasons why street vendors at the AME are not looked upon favourably. Street vendors have often been accused of polluting the urban environment (Bekele, 2019; Karna et al., 2019). The presence of vendors within AME is considered to negatively impact the place's aesthetics. The perceived competition from vendors with formal retailers (WIEGO, 2020) may result in poor revenue performance of the Mall, which invariably negatively affect taxes paid to the municipality. These are dynamics unique to the Accra Mall Enclave (AME), making it an interesting case study.

[1] Ceremonial roads usually have historic significance and located along national ceremonial locations. They are often used for national ceremonial duties. These roads are temporarily closed to traffic on special events like ECOWAS meeting, Presidential Inauguration and Independence Day celebrations among others.

The tension between plans and on-the-ground realities is a complexity that planners need to navigate in their quest to develop inclusive and sustainable cities.

The AME is a contested space that offers an opportunity to engage all these players, particularly planners/state actors, vendors, and the private sector, to understand the logics and existing tensions. Therefore, findings from this research may apply to other vending locations and cities in Ghana and Africa, and potentially, to highly contested spaces within cities in the global South.

1.4 Research Questions

Anchoring on the relatively recent occurrences of vendor ejection from the Accra Mall Enclave in 2017 and April 2021, **t**his research sought to uncover;

1. How planners are navigating the tensions between planning regulations and the reality of street trading within the Accra Mall Enclave (AME),
2. The conflicting rationalities (per Watson, 2003) that emerge, including the dissonance between policy, practice of planners, and practice of vendors,
3. What the logics, strategies, and experiences of street traders within the AME are, and
4. How vendors interact with and negotiate their position with state actors (police, planning officers, politicians, toll collectors, etc.).

The research, therefore, responds to Roy's (2005) call to confront the planning apparatus and Bhan's (2019) observations of Southern modes of practice and the demand for more empirical data to canonise mundane everyday practices that shape cities in developing countries through bold empirical methodologies (Pieterse, 2011; Pieterse & Simone, 2013).

The findings of this study will aid our understanding of place-making in Southern cities, particularly Accra. It will help uncover, among other things, the meanings associated with these spaces, the process of occupation and the role of the state/planners in this mode of urbanisation. The results will aid planners, city managers, and policymakers to re-think the formal-informal and legal-illegal divide, thus incorporating informality, e.g., street vending, into its plans and policies. This will facilitate coordination and enhance the aesthetics of the space, which will ensure the states' official presence. This further has strong implications for urban waste management.

Feedback from the study will help vendors understand the state's positionality and challenges to incorporating informality enabling vendors to reposition themselves for negotiations. Finally, to academia, findings will contribute to understanding how planning is being framed in Ghana and how it is being taught.

The thesis follows the following plan: Chapter one introduces the study, situating it within selected key literature. Chapter two offers a far more detailed and robust literature. Chapter three discusses the methodology and tools of the study. The empirical body of the research is captured in chapters four and five and provides the analysis and discussion of the study's findings. Key findings are summarised and discussed in relation to literature in the concluding chapter of the research.

Given that this was a qualitative study, where voices of the vendors and planners were the key sources of evidence, the researcher chose to avoid greater abstraction of the vendor's voices - and as a result have incorporated their voice, in as much detail as possible. The net result is that the document may read as quite long, but the need to retain the vendor voice, was a key strategy and a specific request by vendors.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents relevant literature from three domains that will guide this research: Southern practice, Ghanaian planning policy and related grey literature, and informality and the urban everyday. The chapter also presents the theoretical framework for the study. For vendors, the concepts of *incrementality, invited and invented spaces* from Miraftab's (2009) manifesto on insurgent planning, Bayat's (2010) *quiet encroachment of the ordinary*, as well as Ballard's (2015) notion of *movement and non-movement* come to bear. In the case of planners and state actors, Roy's (2011) notion of *state illegality*, Bailey et al., (2002) conception of *permanent temporariness*, Watson's (2003) notion of *conflicting rationalities* as well as the psychological construct of *individuation* are employed. The literature, together with the conceptual lenses outlined, will aid an understanding of how planners are navigating the tensions between planning regulations and the reality of street trading around the Accra Mall Enclave (AME) and the strategies street vendors within the AME use to sustain their presence within the enclave and maintain their livelihoods.

The chapter follows this order: First, a brief history of informality and evictions within Accra, followed by the definition of critical concepts and theoretical framework for the study, and then the three literature domains. This particular order was deemed necessary to help situate the other literatures in place and in relation to the study area. This approach sets the context for much broader engagement later.

2.2 Context:

2.2.1 History of Informality in Accra, Ghana

In the 1970s, the term formality and informality gained global attention in literature through the work of Keith Hart, an anthropologist working in Ghana. Hart (1973) expressed informality to mean "employment beyond government service, factories, and large-scale commercial ventures" (Baruah, 2016:1). He differentiated between legitimate and illegitimate informal sector activities.

He identified the latter component to include begging on streets, street hawking, pilfering, and scavenging. He posited that though some of the latter activities were not criminal, their value to national development was questionable.

Hart argues that many individuals sought casual/non-regular jobs as an alternative to either formal employment or no employment. For persons who had learned a trade such as hairdressing or tailoring, the challenge of not having enough start-up capital eventually led them into the informal sector because of its ease of entry. Hart notes the potential for multiple streams of income in the informal sector. In considering the formal/informal distinction, "the key variable is the degree of rationalisation of work - that is to say, whether or not labour is recruited on a permanent and regular basis for fixed rewards. Most enterprises run with some measures of bureaucracy and are amenable to enumeration by surveys and – as such – constitute the modern sector of the urban economy. The unenumerated, self-employed or casual workers, constituted the informal economy" (Hart 1973: 68). Furthermore, Hart points out the association between formal and informal economies. He notes that the informal economy provides a substantial proportion of legitimate goods and services to lower-class residents and middle-class populates (Obeng-Odoom & Ameyaw, 2014).

In practice, countries in the developing world continue to differ on conceptualising the informal sector, Ghana is no exception, thus sometimes making comparisons to other nations quite difficult (Sinha & Kanbur, 2012). Hart's work provides a historical lens for this study.

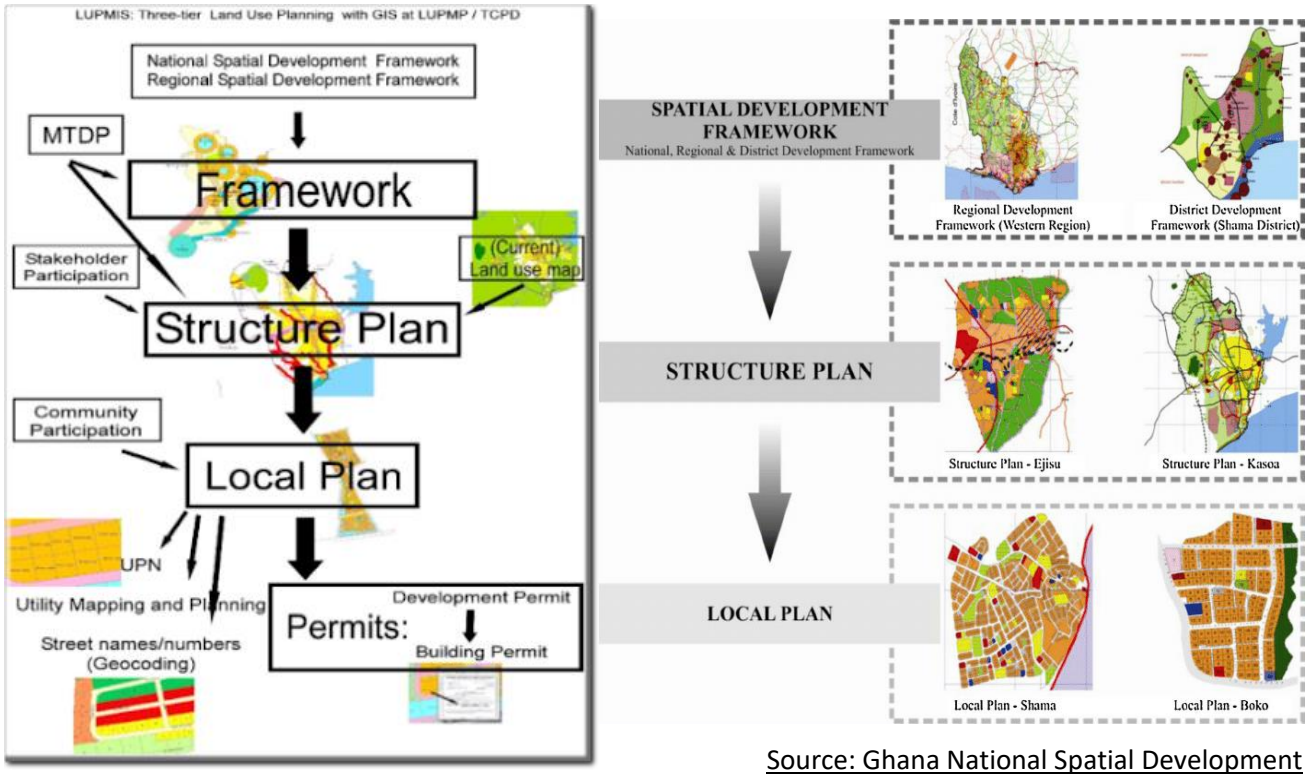
2.3 Urban Planning in Ghana: Planning Policy and Related Grey Literature

2.3.1 The Planning System

Planning in Ghana is managed at the national, regional, and district levels. The Land Use and Spatial Planning Authority (LUSPA), created by the Land Use and Spatial Planning Act of Parliament, Act 925 (2016), is the regulatory agency on land use planning in Ghana. However, the Authority operates only at the national and regional levels and currently falls under the Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology, and Innovation (MESTI). At the district/local government level, the municipality's Physical Planning Department (PPD) is responsible for land use planning. The PPD reports to the Local Government Service, which falls under the Ministry of Local Government, Decentralisation and Rural Development (MLGDRD). Act 925

(2016) prescribes a 3-tier planning system to guide physical planning. At the apex is the Spatial Development Framework (SDF), followed by the Structure Plan (SP), then the Local Plan (LP) – *See fig 6.*

Figure 6: Ghana's 3-tier planning system



Source: Ghana National Spatial Development

Thus, the responsible party for the daily management of space is the Physical Planning Department (PPD) at the municipal level. Regional LUSPA is responsible for harmonising plans and reports to the national office.

2.3.2 Planning Policy and Related Grey Literature

The 2016 election in Ghana led to new political leadership at the national level. A significant policy document guiding the socio-economic development of Ghana from 2017 to 2024 is The Coordinated Programme of Economic and Social Development Policies 2017-2024, An Agenda for Jobs: Creating Prosperity and Equal Opportunity for All (Ministry of Planning, 2017). The term, *Informal sector* appears only ten times in the 151 paged government strategic

document. The policy mentions the informal sector concerning four areas, with a critical point being an attempt to formalise the informal economy, among other means, through a National Identification System.[2]

The informal sector was mentioned in relation to improving financial literacy and financial access for players in the sector which tacitly indicates acceptance of this economy as part of urban life (Ministry of Planning, 2017). The strategic document also mentioned the informal sector concerning vocational training, pension and retirement income, and environmental, occupational safety and health. No direct reference could be drawn from this strategic document on recognising and incorporating the activities of the large informal sector in Ghana through policy (Ministry of Planning, 2017).

Yet in 2012, The National Urban Policy (NUP), a national document that preceded the Coordinated Programme of Economic and Social Development Policies 2017-2024, noted that state neglect (little institutional support) for the informal economy was a reason the large informal sector was struggling. It, therefore, highlighted local economic development, particularly through the informal sector and proposed recommendations towards a more robust urban economy. Three recommendations were made to the informal sector. First, there was a need to change the official attitude towards informal enterprises from neglect to recognition and policy support. Further, urban planning must make provision for the activities and operation of the informal economy, and finally, the operational capacities of informal enterprises must be upgraded (NUP, 2012: 24).

However, of more gravity is the attitude of local government and the Ghanaian media to informality. Media reports on street vending and informality (drawing from Andoh et al., (2020) used headlines and statements like, "hawkers take over Accra pavements", "…degrading the beauty of the city", "eyesore", "traders… continue to flout the law with impunity", and "…traders continue to take advantage of the inability of city authorities to clear them off the streets". Abayateye (2017) used the caption "hawkers play hide and seek with decongestion taskforce on Accra Mall pavements".

[2] The National Identification System is a mechanism to identify all citizens through a national identification card. This card is popularly known as the Ghana Card. The card is linked to an individual, Tax Identification Number (TIN), residential address, occupation and other basic/relevant details.

The local government fails to recognise vending as a legitimate economic activity (Bamhu, 2019; Local government Bulletin, 2015; Reviewed by-laws, 2019; Roever & Skinner, 2016). Until 2018, the entire jurisdiction of the Ayawaso West Municipality, Ledzokuku Municipal Assembly (LEKMA), and seven others fell within the Accra Metropolitan Assembly (AMA), which incorporate the Accra Mall Enclave. The government of Ghana created 38 new districts in 2018 by subdividing some of the existing ones. The total number of Metropolitan, Municipal, and District Assemblies (MMDAs) increased from 216 to 260. The new MMDAs are still setting up their physical and legal structures. A review of the by-laws of LEKMA, La Dade-Kotopon Municipal Assembly (LaDMA), Ayawaso West, and the Accra Metropolitan Assembly (AMA) revealed similar provisions and sanctions. Bamhu (2019) noted that the by-laws of the Accra Metropolitan Assembly were harsh towards street vendors and inaccessible to vendors. More so, these by-laws do not require local authorities to consult vendors when making decisions about them.

Unlike the National Urban Policy (NUP) and other national policies that seek to recognise and protect the rights of street vendors and the informal sector, by-laws are ambiguous and not congruent with national policies. The ignorance of vendors and the grey spaces within the regulations gives local authorities an upper hand, thus affirming what Roy (2005) calls a 'halo in democracy'. This means although the Accra Mall Enclave may now be managed by LEKMA or LaDMA, the severity and conditions of the old regulations of the AMA may still be applicable.

The failure of the Coordinated Programme of Economic and Social Development Policies 2017-2024 to capture the kind of inclusion proposed by the NUP in the incumbent government's strategic socio-economic policy document implies that no financial allocations could be made for such activities. In theory, there are policy recommendations for inclusion, but the state and its representatives still use the exclusionary apparatus in practice. The inability to transform to more inclusionary processes raise questions about what creates blockages and constrains the transformations imagined in the NUP (2012).

2.4 Background to Urban Geography

Critical urban geography has increasingly considered Southern cities as important locations where urban theory must be developed (Lawhon, et. al., 2020). In contemporary sub-Saharan Africa, Roy (2011) averred most city dwellers live off activities in the cities referred to as informal. Simone (2017) and many others (Pieterse, 2011; Mbembe, 2015; Watson, 2003, 2009) have pointed out the struggles, challenges and difficulties accompanying urbanisation in the global South. For instance, informality, street trading, urban sprawl, economic, social and political fragmentation. Researchers have also shared reflections on sustainable pathways to realise just, inclusive and safe cities in the Global South (Haysom, 2021; Joubert, & Mistra Urban Futures Realising Just Cities Team, 2021; Pieterse, et. al., 2019; Watson and Agbola, 2013).

The rise of social movements such as Black Lives Matter or the EndSARS Movement in Lagos, Nigeria (Ayeni, 2021; Black Lives Matter, n.d.; Effoduh, 2020; Tanko, 2020) and mass actions like the recent "Zuma riots and looting" in areas within the Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal provinces (BBC, 2021; Givetash, 2021; Harding, 2021) or the taxi squabbles in Cape Town (Evans, 2021; Hendricks, et. al., 2021; VOA News, 2021) all point to claims of the right to the city and for inclusion. Indeed, this allows us to highlight the struggles for plural rights in the city reflecting on political, social, cultural and economic fragmentation and exclusion, and the construction of the right to the city in the singular and collective sense (Yiftachel, 2015). In the cities of Ghana, few studies have examined the trends of Land Use Activities (Yeboah et. al., 2021; Mensah et. al., 2020; Fält, 2020; Ansong et. al., 2015). With the high privatisation of lands in Accra and other Ghanaian cities (Ayitio et al., 2014; Hoedoafia, 2019; Korah, 2020), coupled with the fact that there are limited public spaces (Laari et al., 2019), claims of the right to the city and contestations over spaces whether overtly or subtly are real. The AME is one of such contested spaces.

Several southern urban thinkers (Bhan, 2019; Haysom, 2021; Kimari, 2021; Pieterse, et. al., 2019; Pieterse & Simone, 2013; Roy, 2005, etc.) have called for more empirical evidence from mundane practices in the cities of the global South. Despite the complex relationship between colonial/post-colonial planning models and informality (e.g., street vending) in many African cities (De Satgé et. Al., 2018; Watson, 2003, 2009a/b; Watson and Agbola, 2013), urban scholarship in Ghana has not done much to aid the practice and process of incorporating informality to *"give us ways of moving and modes of practice"* as Bhan (2019: 369) proposed. Other studies have explored the

existence of spatial inequalities between cities (Ansong, Ansong, Ampomah, and Adjabeng, 2015). However, a few exceptions such as Fält (2020) and Asante (2020) illustrated how the vision(s) of the city are responded to by street vendors and their corresponding consequences on urban interventions. For instance, Okoye's 2020 study, "Street Vendor Exclusion in "Modern" Market Planning: A Case study from Kumasi, Ghana", argues for the need to consider street vendors as active participants during urban redevelopment. However, these studies reflect the command-and-control logic of Northern planning which "conceptualized planners as professionals who stand outside the society, though reaching out to citizens for inclusi-on, through… communication" (Miraftab, 2009:42).

2.5 Critical Urban Theory and Urban Development

Myers (2018) argued that earlier, critical urban theory was developed to analyse and critique urban developments in the global North, but today it is applicable across the North and South divide. As Bhan (2019: 642) points out, we must "think of the South not just as a set of places but as a set of moving peripheries". Southern questions can be asked from the peripheries of all cities, no matter where they are - whether Africa, America, or Europe. Critical urban theory adopts a structural approach to urban development/transformation. It focuses on the "worldwide patterns of capitalist urbanisation and their far-reaching consequences for social, political, economic and human/nature relationships" (Brenner, 2009: 206). Thus, the perspective of critical urban theory focuses on how capitalist markets shape urban environments and their tendency to (re)produce socio-spatial inequality and class power. Furthermore, critical urban theory explicitly seeks to "excavate the emancipatory possibilities that are embedded within, yet simultaneously suppressed by, this very system [i.e., 'modern capitalism']" (Brenner, 2009: 203), and thus calls for alternative urban development pathways.

Southern urban theory and its concepts are building into critical urban theory and critical geography. Urbanisation in the global South is characterised by what Bhan (2019) terms, *squat, and repair*. In his work, Notes on Southern Urban Practice, Bhan (2019: 643) refers to *squatting* as "the process of occupying and incrementally building urban inhabitation on land to which residents do not hold the legal title". He explains that this "is the mainstay of how auto-constructed

cities are inhabited" (Ibid). In the context of informal economic activities, street vending could be conceptualized as an act of squatting.

Amoako and Cobbinah (2011) reveal that the housing conditions of informal sector players are made worse by the increasing difficulty to obtain affordable housing/land, forcing many to resort to squatting unlawfully on mostly unlicensed land (such as undeveloped access roads, high tension buffer zones and areas liable to floods) and putting up structures using a particular set of materials and construction techniques that reflect an uncertain temporality. This temporality and precarious situation are very much evident in their livelihoods. In the economic sense, informal workers, e.g., street vendors face difficulties accessing appropriate spaces for their activities in terms of pricing/affordability and patronage/high foot traffic (WIEGO, n.d; Willemse, 2011). Safety has consistently been a reason for the eviction of the urban poor from their homes and places of work. The state argues that the precarious livelihoods of informal sector workers pose a threat to human life (their lives) and the environment (Bamu, 2017; Boonjubun, 2017). In 2005 the urban poor in Zimbabwe experienced the crackdown of "Operation Restore Order/Murambatsvina" which left about 700,000 people without a livelihood, a home, or both. As the title of the operation suggests, the government was motivated to rid cities of informality. A vision that has failed. Yet six years on, Amnesty International (2011) reported that survivors of the forced evictions were still struggling to survive because the informal economic systems had been disrupted. The urban poor still remain susceptible to further evictions due to lack of secure tenure.

Balbuena and Skinner (2020) argued that given the severe impact of the global pandemic fostered by initial strict and adverse government policies levelled against street vendors, life might never be the same for street vendors. They noted that the pandemic devastated livelihoods and left many in survival mode. However, the pandemic has also created an opportunity to build back better with inclusive "people-centred alternatives for a new economic vision" (Balbuena and Skinner, 2020:2).

Boonjubun (2017) studied the impact of the 2014 street vendor evictions in Bangkok through the introduction of a policy called "Reclaiming pavements for pedestrian's plans". This plan assured the populace of safety and order by ejecting street vendors. The plan drew its value from the Act on Maintaining Public Cleanliness and Public Order. Findings showed that the eviction of street vendors made the streets unsafe as vendors had to negotiate and navigate through conflicts with other stakeholders – city authorities, gangsters and even with other vendors – to secure spaces for

their livelihoods. Boonjubun's (2017) findings add to the plethora of studies that show how ineffective evictions have been over the years in many Southern cities.

How can we make our cities more inclusive and resilient even with Ghana's significant (82%) informal sector? Short (2020) argues for a rethinking of a post-COVID urban space in America – livelier, more engaging urban spaces which embraces street vending. He reflected on how the Chinese government has embraced street commerce as one of the channels to meet its targets of 9 million new jobs to reduce urban unemployment. He noted the role of street vending as "the vital first rung on the ladder of success" for many informal sector workers in many cities in the United States (Short, 2020:1). Even though state actors view street vendors as public health hazards and nuisances, and the fact that shop keepers perceive vendors as unwanted competition, Short (2020) holds that the practice of street vending has a lot to offer to cities of the future. His research in Colombia showed that street vending served as opportunity gateways for poor and new migrants to the city. The study also found that "street vending often provided higher wages than the formal economy" (Short, 2020:3). He further argued that embracing street vending can reduce the negative impact of the pandemic on individuals and households. Converse to the increasing crowds in enclosed Malls; street vending encourages social distancing in open spaces. Notably, he points out the possibility to integrate street vending infrastructure into ongoing economic recovery infrastructure projects such as street expansions. Such inclusive actions will ensure that COVID-19 stimulus packages also create sustainable livelihoods for the urban poor and not only for big corporations. Embracing informality, he argues will "enliven urban spaces and increase public safety by making streets vibrant and welcoming, which is the hallmark of liveable humane cities" (Short, 2020:5).

The dynamics of selling on the street can be likened to Bhan's (2019) concept of *repair* – the incremental and simultaneous building (brick by brick, one layer at a time) and inhabitation. This concept of incrementality can be seen in capital injection into street vending businesses (start-up capital) and the process of occupation. Findings by Amoako and Boamah-Frimpong (2017) indicate that incrementality offers a solution to the housing challenges of the urban poor even though it remains outside official logic. Repair or incrementality as a southern mode of practice, an informal tactic, could also be a lens through which we study the agency of the urban poor who

work on the streets. Do street vendors employ this tactic? In what ways do they do this, and what are the implications?

In the global South, Van Noorloos, Cirolia, Friendly, Jukur, Schramm, Steel, & Valenzuela (2020) posited that incremental housing drives urbanisation and is recognised as the foundation for a socially meaningful housing solution. It is inferred from past studies (Amoako and Boamah-Frimpong, 2017; Van Noorloos, et. al., 2020; Amoako & Boamah-Frimpong, 2017) that incrementality could be a tactic employed by street vendors to alleviate the difficulties they face to secure their livelihoods. This research further contributes to critical urban theory. It builds on the work of Adamtey et. al., (2021), Albino et. al., (2015), and Amoako and Cobbinah (2011), to offer a better understanding of the urban condition in Accra towards making cities in Ghana more resilient.

2.6 Defining Key Concepts and Theoretical Lenses

2.6.1 Street Trade

> "*In recent times, the streets of Harare have become clogged with masses of street vendors displaying their wares on the floor, on makeshift tables, in push carts, vans or boots of various types of vehicles. The situation has become so dire some streets have been rendered unusable by motorists, particularly in the evening hours. Motorists and pedestrians seeking to make their way home after work have to navigate their way through the mayhem of displayed wares, pushcarts and those standing at traffic junctions, all jostling for customers"* (Madziba, 2017: 56)

In the context of securing self-employment and the challenge to support livelihoods, street vendors and market traders operate in uncertain work environments in many cities. Madziba (2017) asserts that in the major cities in the world (particularly in developing countries, and cities in Africa), there has been an incredible increase in street vending/trading. Who is a street vendor/trader? Bhowmik and Saha (2012) define it as a "person who offers goods or services for sale to the public without having a permanent built-up structure." It is characterized by buying and selling of goods or services and is highly flexible. High pedestrian activities in many of these public spatial domains have created a ready market for informal goods and services by street vendors (Okoye, 2020).

Furthermore, Roever and Skinner (2016) advanced informal employment (street trading) contributions in most regions of the global South, including Ghana. Adamtey (2014), asserted that street vendors sometimes avoid taxes/tolls and fees. On the contrary, research by Roever (2014) shows that vendors on the street frequently pay a range of taxes, fines, and levies that help local and national governments to raise funds. The Informal Economy Monitoring Study sampled 743 street vendors. Data revealed that two-thirds of the 743 vendors paid required fees on taxes, licenses, permits, or access to public space, but they do not add it to the cost of sales. Osiki (2018) confirmed similar findings in Nigeria. Similarly, in the central business district (CBD) in Accra (Ghana), Anyidoho and Steel (2016) found that a considerable proportion of total metropolitan revenue (70%) is from market traders and street vendors. There is a need for urban policies and local government practices to incorporate informality without making its functionality redundant. Hence, the state's interest to formalise the informal must consider what Bhan (2019) calls *consolidate*.

Anyidoho and Steel (2016) explored the costs and benefits of informal activities, particularly on streets, pavements, tollbooths, walkways, and other unauthorised venues in the public spaces of Accra. Metropolitan officials perceived vendors to be operating outside the purview of the law, yet they collect fees and taxes after harassment. Because street vending and its related activities are the most apparent of all informal enterprises, they tend to affect the nature of the urban environment and landscape, attracting the most concern from local government and urban planners (Spire & Armelle, 2018).

2.6.2 Permanent Temporariness

This research draws on the definition of Bailey et al. (2002). "The concept of permanent temporariness refers to how the legal status both animates and simultaneously immobilizes daily life, yet itself becomes a force for action, reaction, and movement" (Bailey et al. 2002: 141). The researcher examines the situation of temporal stagnation of vendors (i.e., the lack of mobility options for and legal insecurity of vendors) and how they navigate their interaction with state actors (Isayev, 2021; Mossallam, 2021). Roever (2014) showed that most street vendors have extensive years of experience working on the street, yet with insecure spaces. The absence of legitimate occupancy/tenure creates a kind of unsettledness or permanent temporality that affects their

business growth. These findings are corroborated by the work of Hilal and Petti (2018) and WIEGO (2020). The current study employs the concept of permanent temporariness as a lens of investigation.

2.6.3 The Concept of Individuation

Carl Jung propounded the psychological concept of individuation. This concept is "equated with the extension of consciousness and personality development. It is to divest the self of its false wrappings of persona, the mask the personality uses to confront the world, and the suggestive power of numinous unconscious contents" (Schlamm, 2020: 1163).

Although the original concept of Jung's individuation goes deep into personality and even spirituality, this thesis employs the concept in a much narrower sense. That is the process or moment at which planners may switch or divest from speaking as a planner and a state actor to a self-aware individual with needs, aspirations, empathy, and plans. As an investigative lens, individuation or a switch from a professional/state actor to an individual may play a role in state illegality and its contributions to informality.

2.6.4 Conflicting Rationalities

Vanessa Watson's concept of conflicting rationalities is closely related to Caldeiras' (2017) transversal logics howbeit different (De Satgé & Watson, 2018; Watson, 2003). Conflicting rationalities offers its critical lens from the contradictory logics of the Eurocentric perception of urban theory and the peculiar realities of southern urbanism. That is, the "interface between the different logics (or rationalities) of various urban actors" (De Satgé & Watson, 2018: i). Conflicting rationalities offers a critical lens to assess rationalities among planners and the diverse stakeholders within the AME.

2.6.5 Invited and Invented Spaces

> *Insurgent movements do not constrain themselves to the spaces for citizen participation sanctioned by the authorities (invited spaces); they invent new spaces or re-appropriate old ones where they can invoke their citizenship rights to further their*

> *counter-hegemonic interests. Fluidity characterizes insurgent citizenship practices: through the entanglement of inclusion and resistance they move across the invited and the invented spaces of citizenship"* (Miraftab, 2009: 35).

Using the frames of Miraftab's invited and invented spaces, this study will explore how vendors navigate and negotiate their interaction with state actors and other stakeholders within the AME.

2.6.6 Movement and Nonmovement & The Quiet Encroachment of the Ordinary

> *The vehicles through which ordinary people change their societies are not simply audible mass protests or revolutions, even though they represent an aspect of popular mobilization (social movement); rather, people resort more widely to... "nonmovements"— the collective endeavors of millions of noncollective actors, carried out in the main squares, back streets, court houses, or communities.* (Bayat, 2013; ix).

Bayat's notion of the "art of presence" demonstrates how citizens assert agency in times of constraints. The concepts of movement and non-movement and quiet encroachment may offer the critical language to communicate how vendors have maintained their presence in the AME amidst all their constraints. Quiet encroachment of the ordinary is "the non-movement of the urban dispossessed which encapsulates the discreet and prolonged ways in which the poor struggle to survive and better their lives by quietly impinging on the propertied and powerful, and on society at large." (Bayat, 2013; 14). This study will investigate the validity of these concepts within the AME.

2.7 Urban Informality and Planning in the Global South

> "*Informality is commonly used to describe urban structures that emerge (at least partially) without formal planning, such as favelas, slums, and other "unplanned" settlements; the term is also used to describe a variety of informality to be those actions of economic agents that fail to adhere to the established institutional rules or are denied their protection" (*Dupont et al., 2015; Harris, 2018: 267).

Overwhelmingly, many scholars have focused informality studies on the global South, as it sets that region apart (Harris, 2018). Soliman (2021) describes informality as unfolding sets of behaviours and practices within cities of the global south. In 2019, López, Bartolomei, and Lamba-Nieves differentiated the typical urban informality and formal settlements development characteristics. They asserted that the former occupies a plot as the first step towards developing

of a piece of land. They go through all formal, legal, and regulated sequence that includes legal tenure, planning, and supply of services and infrastructure before finally acquiring the piece of land. However, we must note that the process and instantiation of informality are not homogenous across the global South. Soliman (2021) draws on earlier research to illustrate the reasons that influence the formulation of urban informality in Accra-Ghana, the phenomenon of informal areas, and ascertains the evolution of slums and how they have developed into urban informality. He concludes with a call for a change in planning and the need for a new paradigm towards urban informality.

Different scholars opine on the antecedents of informality in the global South. For instance, Machiridza (2013), Iacoboaea (2009), and UN-Habitat (2016) concur that key determinants of urban informality include rural-urban migration, income inequality (poverty), lack of economic growth, in-migration, poor urban planning/governance, slum formation, and poverty. The inability to curb sprawl creates the problems of unplanned urban spaces in cities of the global south (Amin, 2013). Di Virgilio et al., (2014) assert that the absence of compliance to rules and city laws, inadequate urban planning by city planners/authorities, population growth, inhabitation of informal settlements, and many factors contribute to the materiality of street trading. In Vietnam, Acolin and Kim (2017) identify more specific factors that manifest in urban informality including the construction of houses that do not meet building codes, the infringement of zoning regulations in a legally owned property, or the use of the property for unauthorized activities. These mirror the blurred lines between formality and informality.

In 2016, the New Urban Agenda was envisioned and remained focused on by 193 UN member states in the United Nations Habitat III conference (UN-DESA 2018). The consensus supported the call for rapid urbanisation (Mehaffy and Haas, 2018). In the conference, the discourse on urban informality encouraged a new paradigm of formulating urban development policies to guide planning for the future. Some scholars like Thomassen (2015), Knudsen et. al., (2015), and Honwana (2014) offer insights on the role of the state in shaping and setting parameters of street trading. However, they admit to its complexities and possible negative impacts.

The Ghana Urbanisation Think Tank (GUTT) report (2019) proposed the need to reconfigure the urban areas within Sub-Saharan Africa due to the immense growth observed. Indeed, most city building in the South is attributed to actors outside of the state and formal business sector. The state

usually comes in to regulate after occupation. Studies by Caldeira (2017:14) in Sa˜o Paulo revealed the "cycles of land development/regularisation/valorisation and how it entangled the state, investors, and citizens," making evident the easily overlooked relationship of the state in the informal production of space in cities of the South.

Even though Hein (2018) assumed that informality represents the failure, or the limitations, of planning, and lies beyond its scope, Harris (2018) disagrees. He argues that planners execute plans and developers extensively frame subdivisions, owner-builders frame houses. All plan. Both formal and informal coexist. A process that arguably renders informal practices legitimate (Chalana and Hou 2016; Dupont et al. 2016).

2.8 Realities of Southern Practice - Southern Urbanism and Planning

> *"…to deal with informality therefore partly means confronting how the apparatus of planning produces the unplanned and unplannable" (Roy, 2005: 156)*

Roy draws on Lefebvre's work on the right to the city, arguing that to achieve distributive justice, informality must be an essential deep-seated tool for planning in the global South (Roy 2005). Further, planning practice in the third world must transition from replicating best practices or the Euro-American blueprints to adopting functional Southern modes of practice through experimentation (Bhan, 2019).

Using informality as a conceptual tool, a mode of practice, rather than a segment of the economy, Roy (2005) clarifies how the state engineers *unplanned* and *unplannable* spaces in the city. A corona or halo in democracy is revealed by the autocracy of the sovereign power of the state to enforce laws or *enact suspension* to determine what is formal/informal and legal/illegal. The state – its officials, policies, and practices such as planning is implicated in this apparatus. For instance, in the Accra Mall Enclave ejections in 2017, in response to the state's action, some vendors enquired why the state collected tolls from them for several years when the state considered their operation illegal? (Hawkson, 2017).

Tafti's (2020) work on street vending assemblages in Tehran uncovered intricate layers demonstrating how the state and other agents, for example, shopkeepers, contributed to street

vending. The results noted the cooperation between street vendors and the state even if through augmenting the low-waged municipal employees' earnings. Results also revealed how various agents, including the state, shaped the socio-material formations and character of different locations of the city (Tafti, 2020). In the 2017 decongestion at the Accra Mall Enclave, the Municipal Chief Executive (MCE) reported that vendors had been notified beforehand to relocate to the lorry park close to them. However, some of the vendors reported that in their attempt to relocate to the said designated space, "someone who claims to be the owner of the park prevented us..." (Hawkson, 2017:1). This reveals the role of multiple players and the power dynamics within the space. The analysis and discussion chapters delve deeper into these unfolding issues.

In his argument for expanding the urban studies canon, Bhan (2019: 651) made four key observations that will inform this research. First, the modes of Southern practice are rooted in space and time. Therefore, street vending may be common in most southern cities or several locations in the city but with peculiarities. The Accra Mall Enclave is one such location where the instantiation of informality (street vending) could be studied. Secondly, the modes of practice are uncertain and unpredictable, restless, and always changing. That is to say, the observations to be made through this research may be accurate for the time being but not necessarily in the future. It will contribute to our understanding of the present and how the enclave's future is unfolding but only to some extent. Also, southern practice modes are often short-term – they do not seek the 'long term', unless that can be reached through a series of incremental “what next". Drawing on this finding, vendors may perceive their occupation within the enclave as temporary yet desire permanence. Finally, Bhan (2019) notes that these modes see 'best practice' as pragmatic, possible, and feasible, just as much as ideal, technical, and appropriate. This explains why street vendors may act counter to city regulations and planning norms, a phenomenon Caldeira (2017) calls *transversal logics.*

2.9 Informality and the urban everyday

> *"…unless we can imagine and develop a more credible account of everyday urbanism, the desire for urban improvement will remain a frustrated yearning" (Pieterse, 2011:2).*

One of the core bodies of literature I will be engaging emanates from the work of Women in Informal Economy; Globalising and Organising (WIEGO) (See Duminy, 2011; Lund & Skinner,

2004; Roever & Skinner, 2016). The work of Roever and Skinner (2016) highlights the experiences of street vendors in Accra and four (4) other cities – Ahmedabad, Durban, Lima and Nakuru. WIEGO's work indicated how vendors navigated everyday experiences of dealing with the state. Findings indicated that even in the absence of forced evictions and relocations, street vendors are still affected significantly by exclusionary practices. The greatest impact is on their income and productivity through the loss of time, harassment by state officials, workplace insecurity. More so, the planning system is usually at the forefront of exclusionary action through its power to determine legality and illegality. Even though work on the street and market accounts for a significant share, i.e., 24% of the Ghanaian workforce, they are one of the most marginalised (Roever et al., 2016).

Street vendors are not un-strategic or apolitical. Street vendors have a voice. They know what works (Anyidoho et. al., 2016). They have a better understanding of the average Ghanaian consumer. For example, a yam vendor on the street of Accra explained that "people were willing to buy more than one in traffic, hence the reason they moved to buyers or pedestrians in traffic with about five tubers of yam" (Andoh et al., 2020: 7). Street vendors are system experts and know when and where the hotspots are located. This informs their actions/logic, and it works for them. In Hawkson's (2017) report of the Accra Mall Enclave ejection in 2017, a vendor requested that the state permit vending between 6 am to 10 am. Although their activities may be precarious, about 24% of the 82% of the total employed workforce in the informal sector in Ghana survive on the streets (Business and Financial Times, 2021) and contribute to the economy by "paying for tickets [tolls] from the authorities every day" (Andoh et al., 2020: 6). The state and its systems may be against vendors and their actions; however, their activities are reinforced and requested by urban residents. Vendors exist to meet a need; "I started selling the Waakye[3] early in the mornings to those going to work, and I realised people liked it, so I have since been here" (Vendor Meemuna quoted in Andoh et al., 2020: 6).

[3] Waakye is a local delicacy. A mixture of rice and beans prepared with traditional leaves. Muslims are known to be the best at preparing this meal. It's an ideal meal for anytime of the day.

Conclusion

The sets of literature/arguments highlighted in this chapter give credence to the present study. The literature is in fact a component of the methodology, and supports the methods employed for the present study. This chapter shows clearly how the informal sector, street vendors in particular are considered illegitimate and illegal in many cities in Africa. In Ghana the review of grey literature revealed the dissonance between policies. For instance while the NUP encouraged the recognition of the informal sector, the Agenda for Jobs made marginal allowance for them. More so, local government By-laws outlaw street vending and other expressions of informality. Evictions, forced removals and relocations have been the state's official position in dealing with street vendors.

Worthy of note is the point that while all the theoretical concepts presented are part of everyday life in cities, and have been reported on individually in the chapter, they are often experienced in ways where multiple of the preceding concepts can be noted in a specific context at the same time. That is, conflicting rationalities, individuation, invited and invented spaces, state illegality, incrementality, formality and informality, etc. are deeply intertwined in the urban everyday. These are woven into each other in ways that are unique and always emergent in their materialization (Bhan, 2019, Roy, 2005). In fact, Amin (2013:206) argues that

> "To look into the city is not to look into a complex mechanical entity such as a clock that, once opened and scrutinised with the rules of timekeeping machines, becomes transparent in all its workings and, for this, fixable. Instead, it is to look into a constellation of entities, networks and systems with their own logics and dynamics that are only ever partially visible and always emergent in their combinations"

This quote stresses that these concepts are all taking place at the same time, or almost always, therefore analyzing them individually will always fail to capture the true essence of the Southern city (and Southern urbanism as a concept). For this reason, the key role of this thesis is to examine the emergence of these different thematics and how these play out in the AME as interwoven, not separate. As such, speaking to each individually in the discussion section is not possible because they are contingent, hybrid, emergent and fluid, deeply embedded in the narratives. These concepts underpin what you observe but may not be individually discernible (but very real and evident). Chapter 3 presents the methodology of the study.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter details the methodological design, approach to the research, the tools employed, and the ethical considerations in carrying out the study. Chapter 2 presented the literature and conceptual lenses for the study.

3.1 Methodological Tools

I set out to investigate the tension between the practice of planning guided by colonial logics and reinforced through post-colonial practices and the everyday modes of practice. My inquiry engaged these tensions and the agency of city dwellers by locating my research in the capital city of Ghana, Accra. The site of my study was the Accra Mall Enclave (AME).

3.1.1 Research Questions

This research aims to contribute to the attainment of just and inclusive cities in Ghana. It attempts to understand the tensions between the formal and informal, between formal planning and governance and how this engages the fact that most economic activity in Ghana is informal. Noting that the planning and policy regimes, even the political regimes, are ill-equipped to understand, guide, plan and govern in the context of extreme informality. This research uses the AME as a case study to explore and understand these tensions. These differences and "out of touch with reality" conceptualisations and positions of planning and governance are reflected in the context of emerging literature and conceptualisations around the questions of southern urbanism and theory.

In a highly contested space such as the Accra Mall Enclave, several rationalities are at play – the states', private sectors', and the publics', e.g., vendors and pedestrians. The research questions seek to highlight the differential logics at play. Regarding vendors as unwanted stakeholders within the AME, the research questions also sought to understand how vendors have sustained their presence and their experiences – tensions, conflicts, and strategies. Findings will speak to the process of place-making and the affective component of vendor's relationship with the AME. Finally, research questions sought to uncover how vendors have managed their interaction with

the state. Findings will highlight how the state contributes to informality in the Ghanaian context (Roy, 2005).

Anchoring on the 2017 vendor ejection from the Accra Mall Enclave (AME) (as a moment that links city managers/planners/media and vendors within the AME), and the 2021 Make Greater Accra Work (MGAW) initiative/eviction by the newly appointed Greater Accra Regional Minister, the following research questions and sub-questions have been posed:

1. How are planners navigating the tensions between planning regulations and the reality of street trading at the AME?
    a. Do planners still outlaw informality and street vending, or have they shifted toward more inclusive urban structures?
    b. What do they perceive as the way forward towards a just and inclusive city?
    c. How have planners handled the disconnect between urban plans and the on-the-ground situation?
2. What are the conflicting rationalities that emerge, including the dissonance between policies, planners', and the practice of vendors?
3. What are the logics, strategies, and experiences of street traders within the study scope?
4. How are street vendors negotiating their interactions with the state (police, planning officers, toll collectors, etc.)?

Table 1 summarises the research questions and the methodology employed for data collection and related objectives.

Table 1: Relationship between research questions and research methods

	Description	Method	Objective/Outcome
Q1.	How are planners navigating the tensions between planning regulations and the reality of street trading around the Accra Mall enclave?	Policy Review/Analysis In-depth semi-structured interviews with planners and key informants	*Reveal official logics. Contribute to current knowledge on planners' positionality and tactics regarding street vending
Q2.	What are the conflicting rationalities that emerge, including the dissonance between policy, the practice of planners and the practice of vendors	Policy Review/Analysis In-depth semi-structured interviews with planners and key informants Non-participant field observations Semi-structured interviews	*Reveal conflicting rationalities. Contribute to the process of co-creating mutually satisfactory solutions to the vending challenge within the Accra Mall Enclave
Q3.	What are the logics, strategies, and experiences of street traders within the study scope?	Non-participant field observations Semi-structured interviews	*Unpack street vendor logics and experiences. Canonise ordinary everyday practices; reasons and significance of these actions by street vendors and their experiences (thinking, feeling)
Q4.	How are street vendors negotiating their interactions with the state (police, planning officers, toll collectors, etc.)?	Non-participant field observations Semi-structured interviews	

3.1.2 Research Approach and Design

The study was anchored on three pillars – first a policy review, then embedded ethnographic work with street vendors, and finally, an in-depth engagement with state actors, private sector, and public, i.e., pedestrians and clients of vendors within the AME. These categories are the key stakeholders within the AME. Therefore, to have a holistic picture, the perspectives of all these stakeholders were sought. Consequently, the study's approach was sequential, beginning with a policy review and analysis across scales, followed by the embedded ethnographic work with vendors, then engagement with state actors and other stakeholders.

Table 2 presents a breakdown of these pillars.

Table 2: Three pillars of the research (In sequence of performance)

(1) Policy Review/Analysis	(2) Embedded Ethnographic work with Vendors	(3) In-depth Interviews with Planners and Key informants
National Level Policies *Land Use and Spatial Planning Act (Act 925), 2016 *Local Governance Act (Act 936), 2016 *Spatial Planning guidelines and Manuals *Ghana Human Settlement Study/policy *Ghana National Urban Policy *National Youth Policy **Strategic Government Policies** e.g., Agenda for Jobs 2017 – 2024 **Local Government By-Laws** *LEKMA *LaDMA *Ayawaso West Municipality **Media reportage** (Print, Radio, TV)	*Field Observations *Semi-structured Interviews **Type of Vendors/items** ▪ African clothing ▪ Food, fruits & Pastries ▪ Apparel/Shoes/sandals ▪ Mobile money ▪ Itinerant trader/hawker of toffees, face masks ▪ Phones & phone accessories (movable trays) ▪ Provisions (drinks, bread, biscuit, etc.) ▪ Books ▪ Rings ▪ Beauty products	**Policy Makers** *State actors – policy and local government levels I interviewed long serving professionals, and young and middle level planners to tease out any conflicting rationalities among planners, if any. *Ministry responsible for local government *The Ghana Institute of Planners (GIP) **City Managers** *La Dade Kotopon Municipal Assembly (LaDMA) *Ledzokuku Municipal Assembly (LEKMA) *Physical Planning Department *Municipal Chief Executive (politician) *Municipal Department of Sanitation *City guards **Other Stakeholders** *Vendor Association *Planning Lecturers (KNUST) *Newspaper articles and media reportage on Make Accra Work *Management of City Galleria *Pedestrians and Customers *Organizers of the trade exhibition at the Mall (declined interview) *Management of the Accra Mall (declined interview)
ANALYSIS (Thematic Analysis)		

Policy review

The policy review helped the researcher to build a perspective of the study area. This perspective informed the framing of prompts for the semi-structured interviews for all interviewees. Another reason for the policy review was to establish the state's official position on informality (street vending) as documented in policies, including plans for this sector, its activities, and its actors. The policies reviewed included national-level policies such as the Land Use and Spatial Planning Act (Act 925), 2016. This document established the Land Use and Spatial Planning Authority (LUSPA), the regulatory body responsible for spatial planning in Ghana. Local Governance Act (Act 936), 2016, also guides local governance in Ghana and the spatial planning guidelines and manuals. The Ghana Human Settlement Study/policy and the National Urban Policy (NUP) were also reviewed. Strategic government policies were also reviewed, such as the incumbent government's Agenda for Jobs 2017 – 2024 and the National Youth Policy.

Furthermore, Local government bulletings and by-laws were studied. Newspaper articles, radio and TV interviews on street vending in Accra and the Accra Mall Enclave (AME) were also reviewed. This process informed how questions for officials and vendors were generated.

Embedded ethnographic work with street vendors

The interview process with vendors was not a once-off event but a relational experience, what Clifford Geertz called "deep hanging out" (Walmsley, 2018; 273). Before the interviews with planners and state officials, I spent entire days for four weeks with vendors switching between different vendors and different sides of the study area (LEKMA, LaDMA & AWMA). The process started with a 7-day field observation that revealed the vending clusters within the AME and the spatio-material shifts between vending during the day and night markets. The observation offered the researcher deeper insight into the operations within the research area, such as what time vendors reported to work and closed, which vendors came early and why, where, and how they stored their goods after closing, the relationship between different actors in the space such as *okada riders*[4] and vendors and traffic wardens.

[4] An okada is a commercial motorcycle taxi commonly used in Nigeria and Togo. It is increasingly gaining popularity in Accra, Ghana but outlawed by law. The opposition NDC party promised to legalise Okada when elected. The incumbent NPP party has stated authoritatively that they will never legalise okada in Ghana.

Vending clusters are groups of vendors who trade in particular products within the AME. For example, Section A (see fig 3A) and some parts of Section E (fig. 6) are known for male leather shoes, interspersed with vendors of provisions[5], books (motivational, business, and religious), and beauty accessories, e.g., sunglasses, necklaces, and rings. Section B (see fig. 3B) has different clusters: male apparel (shirts/trousers/shots), sneakers, slippers and leather shoes, phones and phone accessories. You will find mobile money vendors, provisions and kebab sellers scattered across the different segments of the AME. Because of the nature of their business, they seek unique spaces as opposed to clustering. During the day, food vendors are not clustered. Two food vendors in Section E and two others in Section D sell assorted meals, e.g., Waakye, Sandwiches, and Hausa koko. However, there are more food vendors during the night market, ranging from rice meals to local desserts like *Kelewele*[6].

The busiest section of the AME for vending during the day and night market is the LaDMA side, i.e., Sections B, C, and D. Several items are sold in Section C, including African clothing, provisions, slippers, fruits and pastries, female shoes, sandals, and makeup. The food section of the night market is in Section D. You will also find vendors of phones and phone accessories, fruits, male clothing in Section D. Thus, these vending clusters already existed. The researcher first noted these categories, approached vendors individually to inform them about the research and sought their consent to be interviewed.

The study envisioned working with a maximum of 15 to 20 interviewees, planners, and other stakeholders inclusive. However, the made-in-Ghana exhibition, the unfolding eviction attempt, and the fact that two municipalities actively manage the enclave increased the number of interviewees to 53, comprising 27 vendors. The escalation in the number of respondents also ensured a higher degree of data saturation[7] (Saunders et al., 2018). A list of the types of vendors interviewed is outlined in table 2. Executives of the vendor association within the Accra Mall

[5] The term provisions range from drinks, water, bread, biscuits etc. These vendors do not sell just one item but a range of these products from different brands/companies. They know what people want so they stock those. Even though they may have a spot, you will find them hawking with a few of their goods in a pan by the road.

[6] Spicy hot plantain crisps. It is a popular Ghanaian delicacy which is often bought because it takes a lot of time and good skill to prepare it right.

[7] Saunders et al., (2018: 1904) argued that the view of saturation as an event is problematic, rather saturation could be "considered as a matter of degree, rather than simply as something either attained or unattained."

Enclave (AME) were also interviewed. Interviews for distinct categories of respondents were ended when interviewees repeated the same responses (saturation).

In-depth interviews with planners and key informants

The third pillar of the research entailed interviews with planners, the private sector within the AME, lecturers from the Department of Planning of the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) and clients of vendors and pedestrians within the AME. These interviews were also semi-structured, allowing the researcher to probe into subjects that emerged in particular interviews. Nineteen (19) state officials were interviewed, spanning policy (national and regional levels) and implementation/municipal levels. The average years of practice (arithmetic mean) for state officers interviewed was 14.12 years, with the least years of practice being three years and the highest 40 years. These respondents were composed of 13 planners; one works engineer[8], a municipal Sanitation Director, one Municipal Chief Executive (MCE), two city guards, and a director from the ministry responsible for local government.

Table 3: Key informants/Planners in-depth interviews participants

State Officials / Planners / Key Informants	
Description	**No.**
Planners	13
Works Engineer	1
Municipal Sanitation Director	1
Municipal Chief Executive	1
City Guards	2
Director at the Ministry of Local Government	1

Interviewing the sanitation Director was necessary given that his department played an integral role in the Make Greater Accra Work (MGAW) initiative. Sanitation officers accompanied city guards daily to ensure that the public spaces were clean. Eleven state officials were at the policy

[8] The works engineer is the head of engineers at the municipal level. His unit falls under the Physical Planning Department (PPD) and therefore works closely with the physical planner. He plays an integral role in municipal projects and the issuance of development permits.

level, while eight (8) were from the municipalities. It must be noted that most planners at the policy level previously served at the municipal level, therefore, officials at the policy level spoke from their experience at the local level and their practice as policymakers.

To understand the influence of planning education on planning practice, two (2) lecturers from the department of planning of KNUST were interviewed. Key personnel of city Galleria (a private property within AME) was also interviewed. Management of the Accra Mall, the organisers of the made-in-Ghana exhibition, some municipal officials, and customers and pedestrians declined the invitation to be interviewed. The other set of respondents were two (2) customers and two (2) pedestrians. Although the degree of saturation from the responses of pedestrians and customers of vendors may be lower than that of vendors and state officials, data saturation was realised. More so, the fluidity of being a state official, a customer, and a pedestrian within the AME was observed. Therefore, the perspectives of pedestrians and customers of vendors in the AME were adequately captured in this study.

3.1.3 Sample size and method

This study set out to explore the tangled complexities of city planning and the experiences of street vendors within the Accra Mall Enclave (AME) through a policy review and analysis, embedded ethnographic work with vendors and in-depth semi-structured interviews with state actors. The sample size could therefore not have been pre-determined or determined a priori. This study employed the concept of data saturation as the determining factor for its overall sample size (Saunders et al., 2018). That is when no new themes emerged among a particular category of respondents. However, due to the nature of the research, certain respondents had to be interviewed, e.g., planners and municipal offices. The sampling method most suited for this was purposive sampling. Therefore, purposive sampling was used in the case of state officials, including planners and the private sector within the AME. In the case of City Galleria, even though purposive sampling was used to select them, their senior management appointed an officer to be a respondent.

The Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) was selected because historically, it has been and is still the institution that churns out the highest number of planners in Ghana. Most state officials and planners interviewed either had their first or second degree from

KNUST, particularly from the Department of Planning. Having selected the institution, the researcher communicated the research purpose to the Head of Department (HOD), who shared faculty details with the researcher. The final decision on which lecturers were interviewed was based on the availability and willingness to participate. The two interviewed lecturers gave their consent and were available to be interviewed. These interviews were done virtually via zoom because of the distance between the locations of the researcher and interviewees. The respondents approved of the medium (zoom) as well.

Having observed the various segments of the AME (LEKMA, LaDMA and AWM) and the various vendor clusters, stratified sampling was used to ensure a fair representation of the various vendor clusters from the segments within the research area. Once the segments and clusters had been defined, simple random sampling was employed. The aim at this point was to capture the experiences of individual vendors. The researcher started from the LaDMA segment – i.e., Sections B, C and D because they were the busiest. The researcher arrived early in the morning by 6:30 am and started approaching vendors who had already set up and were ready for work. Some consented instantly after the consent statement had been explained to them. Others rescheduled, and others declined. Since vendors did not report to work in order of arrangement, the researcher moved in-between segments and Sections within the AME, repeating the same process. This same process was used in the evenings – the night markets.

After going through this process for a week, the researcher had established relationships with a good number of respondents from the different segments and Sections. Subsequent visits to the research site were spent with these respondents to deep dive (Walmsley, 2018) into their earlier responses and engage in further conversations. This process proved even more relevant when the Make Greater Accra Work (MGAW) initiative was launched in February 2021, and evictions began. Interviewees had already established some trust and understanding in the research and could speak freely. Also, vendors were no longer in their positions; hence, the established familiarity and relationships made it easier for the researcher to identify and approach interviewees for further conversations. This process made data collection easier and enriched the data.

Pedestrians and customers were typically in a hurry. The researcher approached pedestrians, walked along with them and explained the research. Most of them said, “Next time,” which is a polite way for Ghanaians to decline. Eventually, two pedestrians consented to be interviewed. The

researcher did not approach any customer while the person was in the process of making a purchase. This could make a vendor lose the business or make the customer feel embarrassed. Customers were only approached after making a purchase or otherwise and were on the move. Many customers explained that they were in a hurry.

Of the 53 persons interviewed, 33 were male and 20 females. Policy level respondents were 11, while municipal level respondents summed up to eight (8). There were 27 vendors, 19 state officials, two (2) lecturers, one private sector player, and two (2) respondents for pedestrians and customers. Table 3 above offers a breakdown of respondents.

Table 4: Demographics of respondents

DESCRIPTION	VENDORS (27)		STATE OFFICIALS (19)				OTHER STAKEHOLDERS (7)		TOTAL
	Vendors		PLANNERS		OTHER		Private sector/Clients/Pedestrians		
	value	%	value	%	value	%	value	%	
MALE	14	51.85	8	61.53	6	100%	5	71.43	33 (62.3%)
FEMALE	13	48.15	5	38.47	0	0	2	28.57	20 (37.7%)
TOTAL	27	100%	13	100%	6	100%	7	100%	53
GRAND TOTAL	53 Respondents (100%)								

3.1.4 Data Collection and Handling

Data Collection

Data was collected over four (4) months, from February to May 2021. Table 4 presents the time map for the study.

Table 5: Research Time Map 2021

FEBRUARY				MARCH				APRIL				MAY			
Wk1	Wk2	Wk3	Wk4	Wk1	Wk2	Wk3	Wk4	Wk1	Wk2	Wk3	Wk4	Wk1	Wk2	Wk3	Wk4
			PRE-EVICTION							**EVICTION**	**RE-SETTLING**				
Policy Review							Made in Ghana **Exhibition** 29/03 -11/04								
			Field observation												
				Vendor engagement & Interviews (Customers/Pedestrians)											
				Booking Appointments with officials						**Evictions & Negotiation 13th – 27th**	**Approval & Settling into Yard 28/04 – 14/05**				
								Interviews with Planners/ State Officials (April – May)							

As observed in Table 4 above, engagement with vendors began in March to mid-May. The researcher started scheduling interview appointments with state officials and other stakeholders in March for April. This gave officials enough time to review the research consent document to decide and schedule appropriately. It also helped the researcher make fresh plans where necessary.

An exhibition of made-in-Ghana products commenced three weeks into the vendor interviews. Although it disrupted the spatial-material structure of the AME, this event did not negatively affect the research. Although the organisers of the exhibition declined to be interviewed, six (6) exhibitors granted the interview, three (3) of which were original vendors within the AME. All these form part of the 27 vendors interviewed for the study.

Although interviews with state officials and other stakeholders were originally planned to follow vendor interviews in a sequential manner, the cataclysmic impact of the MGAW campaign required the researcher to engage further with vendors. Hence, interviews with state officials and other stakeholders ran concurrently with further research engagement with vendors in the AME. The researcher, therefore, had to switch between interview appointments with officials and being present at the research site.

The already established relationships with vendors allowed them to report what had transpired in the absence of the researcher. On other occasions, the researcher would chance upon unofficial pop-up discussions by vendors on his arrival, especially after the MCE had finished his inspections

or after a general meeting. These discussions offered a lot of insight into what had transpired in the absence of the researcher. On average, the researcher reported at the AME by 6:30 am and left at 10 pm. However, in the heat of the evictions, i.e., from April 13 to April 30, 2021, the researcher stayed longer, till 11 pm, to observe how city guards and vendors closed off the day. It was during these late periods that individual executives of the vendor Association granted deep conversations such as how the Association had to take a loan for the rental of the bulldozer to clear the yard within the shortest period for occupation.

Data Management

Primary data was collected in the form of audio recordings of interviews and pictures of spatio-material formations. The data was transcribed using Otranscribe[9] and later transferred and stored in Microsoft Word.

Respondents were anonymised right from the transcription process using codes e.g., VRSP1 means Vendor Respondent 1 and PRSP1 means Planner Respondent 1. All data was securely stored and only the researcher had access to the information.

3.2 Ethics

The University of Cape Town (UCT) granted this study's ethical approval. The researcher requested to collect data in Ghana and was granted. Ghana had few COVID-19 cases and was not in a lockdown situation.

Securing informed consent and anonymity of interviewees

All interviewees gave their explicit consent before the interviews and for the recording. Before interviewing a respondent (vendor), the researcher introduced himself and explained the purpose of the research and the informed consent statement to their understanding. This was done mostly in *Twi* since it was the most used language among vendors. Interviews for foreign vendors and state officials were done in English because it was their preferred language. An interview was only started and recorded after the respondent had given explicit written or oral consent.

[9] oTranscribe is a free browser-based transcription tool that allows the audio file and transcription in one window. It does not keep record of your audio files.

In the case of state actors, a copy of the consent form with a detailed email about the researcher and the purpose of the study was sent to them with a request for an appointment. The interview commenced only after explicit consent had been given both for the interview and to record. This process also applied to the interviews held virtually. All respondents were given an option to be anonymous. Those requesting anonymity were provided with a pseudonym such that no statement can be attributed to any participant. No pictures were taken of respondents.

3.3 COVID-19 Protocols

COVID-19 protocols were observed. Specifically, five (5) protocols guided the research. These have been outlined in Table 5. This checklist was applied throughout the research. Interviewees who were not in mask were given one to wear prior to the interview.

Table 6: COVID-19 Safety checklist

1.	Are you 2 meters from the prospective participant?
2.	Have you read out and explained the consent to the prospective participant in the language of their choice?
3.	If the prospective participant agrees to the interview, are they wearing a face mask?
4.	If the participant is not wearing a mask, sanitize the sealed mask and pass it to them
5.	Sanitise any material before receiving it or handing it over to the participant

3.4 Giving Back (Feedback)

I have decided to give back to the community of respondents who made this research possible. Highlights of study findings will be shared with all interviewees. A feedback session presenting study findings with a discussion component will be organised via zoom for planners and other officials. For vendors, a feedback session like the interviews will be had or in a general association meeting. The feedback sessions will be done in the language best suited for the respondents. Pamphlets highlighting the study's findings written in simple English will be distributed to pedestrians and customers within the AME. Through the process of feedback, the researcher will give back to the community of interviewees because to be informed is to be empowered.

3.5 The researcher

I am a practising urban planner at the Land Use and Spatial Planning Authority (LUSPA). Because of this, I had relative easy access to key planning officials at policy and local government levels. As a planner at the policy level, I had been exposed to some policy discussions about clearing street vending from the Accra Mall Enclave (AME). This sparked my interest to study the informal activities within the study scope. Throughout the study, I was self-aware of my positionality, mainly as an independent researcher passionate about sustainable and inclusive urbanisation in Ghana. I was therefore reflexive, and cautious of bias in my engagement with respondents.

The ethic of capturing a specific Southern position informed my thinking, my analysis and writing style for this study. This positionality follows Ash Amin's (2013:206) constellation of entities approach and Roy's (2005) argument that Northern theory building do not do justice to the richness of the processes observed in the Southern context. That is, because of the complexity of urban informality, seeing each concept, observations and/or theme on its own "like a fixable clock" misses the nuance and the essence of what it is we are trying to understand in Southern urbanism which is in part to uncover and make meaning of the hidden flows of the African city.

This paper is thus presented in a narrative style deeply enriched by quotes from respondents. This manner of presentation allows a reader to appreciate the situation at the AME in particular and the planning tensions they stimulate but also, the context related experiences once considered mundane and unscientific, and now being canonized.

Conclusion

This chapter provided an insight into the approach, rationales and methodological tools employed for the study. Chapter 1 gave a detailed introduction to the research, including the contexts, material formations, and events within the research area throughout the study. Chapter 2 located the study within the existing academic discourse and state policies. Subsequent sections of this thesis, chapters 4 and 5, present the empirical body of the research. It also brings forward arguments made possible through existing concepts and literature.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATIONS AND ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

Chapter 3 presented the methodological design, rationale, and tools used to answer the research questions. Chapter four presents results and reflections of the emerging themes from the three groups of respondents namely, city/state officials, lecturers and vendors in the Accra Mall Enclave (AME). In total, two (2) lecturers, nineteen (19) state officials including thirteen (13) city planners, and twenty-seven (27) vendors responded to the research questions of this study. Specifically, the study sampled fifty-three (53) respondents composed of thirty-three (33) males (62.3%) and twenty (20) females (37.7%), respectively. These respondents were selected for various reasons; see section 3.1.3. The acronyms "PRSP" and "VRSP" stand for Planner Respondent and Vendor Respondent.

This chapter first engages an overview of respondents. This is followed by the results and reflections presented under headings in a narrative style deeply enriched by quotes from respondents. Findings from this study show that relationships play a critical role in the vendors' journey. At the AME, relationship determines space acquisition and provides avenue for apprenticeship. COVID-19 and vendor evictions following the launch of the MGAW campaign also came up. Clannism/Tribalism as well as *incrementality* with regards to start-up capital and business growth was also observed. Formalisation and seeking legitimacy also came up strongly. The themes of income sustainability and job security as well as the possible alternatives to street vending were also identified. Of noteworthy is the theme of marginalisation – that planners also feel side-lined and unheard. The narrative text will engage these themes under various headings. The chapter ends with a conclusion.

4.1 Overview of respondents

4.1.1 Vendors

The length of service of vendors within the AME was varied. The average years of practice (arithmetic mean) for interviewed vendors was 9.63 years. The most recent arrival at the AME had been there for only two months, and the longest had been selling there for 26 years. There were varied reasons for starting trade at AME. Some were due to relocating following evictions at other

sites; some hawkers who occasionally stopped to rest at the AME eventually settling there; others noted the busy state of the AME and chose to locate their business there. Educational status of vendors within the AME range from no education to tertiary education.

4.1.2 Lecturers

Only two lecturers were interviewed. One of the Urban Planners who supports informality was a lecturer in KNUST specialising in Planning and Local Economic Development with 12 years' of' experience. The second respondent was a lecturer in planning and policy, and urban regeneration and regularisation. He collaborated on several international projects over his 15 years, including the millennium city initiative.

4.1.3 State Officials/City Planners

Most of the officials interviewed (76.5%) held a master's degree in planning or a related field. Only three planners (17.6%) had only a first degree in planning. One planner held a Ph.D. The average years of practice (arithmetic mean) for state officers interviewed were 14.12 years, with the least years of practice being three years and the highest 40 years. Respondents had experiences at municipal and national/policy levels and consulting experience with various international organisations.

4.2 Business at the AME

4.2.1 Understanding Business at the AME

The AME is a contested space in many aspects. Contestation between two municipalities, formal state structure and street vendors, and tensions between the formal sector and street vendors within the space. Whilst planners PRSP10, 16 and 3 posited on low prices of vendor products and the issue of demand and supply on the street, planner PRSP12 alluded that the business operation is about competition.

Prices inside the Accra Mall are more expensive due to rental costs and other overheads like employee salaries. Vendors in the AME may not bear these costs but others such as paying off the municipal guards, time taken to organise when challenging municipal officials, even losses incurred as a result of evictions and stock confiscations. Nonetheless, vendors draw on the

economic ambience of the Mall for their business. The Accra Mall has positioned itself as an aspirational place to shop, and its environment forms part of its allure. Planner PRSP8 notes.

> "Many go to the Mall as tourists. They travel from outside Accra and come and go through Accra Mall to see how it is, they will not necessarily buy anything. But vendors know what to sell…" (PRSP8)

So, although many people may visit the Accra Mall, not all of them shop at the Mall. Amarteifio's (2019) article indicate that shops/tenants of the Accra Mall have raised several complaints of poor sales and high rental cost. This raises questions about the economy's needs, affordability, and which goods are best suited for a Mall. Below are quotes from planners PRSP10, 16, 12 and 3.

> "You know these street traders sell affordable things in the market. You find cheap goods you may not find in the Mall…" (PRSP10)
>
> "It is just an effect of demand and supply. It is a place where many people use that route, and therefore, the Accra Mall Enclave is a market area (commercial). This makes many people go there and even take over the footbridge." (PRSP16)
>
> "In a capitalist market, businesses like the Accra Mall are profit-oriented and also want to monopolise. However, the informal sector (street trading) cannot be underestimated. They are compelling. What is happening here is the one that collapsed UTC (Union Trade Company Building). The UTC[10] at Accra was collapsed by the informal sector because when people come, they go inside the thing is expensive but they get the cheaper one around, so eventually, they started buying from the cheaper ones, and then UTC collapsed. So it is important to look at it from that point of view." (PRSP12)
>
> "I see the middle and lower-income make use of street vendors. You cannot just walk into the Mall as products are quite unaffordable to the middle and lower class. The business on the street sells at a lower price. So I will go there and not go inside the Mall." (PRSP3)

Vendor stories reveal a kind of apprenticeship, which influence how vendors began their business journey in the Accra Mall Enclave (AME). Most of the vendors were introduced into the vending business by a relative or a friend. These relationships or connections either helped them secure

[10] The defunct UTC building was a chain of department stores which is believed to have been constructed in the 1920s. The article by Ghana Web (2020) shows a picture of the building in the 1960s. Vending activities around it led to its collapse.

their current vending space within the enclave or enabled them to decide what to sell at the beginning of their business. Vendor networks assist new entrants in determining at least one of the following; what to sell, the price to sell at, and the art of quoting prices and haggling with clients to be profitable.

Additionally, like many businesses in Ghana, vendors in the AME were also negatively affected by the COVID-19 global pandemic. Before the April 2021 (MGAW) evictions, vendors indicated that sales were low, and business was generally slow due to the negative impact of the pandemic. Yet, the state launched an eviction attack against them. These were specific responses from vendors VRSP1, 3, 4 and 25.

> "The market is bad; because nowadays at our place, they are not buying. So, you can't be sitting down there; at least you must move. And even though here too (AME) is not good, at least it is better than that side[11]." (VRSP1)

> "I am saying that the tourism aspect of the informal sector, since the COVID-19, everything is down. We were in the house for six months, if not a year, because it was just November that we were allowed to do certain things. Still, tourists are not coming, and this kind of work is the tourists who buy. And Ghana here, there is no money. The thing is nice, but people cannot buy it. So normally when we come here for fairs, everybody is happy but this one, I am afraid it is the worst. But we are trusting God". (VRSP3)

> "The market is slow. Because as compared to last two years, last year the COVID-19 come scatter everything; so everything make slow. As for the last two years, we sell (i.e. we were profitable), and you see, everyone got by... But this day before you sell, you have to talk, convince the customers before they come and buy our books. Only a few people like to read." (VRSP4)

> "You can't stay home as a man. When you do that, people will insult you as a lazy man. So you need to do something. When you come to work too, you are being stopped meanwhile you have spent all your money to go for goods (restock). How long has it been since we came out of COVID-19? The COVID-19 is still here with us. They should not evict us. They should give us the redline to restrict the extent to which we can go." (VRSP25)

Clannism and Spatial Governance: Is Eviction Motivated by Tribalism?

Generalised Eurocentric views of governance do not see clannism and other societal structuring as informants to process. This is often seen as undemocratic in the idealised and sanitised view of

[11] VRSP1 was an exhibitor. She implies that the situation at the AME is better than her original place of business.

democratic processes. Davis (2020: 486) articulates that "there is an art to democracy", which is "hard to achieve because of faults that lie in ourselves", the principal of which is tribalism/ethnocentrism[12]. Findings from this study show tribal/ethnic dynamics within the politics of eviction at the AME. This points out that the state's opposition to vendors within the AME is more than just legislation, more than just governance, it is also something else, something that is not always articulated, or even seen.

In their narratives of the 2017 evictions, vendors expressed that the then Municipal Chief Executive (MCE) launched the eviction because the vendor list they submitted contained only *Akan* names. The *Ga-Adangbe* tribe is the largest single ethnic group in the Greater Accra Region, their traditional home. However, because it is Ghana's administrative and political capital, Accra is cosmopolitan. The two AME municipalities (LEKMA and LaDMA) are traditional homelands of the *Ga* people. The fact that there were no *Ga* names in the list of vendors within the AME meant that either the system of admitting vendors into the enclave was exclusionary or no *Ga* vendor preferred the AME. The MCEs considered the former more valid. Below are quotes from vendors VRSP13 and 20.

> "…So the first thing she did was that she asked all traders to submit their names. When we submitted the names, she said no *Ga* names were on the list. That was her first response. The first MCE said that, and the second female MCE who recently died also said the same thing when we submitted a list of vendors to her. They both said there were no *Ga* names on the list. Excuse me to say but the *Ga*s' are lazy. So if the indigenes don't like work and we are here to work, you shouldn't deny us. What she meant, I believe, is that if there were even a few *Ga* names in it that would have been fine." (VRSP13)

> "She first asked us to bring a list of traders, we did. After receiving the list, she first did a scan through and said there was no *Ga* name on the list. And she said, where are you from? Go to your home town and trade there. We cannot report such a thing. It will not lead to anything." (VRSP20)

Although evictions at the AME may be based on planning decisions, there may be underlying ethnic/tribal influences. Likewise, consciously or unconsciously, admittance/granting access into the AME may be biased towards specific ethnic identities.

[12] There are over 100 ethnic/tribal groups in Ghana. The terms *tribal* and *ethic* are used interchangeably in Ghana. Tribalism refers to one's loyalty or advocacy for one's tribe/ethnic group rather than the interest of the general public.

4.2.2 Start-up Capital

The variance in initial capital invested ranges from Ghc50 (US$8.3) to Ghc10, 000 (US$1656). Most of the respondents' businesses within the AME are self-owned businesses/self-employment. The amount of initial capital invested depends on the type of product/business the vendor was investing in and the scale of the business. For instance, a street vendor may need just about Ghc50 to start a facemask business but Ghc10, 000 for mobile money business. However, consistent with most respondents is that they have grown their business and their capital incrementally, as narrated by vendors VRSP15, 9 and 7.

> "Anyway, I started with like Ghc2,000, then as time went on, it was like gradually I was selling gradually. But now, if I want to come here, I will need like 5,000 to 7,000 or even 10,000." (VRSP15)
>
> "When I started in the beginning, I started with 10 million (Ghc1,000). That was the clothes and footwear. The phones recently started." (VRSP9)
>
> "And the mobile money too if you want to start, you must have lot of money. Like a busy place like here, (AME) they will be withdrawing big moneys. We started with Ghc10,000." (VRSP7)

4.2.3 Space Acquisition at the AME

It was clear that space was not easy to acquire. Leaders of the vendor association acted as gatekeepers. New entrants gained access through familial networks i.e., friends or relatives who already operated within the AME. This may explain the dominant Akan-vendor presence within the enclave. See the quotes from VRSP 20, 15, 13 and 7.

> "We came here not too long after the Mall was completed. We started right here. There was no special reason. A family member introduced me, and I later took over the business. She was even here before the Mall was built 20 years ago." (VRSP20)
>
> "My daughter was already here, so I came to inform her I wanted a place too. And at that time, that place was a little bit bushy. I weeded the bushy area and cut off the wire mesh with the help of the boys here. That is where I started. At that time, there was not a lot of people, but as time went on, people were coming a lot." (VRSP15)
>
> "If someone wants to come here and sell, the leaders engage with the person. The leaders decide if it is possible for the person to sell here or not. When there is no space too, we tell the person there is no space here." (VRSP13)

"My brother was here first. He was the one who had a place here. So after he left, he gave the place to us. He was also doing mobile money. The time we were in school, if we came for vacations, then he will give us money to go and buy the credit (airtime) to sell and make some profit. So we will take the profit and bring back the capital to him. He was both into government work (public servant) and the mobile money." (VRSP7)

4.2.4 Taxes/Tolls/Tickets

Planners and state officials acknowledged that vendors in other parts of the city pay tolls/tickets. However, no tolls/tickets are collected from vendors at the AME because the state does not want to legitimise their presence. Planner PRSP14 lamented that the municipality is losing lots of money by not collecting tolls from vendors within the AME. Vendors are, however, requesting to pay tolls/tickets. The sentiments gathered suggest that collecting/paying daily tolls/taxes/tickets legitimises their business operations on the street. Hear from planers PRSP14, 15 and 2, and vendors VRSP22, 9 and 14.

"They provide services and goods. When we take tolls, it means we are legalising them, and they will have to be there. We are losing money." (PRSP14)

"Yes, you are taxed daily tolls. So, every day, they either pay 1Ghc or 2Ghc depending on the area they operate even though it is illegal. But we call it ticketing, they are to pay, and then there are other containers (kiosks) who don't have a permit, but they still pay business operating permit (BOP) either monthly or yearly." (PRSP15)

"So if we are saying they are illegal and we are going for money from them, what are we doing to ourselves? That is a very big issue, and then you see we are only interested in what we will get from them and not thinking of how we can make this more sustainable." (PRSP2)

"…this has been my livelihood for all these years. I married through this business, given birth, and my children are going to school all through this same business. So we want the assembly[13] to come and collect tolls from us. We have already positioned ourselves here, so if they come for tolls from us, I believe it is good, and it will help the country/assembly and also help us get something in our pockets. This is better than the way they want to evict us…" (VRSP22)

"Since I have been here, I don't pay any tickets." (VRSP9)

[13] Ghanaians usually refer to the municipality as the assembly.

> "If only they would collect tolls from us, I am good. If at the end of every month they will collect even Ghc100 (US$16) from each vendor and allow us to trade freely, I will gladly pay, and I agree to the tolls." (VRSP14)

Bamhu (2019:2) confirms the responses of planners above. According to Bamhu (2019), by-laws regulate various aspects of street vending in Accra, including the Business Operating Permit by-laws, the Temporary Structures by-laws, the Push Trucks by-laws and the Noise by-laws. Relatedly, in a more proactive way in India (ibid), the Act on National Policy for Urban Street Vendors provides for local-level stakeholder dialogue on street vending and authorises local authorities to pass by-laws to regulate issues such as zoning, monthly maintenance charges, and the collection of fees and taxes associated with street vending in a participatory manner.

4.2.5 Vendors Plans and Aspirations

Although the future was uncertain for most vendors, selling within the AME was still their future. Some vendors sincerely noted that the items they sold might change, but they will keep selling. Other vendors with secondary school certificates or diplomas envisioned being in the police, military, or nursing professions. Others were looking forward to obtaining a college degree. Some vendors expressed their aspirations not specifically to the business but concerning their long-term goal, e.g. educating their children. Specific assertions from vendors VRSP19, 10, 26 and 25 were captured below.

> "After a while, I will stop doing this job. Some of us want to go back to school and end up in the police and nursing training. I see myself somewhere bigger than my present location." (VRSP19)

> "For me, this has been my livelihood for all these years. I see myself in this same business and probably bigger in the next few years." (VRSP10)

> "Truth is I have done so well to finish my diploma at University of Professional Studies (UPSA). I was even planning to continue for a degree at Legon (University of Ghana), but with these evictions, I am not sure if I can; because how can I pay for my fees when this is going on?" (VRSP26)

> "No one can stay here forever. Some people will leave, and others will come. That is how it is. If I get what I wanted, what else would I come here for? In the near future, when my children are done with school and they are working, what will I come here for? I am suffering here because of my children. When they are in a better position, I will stop coming here. If you take good care of your children, you

> will not need to sell by the road in your old age. So the idea to clear us is a bad one which will not work." (VRSP25)

For most vendor respondents, street vending is their business, a long-term endeavour, not a temporary occupation or a kind of transition as perceived by state officials/planners. Planners' assertion speaks to the aspiration of some of the vendors with high school certificates and above. However, other educated vendors consider themselves entrepreneurs and aspire to expand their trade within the AME or a better location with similar characteristics. This argument is not a case of underemployment as posited by planner PRSP12. Vendors explained that they could not afford the expenses of securing a shop at a location with similar characteristics to the AME. Below is a quote from planner PRSP12.

> "...you don't have to say because you are poor, you will be selling at unauthorised places. That one is a no no. If you go and look at what they sell, it is completely the case of underemployment. There is no need for them to risk their lives selling those things. Last time I was walking, a beautiful Ghanaian lady selling only toy guns. She was having about nine and selling one about 1ghc, so it is also ignorance; they just want to do something. So eventually very few of them are smart enough to make money and progress, so there is a need to study and to look at the labour and migration issues, and also the employment issues and most of them are underemployed and then conscientise and sensitise and advise and remobilise them into productive areas. We need to do something because it is becoming too much and disturbing the economy. If you study them critically, in terms of financial analysis, it is not profitable. If you look at the economy of it, also what they sell and the margins they make. You will realise that few of them make profit. They need advice; they need to be sensitised to either up their game in their business or move to another sector which is more productive." (PRSP12)

The language in the quote highlights the official normative view about vendors, i.e., the need to “conscientise and sensitise and advise and remobilise them into productive areas” speaks volumes in bad ways. Do planners/state officials also need a shift in attitude, moving away from prejudice and disdain to accept the vending profession as part of the economy? Although the quote above positions the vendor as a problem, vendors within the AME aspire to expand their trade and be more profitable. Their key concern is a secure tenure, what VRSP10 calls "peace". They desire state recognition, support and guidance, not eviction.

Vendors were uncertain about the future. The uncertainties that vendors face is reflected in their expressions of faith – the belief that God will see them through, and that they will prevail no matter what happens. The current antagonistic relationship between street vendors and the state has been unprofitable for both parties. There is a kind of stalemate where vendors cannot fully settle and grow their businesses because of the 'war' and planners/the state are unable to manage and control the spatio-material formation of cityscapes due to lack of resources and the fast and emergent nature of informality in many spaces within the city. Like Bhan (2019) notes, vendors are fluid and open to changing and adapting to whatever situation or market demand arises. See these responses from vendors VRSP13, 24, and 20.

> "It is my brother's business. You know, people only continue doing business when the business is booming. If it continues like this (evictions), somebody may change his business. Right now, we have lost most of our customers because they don't know we are here." (VRSP13)
>
> "Maybe you are planning your own, but God is planning another thing for you. If I told you I knew I will be in Ghana now, I didn't know. But I am here. So it is not how you plan." (VRSP24)
>
> "God is the one who takes care of man. I can sell on the road. We cannot really challenge them (city authorities). God is the one who gives us the business." (VRSP20)

4.3 Reasons for Street Trading, Patronage and Way Forward

While some planners (PRSP4 and PRSP5) viewed it as a governmental problem, planner PRSP11 looked through the lens of rural-urban migration and the unavailability of job opportunities. Although some planners like PRSP11 felt these vendors were coming from the northern part of Ghana, findings showed that vendors at the AME migrated from other southern regions to Accra, particularly the Eastern and Ashanti regions.

Respondents resorted to vending mostly because it was their best option for what they understand as honest earning. They did not want to rob/steal, go around begging or practice prostitution. These alternatives constitute criminal offences in Ghana. Also, some vendors explained that street vending offers independence/autonomy to be one's boss, and it pays better than formal employment. Others felt compelled to choose vending because seeking formal employment posed sexual harassment threats – i.e. sexual exploitation for employment. Figures 7a and 7b respectively

present the perspectives of planners and vendors on why people sell within the AME. These were quotes from planners PRSP4, 5, and 11.

> "So even though the government is paying your Senior High School (SHS) and giving everything, economic hardships are on the rise. So until the economy improves and people can be employed, informal street trading continues. It depends on economic growth to ensure that the planning of communities could be established properly...but in Ghana, if you are not working and the government is not giving you social grant/support, how do you buy something to eat? Street trading becomes the alternative." (PRSP4)
>
> "I will blame the government because it has been difficult for people to get formal jobs to do, so they have resorted to the informal sector. And those who are not educated enough would not worry their heads looking for formal employment. They will start up their own business to gain something small to feed the family." (PRSP5)
>
> "The less skilled are not finding jobs. The easiest way for them to survive is to just sell on the streets. Planning properly for the economy is lacking. The rural-urban migration, particularly from the northern part to the country's south, is another cause of street trading. You see, most of these vendors are from the north. So again, looking at the country, how do we develop secondary cities or make sure that there is some balance in terms of the growth." (PRSP11)

Figure 7a: Reasons for Street Trading – Planner Perspectives

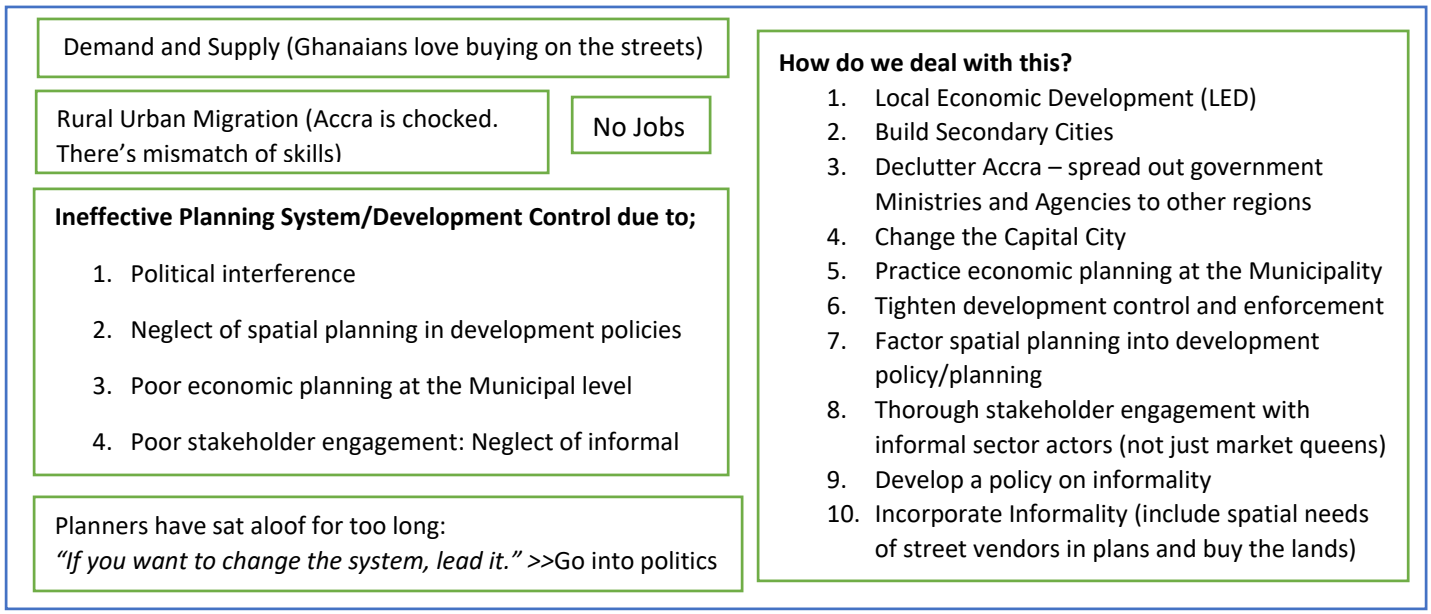


Figure 7a above highlights what planners thought contributed to street vending in the AME and how it could be dealt with. A long-serving practitioner thought it was time for planners to go into politics to effect the changes planners always complained about but did nothing about.

Interactions with vendors show a lack of opportunities/alternatives to street trading in Ghana**.** Evicting vendors without creating apparent alternatives may lead them to engage in social vices like robbery, prostitution, and begging. Some vendor respondents lamented on the issues of nepotism and favouritism, which limit opportunities in the workplaces. "Even cleaning jobs are granted only through protocol[14]" Outlined below are quotes from vendors VRSP10, 20, 17, 23, 11 and 26 to highlight their reasons for vending within the AME.

> "Yes, this is my business. I do not have anyone to help me, so this is my only business and means of survival. I decided to sell provisions because the provisions move faster at this location." (VRSP10)

> "We need to eat *o*. We are living in our own country, we have not gone to steal, not practising prostitution, we have not done any wrong, and you did not grant us government employment. Even if you'd employed us to clean parliament, we would be glad. Even cleaning jobs are granted only through protocol. You did not pick us, and we are struggling to survive so that we can feed our children so that our children will not become street children. So that they will not become rascals to overthrow the government. And you are also preventing us from this. Is this good?" (VRSP20)

> "when you go looking for a job, you hear foolish things. When I came here, I didn't hear any such foolish things. When you search for a job, you see the job, you get the job, but the boss will say he wants to have sex with you first before he finally accepts you. I have heard this three times already. They all want to sleep with me before offering me the job." (VRSP17)

Figure 7b below highlights vendors perspectives about their trade and occupation of the AME. Vendors are calling on the state to recognise, incorporate their operations and collect tolls from them. See more vendor quotes below.

> "I live in east Legon. If you don't allow me to earn honestly and I am hungry, my only option will be to get a gun and rob. There are lots of nice houses around me too. How do they expect me to cater for my utilities, light and water bills? For me, I can't say that I am going to steal. It is not a good thing. There is no way I can stop selling here, cos this is the only place I have." (VRSP26)

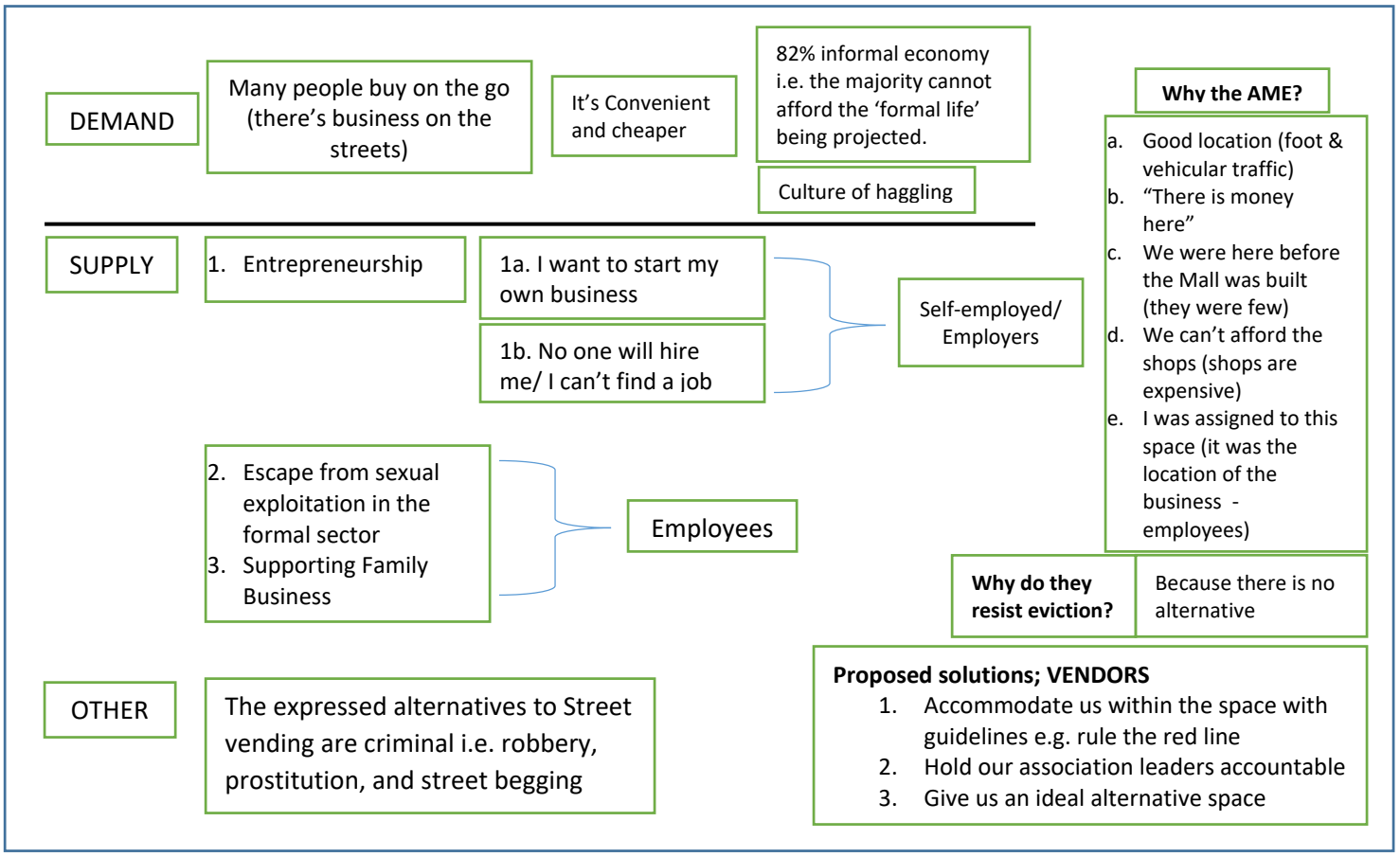
> "Firstly, right now, I can decide to rest and not come around, but if I work under you, I can't do that. Even if I get tired, I can't do that. And moreover, will the pay (salary) be okay? Sometimes I can put my things on the street, and I don't sell, but

[14] The protocol list is made up of a set of candidates who are offered employment based on their connection to some high ranking officials in the police or and in government. (see Toobu, 2020)

other times I sell. That money they are going to pay me a month maybe, I can earn it in one week or something like that (here at the AME). So that is the difference there. That is why you see; some people just decided to do their own things (business). They don't want government work or something like that." (VRSP23)

"This place nobody will stop selling *o*[15]. Money is here *o*. This road money is here, *papa*, the four corners all. You know it is a roundabout so the east and west all, cars are passing, everybody is walking here, everybody is buying. Money is here, I tell you." (VRSP11)

Figure 7b: Reasons for Street Trading – Vendor Perspectives



In summary, state officials/planners posited that people are on the streets because of poor economic growth, lack of jobs in the formal sector, failure to plan for the spatial needs of informal sector workers and unmatched skills of migrant workers to the formal sector. In addition to lack of

[15] Ghanaians use the sayings '*o*' and '*papa*' as stressors. These are attached to a phrase for emphasis

jobs/viable alternatives, vendors expressed autonomy and higher financial returns as reasons for choosing to vend within the AME.

The lecturers had a modern and historical perspective of why street vending occurs at the AME.

> Lecturer 1: "I believe that there are associations between activities. At the Accra Mall, people come shopping. Customers who pack at the place then consider the place appropriate for meeting vendors. Vendors meet the needs and sell to a particular clientele the Mall is not able to meet. So to me, in the first place, there is some kind of association between activities and between facilities. The Mall is not able to meet all the demands of the clients, so it is the informal sector that addresses those needs…"

> Lecturer 2: "I think informality (street vending) goes back to what role we have played in creating the informality itself... I think that is where it starts from. We tend to think that it is just an occurrence, but if you look at it historically, informality predates formality. It was our systems of living, our systems of survival; we lived through all of this until colonisation came in, and ones that came in, it came with a new standard that made ours look inferior. So that is the starting point."

The research sampled views from few pedestrains and clients of vendors. Pedestrians and patrons are requesting a structure for vendors within the AME. During the evictions, pedestrians acknowledged the aesthetics and convenience of having the walkways free. However, they pointed out that vendors provide a convenient shopping experience that is time-saving and less expensive. Recommendations from pedestrians included the official integration of vendors into the AME with guidance and the institution of a monthly shopping fair/carnival. See the quotes below.

> "When I was going to work in the morning, there was nobody here. I was surprised. It is always good when they are not here. Right now (evening), they are on the walkway occupying space. But in the morning I could walk freely, and that's the best. I understand that they get sales here. There can be a form of arrangement for them where it will not affect pedestrians. They should get them a small place. Because in a way their services also benefit us just like the way I have stopped and getting a Kebab. But it must be in the right perspective, which is what we are looking for to make the city look nice."

> "Someway, somehow I feel bad and sad for them. Some of them don't have anywhere else to sell their stuff, and it makes things easier for the passersby to get whatever they want to buy. When they get here, and they see that this is what they need and just stop and buy it. There was a time I stopped by and bought a shoe. Instead of me walking into the Mall and also it is more expensive in there than out here. So somehow, though, the eviction is good, but it is very bad. At least a place

should be found for them. As it stands now, you have denied some people their day to day livelihoods, but this place looks more organised and accessible; it looks free."

"I came here to buy a sneaker. I saw a particular footwear displayed on the ground here, so I wanted to come and check it out; if it is still available, I can buy it. I normally buy here from time to time. Sometimes if I am going to the Mall and I see something I like here, I pick it up. I come to the Mall frequently, so I always pass in their midst because you will not find some of the things you want to buy in the Mall. For example, I like local beads and all, so sometimes, I see the particular design I want here but not in the Mall and even if you see it in the Mall or other places, it will be more expensive, so I buy here. So this time around, I wanted to buy footwear. They display it here, so it is easier to make your selection here because it is already displayed. You can just see through it quickly and pick up what you want. Cos sometimes when you go to the store they keep looking, looking, looking."

"You see some times they also contribute to the traffic and other things. So if being here will endanger their lives, property and lives of other communal users, it (eviction) is ideal. If a car loses break and comes towards their direction, it will be disastrous because we have seen such before, so if removing them from here is for the safety of everybody, it is fine, but I think few should be allowed to still do business here like the mobile money and the lotto, the few ones that people need. And some few people should still be allowed to sell. There can be a carnival once in a month, maybe every last weekend of the month they allow them to bring their businesses here from Friday to Sunday then they go. They can allow a buying fair every last week of the month here. Since this road is a major road because of the Mall, the bus station, and there are a lot of buildings coming up here yes so probably patronage is a bit high here as you can see, so it is either they should institute the idea I shared about the buying fair. That one, too, can at least help things."

Is income from street vending at the AME sustainable?

A striking finding from this study is the notion that street vending at the AME pays better than formal employment. Some vendors also indicated that they make more money on the streets than most government workers, albeit without job security. For example, Vendor VRSP13 explained that daily sales of Ghc100/US$16.5 (i.e. US$493/month) was not good. The average planner earns a US$420 monthly salary. This salary is above the pay grade of lower-level government employees like city guards. The monthly turnover of Vendor VRSP13 at the AME is above this amount. VRSP11 quit her formal job as a chef and started her business at the AME. She indicated that she made more money vending. VRSP23 asserted that even though he may not make sales on some days, on certain days, he makes enough sales so that his turnover at the end of the month is usually more than what many employees take. Planner PRSP2 insinuated that trading on the streets is more

lucrative than even the formal sector. He feels the convenient demand and supply of goods and services and its affordability makes business on the streets more rewarding and more accessible while allowing individuals the freedom to control their time. Some vendors confirmed his assertions. Planner PRSP2 may have exaggerated; however, the spirit of his statement may be the reality within the AME for some vendors. Below are planner PRSP2 and vendors VRSP13, 8, 3, 11, and 1.

> "In Ghana, most people like patronising things informally as a people. People you see on the street make much money a day and in a month… you will put this your salary and planning somewhere and go to the street. What someone earns a month, we will work the whole year and not even earn half that amount." (PRSP2)

> "I have a sister who used to sell at Nima market. When she made some money, she decided to rent a shop. She said in a day often time what she is able to sell comes to just about Ghc100. How much will she give to the children? I sell more here. So now, if I am to move to a new place, I will need a place where there is crowd or heavy foot traffic." (VRSP13)

> "Oh, by God's grace, my business is thriving. If I say it is not doing well, then I am lying. I have three children that I take care of, and I am not struggling. The experience is normal (okay) for me." (VRSP8)

> "When I saw that the teaching was not fetching, I switched to the business." (VRSP3)

> "*Chaley*[16] doing your own business is good *o*. If maybe you are into government salary, find yourself into some business because the money will come. See, I used to work for my boss. I was the chef in the company where I ran the night shift. We sold like Ghc1500 or sometimes Ghc2000 every night. The morning shift is not that busy. They sold Ghc500 on average. So within only a day, Ghc2000. We are only six employees and the day we don't sell at all it's Ghc1500. So, let's assume Ghc1500 for 31 days. My boss will give me Ghc1000 then give someone 600 and another 700. But with this business, I tell you if I sell Ghc5, I know it is for me. The market is good here. I tell you. Yesterday I was left with only Ghc70 to hit the mark (my target) the way I sold when the people did not worry us (prior to the evictions)." (VRSP11)

> "I have people who come for the product to go and sell. I also have online buyers. At exhibitions like this at the end of the day, oh, you will get what you will eat, and it is not bad. We thank God it is not bad." (VRSP1)

[16] *Chaley* is a slang for friend.

4.4 Eviction of Street Traders

This section presents the eviction attempt initiated through the 2021 'Make Greater Accra Work' (MGAW) campaign/eviction and vendor narratives of the experience of past evictions, especially that of 2017. The impact of evictions and vendor tactics during the eviction attempt are highlighted.

4.4.1 Impact of Evictions

The struggles of street vendors (i.e. the struggle for the street) within the AME is not merely for survival; it is a pathway to break the cycle of poverty within families. Older vendors sell on the street, hoping that their children will have a better trajectory while younger vendors strive for social mobility.

Evictions interfere with the plans of vendors. In some cases, it leads to their deterioration. The eviction of 2017, for instance, left many vendors in a worse state compared to other eviction attempts. They lost their goods because their confiscated products were donated to the *Osu* children's home without consent. One vendor, VRSP10, has not been able to bounce back to her vibrant state since then because she did not receive any support from her social network like other vendors experienced. Below are some quotes from vendors VRSP8, 10, 14, 23, 13, and 18.

> "I have been suffering for a long time. My body is weak now. I started doing business here before giving birth to all my children - almost 30 years ago. I am 60 years old now. I have lived the life. I was here several years before the Mall was built. I should have had my own store here by now. In 2017, the *aabaye*[17] came to collect all my things worth almost 20 million (Ghc2000). Since then, I have been down. I have not been able to get money to sell as I used to again. So I collect people's things, e.g. the water and drinks and sell and then repay them. So personally, I don't have any money for the business." (VRSP8)

> "I have five children. If you don't work, how do you support your family? Even though there is free education, we still need to give money to the children every day. One of my children has completed Senior High School (SHS), another will finish this year, and the youngest will be two years old next month. So if I wake up every day and sleep at home, how can I cater for all my children? My husband also helps, but my business helps us a lot." (VRSP10)

> "you see me standing here now on alert. You see? It is not that I have sold anything, and I can't come back here in the evening time again to sell because they (*aabaye*) will be back. Dey go stay here till like 9 pm to 10 pm. Almost two

[17] Aabaye is the popular term for the city/municipal guards who enforce planning decisions. It is a Ga phrase translated, "they are coming."

> weeks now, I didn't sell anything, just imagine. The little money you have, you will be spending it. So I just gather might (courage) to come around today to put small things here may be some people who know me here can buy something. So that is why I just come. It is affecting. (VRSP14)
>
> "Sincerely, before the eviction, there were a lot of people here. Some people collected loans of Ghc 200. Most of the women collected these loans, which they didn't pay before the problem started (evictions). My brother, they have to leave this place to be moving up and down; because of Ghc500 or Ghc200. So how are they going to cope with this eviction? So that is why it affects." (VRSP23)
>
> "I remember, they took my things, this same woman (MCE), she took our things and donated them to the *Osu* children's home. My things included two full boards of bread. I did not know they (*aabaye*) were going to come on that day. So not long after the car delivered the bread, here they were. They took all my bread. I begged this woman several times she did not listen. And she took these two full boards of bread to the children's home. She is the one who is dead." (VRSP13)
>
> "We have done all the prerequisites as initially discussed. So what is preventing us not to come here (the yard)? Then (it means) you want us to go back to the pavement. And if that (is what you want), we will do it. Because I pay tax, yes, I am a Ghanaian. What do you benefit from being a Ghanaian? Nothing. But our taxes are what's used to pay the leaders". (VRSP18)

These quotes highlight the frustrations of vendors during eviction attempts.

4.4.2 Politics and Evictions as a Wake-up Call

Most vendors have become accustomed to evictions and eviction attempts. They think of eviction as a non-starter because they know it can never succeed fully in the long term. Vendors have often perceived eviction attempts as a wake-up call to curtail them from taking over the entire pavement as opposed to the notion of permanently clearing them from the AME. Specific responses were captured from vendors VRSP9 and 8.

> "This thing is not new. They have been doing it every year for so long. Because of the election and also COVID-19 that's why they didn't do it last year. This is a normal occurrence." (VRSP9)
>
> "It is something they usually do. They have been doing that for a long time now. You see, usually, when they sack us, we take an initiative. We go to their office. They say we should move off the pavement. So as you can see, we have moved backwards. So as long as I am not on the pavement, they will not worry me. It was not so at first. Initially, they just did not want us here, even if you were back here, they will worry you, but now they are not." (VRSP8)

In communicating the 'normalcy of evictions', vendors highlighted leniency of the state towards them (in terms of evictions) during an election year, like 2020. There is a kind of politics by the state/politicians. The state recognises the impact of informal sector workers during elections but ignores them and revert to 'the law' after elections. Vendors have identified this state presence and absence pattern – state informality – and, therefore, see election years as bridge-building opportunities and lobbying for their interest. This explains their active involvement in the 2020 elections. See quotes from vendors VRSP17, 26, and 22.

> "All those they have evicted at the other side (LaDMA/LEKMA section), I was here, I saw how these people were campaigning for NPP (New Patriotic Party). They advocated for you guys to bring a polling station here so that we can vote for you, and we did. Politicians need to consider certain things. You see the final results? Eviction!" (VRSP17)

> "So they don't think about us but when it is time for election they pursue us to vote for them. Do you know the number of rallies we have attended? The president, Nana Addo, always blows his horn when his convoy drives through here. I am talking about the particular car he sits in. You know, if the NDC (National Democratic Congress –the main opposition party) had won the election they would have mafia'd[18] vendors here because this year the vendors here showed clearly that they were real NPP supporters." (VRSP26)

> "We will be going to see the constituency Chairman. We have called him, and he says that was not the arrangement he made with the MCE so he will speak to the MCE. So, we have given them up to tomorrow. If they don't tell us something positive tomorrow, then we will take them "boot for boot" because we have evidence of the campaign they did with us. We put up a platform here and hosted the MP (Member of Parliament), Constituency Chairman, and the MCE. And the Chairman said that nobody will sack us ever again. He gave us his word. They all accepted it and said that we should first finish voting. They reiterated that we will never be evicted from here after the elections. Words right from their mouths. The constituency Chairman and the Parliamentary candidate for NPP called Gerald they said that. Even the vote they got from here this time around was unprecedented. We encouraged all those who sell here to transfer their votes to this constituency. Previously, we were not registering/voting here but after our meetings with them we encouraged everyone to register and transfer their votes here. And we ourselves became polling agents here. Our members did that work here and counted everything here. Now that we have finished voting for you, see." (VRSP22)

[18] The Ghanaian expression *'I will mafia you'* means, I will be wicked towards you or sabotage your progress.

These quotes show how vendors employ politics and the interest of politicians to entrench their presence somehow, howbeit with determination and assertion.

Also noteworthy is the related findings on eviction notification. While vendors and municipal officers acknowledge that vendors were notified of the impending eviction following the Make Greater Accra Work (MGAW) campaign launch, some vendors indicated that the eviction took them by surprise because (1) this notification was not different from non-actioned notifications. (2) The notification did not allow them enough time to sell their stock, especially perishable items. Therefore, the circumstances forced perishable stock/food vendors to keep selling (playing hide and seek with officials) to preserve their working capital. There was a dissonance between what it means to notify and be notified here. See quotes from vendors VRSP21, 13 and 16, and planner PRSP13.

> "...They sacked everyone. Nobody knew. It just happened like an emergency. They announced that they are coming. We took the announcement like they normally do; because historically, they normally come and go, and we continue our business. We think as usual. Because, usually, if they say something like that (notify us), we normally adjust; everybody shifts back, we create space. But this one worst everybody. We are shocked. It came as an emergency; we never expect it up to like this." (VRSP21)

> "It has been almost four days now, and I have not sold anything. All my things have been packed down. The truth is they did not notify us on time, and they didn't give us enough allowance; they gave us only three days final notice. I had also gone to town to restock, so the three days is not enough. I have stocked goods worth about 30 million (Ghc3000). Because with this, within a maximum three weeks, I would have sold out and need to restock. So all the things are there, tired up. It is affecting us." (VRSP13)

> "They were here yesterday to destroy our tables and chairs and other things. This is not the table I sell with. AND YOU CAME TODAY TOO? Yes, because we have already prepared the stew and bought things already. If we don't sell, everything we have done will go to waste. It is impossible to stop coming because this is our only business." (VRSP16)

> "Because they are not a formalised body, we can't meet their leadership. So a van announcer went around and did detailed announcements for about two weeks running. Announcing to the would-be affected people that they should vacate the pavement and move into the bus terminal. So they were well aware of the intentions. The Regional Minister also intimated that we should not use the Rambo style to clear people from their current place of work. We should dialogue, jaw-jaw with them. We still want the intention to be carried out but with thick gloves. They were

> well aware, so most of them did not even show up. So the message was well disseminated and received to make sure that they were not taken by storm. To get them as a body is difficult." (PRSP13)

While vendors perceived the eviction attempt as wicked and insensitive, planners argued that the safety of vendors was their priority. Also, planners argued that vendors did not maintain a clean environment, and finally, the AME is not zoned for vending purposes. Specific quotes from planners PRSP1, 9, 14, 15, and 17 are highlighted below.

> "… where they are currently trading is on the roads. Because anytime there is a need for road expansion, we will have to move them and at the end of the day pay compensation to them, and that is an additional cost to the government." (PRSP1)
>
> "Street traders should be cleared because that area is not meant for that activity. That area is for civic activities, Malls, commercial hotels and are taxed heavily for their operation. If you allow people to sell everywhere they want, then there will be chaos, and meanwhile, all products on the streets are equally in the shopping Malls. So if you allow them, what are you telling those who are selling in the shopping Mall?" (PRSP9)
>
> "We want to move them because they usually don't keep the place clean that is the problem. The problem has to do with keeping the place clean..." (PRSP14)
>
> "You see, initially we wanted to clear them, but at the end of the day, you also look at a human face, you also look at how best you can cushion them so that you cannot throw them outright. That's why we were looking at relocating them to the yard and making sure, if not permanently, at least for now in the medium term. We will keep them away from the pavement because they obstruct movement..." (PRSP15)
>
> "that location (the yard) is a property of another. In the event of developing the location, they will be evicted. So it is either we get a place permanently for them, or they are evicted." (PRSP17)
>
> Lecturer1: "When it poses danger, we need to clear our streets. But as we clear the streets too, we should make sure we find alternative places where they can work. Now let us take a single case of Tema Station at Achimota. When you go there, you wouldn't see vending inside or around it. How did it happen? So we can make it work. Let's find ways of addressing their land/space needs. To me, selling on highways poses danger and must be cleared. We need to get them alternatives to get their livelihoods and sustainable, inclusive cities".

PRSP9 thinks that it is time for the government of Ghana/city planners to integrate informality into planning in Accra, similar to cities like Durban in South Africa, where street traders were given improved infrastructure and their operations formalised in the

process[19]. PRSP17 asserts that street vending obstructs free movement on pavements and breed illegal activities like theft.

4.5 Formalising the Informal vs. Incorporating Informality

To formalise, the informal connotes a cleaning-up or transforming informality to make it formal, whereas incorporating informality implies the acceptance and or recognition of the practice through regulation and policy. The state desires a formalised economy; however, its operatives, e.g. city guards and planners, experience psychological tensions, which causes them to alternate between being a state actor and an individual with needs and feelings. This switch affects their performance negatively, e.g., the development control function of the state. Planners acknowledge the pervasiveness of the practice of street vending. Further, power structures and political interference have also impaired innovative thinking and action among city planners. And the stalemate between the state and informal sector actors, in this case, street vendors, leaves many urban dwellers in perpetual waiting for recognition hence protracting vulnerable livelihoods in the city.

Vendors expressed what they desire from the state and why they must be taken seriously. Lecturers shared their perspectives on the antecedents of informality and what needs to be done. This section presents the views from vendors, lecturers, and city planners. Here are quotes from vendors VRSP27 and 4.

> "We are the ones who are helping the market. Someone can bring (import) about 10 containers of goods. We are the ones who continuously buy from them till they get enough money to reorder their next containers. If they don't sell, how else can they order again? And they pay huge taxes to the government. So if you won't let us sell, you must know that you are spoiling the system. It is not just about us, the vendors. Everybody becomes affected in one way or another. Take me for example, in a week I can go to Accra (central market) almost every day because when I set up people buy and if I don't have what the person wants, I call the wholesaler to enquire and quickly go for it to supply the client. I usually restock every three days. When I went there today, I told him the *aabaye* guys are worrying me... And he is also a bit worried because what affects me affects him too." (VRSP27)

[19] Planner PRSP9 was drawing on the Warwick Junction case study in Durban, South Africa.

> "I know we cannot tell the government to give us money. They have sacked us so they should find a better place for us to start business and be selling, or they should just allow us to manage our small business here. You know some of us are refugees. During evictions like this, we feel bad because it is here that we manage to have small money. If you are staying in the house you have to pay rent, pay water bill you have to pay light. But when you are not selling, you cannot pay." (VRSP4)

Responses from vendors reveal two essential issues. First, the connected business chains between wholesalers and retailers (formal and informal), a retail continuum, and second, why the government must urgently support their operations. The two are connected. As one increases, the other is affected and vice versa.

Lecturers posit that the state/planners have played an active role in the informality situation in Ghana by neglecting the spatial needs of vendors. They shared the following opinions.

> Lecturer 1: "informality has come to stay. Over 80% of the labour force is within the informal sector. As planners, we have failed to consider the needs of the informal sector, especially what you call vending. In our country or part of the world, the informal sector is rather increasing, growing and then I wouldn't say that the formal sector is dying, but it's going down. The informal sector creates jobs. The government wage bill is very high; the informal sector could highly limit the dependency on government. It is very difficult to plan in the long term for their needs. Yes, it is difficult, but we still need to factor into consideration what their land needs are".

> Lecturer 2: "in fact, we created systems that were very alien to what we had before. When you look at all the estates created, e.g. Tema Kaiza flats, government estates, they were created as though everyone was working or will work in the formal sector. But if the father is in the formal sector, but the wife did not secure a job in the formal sector, how can she still survive? So then she converts the frontage of the house into a small space to sell, or she's learned how to sow. She converts the garage into a sowing area, and over time it extends and it grows out. The point is that we planners have contributed to this informality".

During the interview, planners PRSP1 and 6 maintained their stance on integrating vendors into the sanitised formal state structure. The need to formalise the informal sector by redeveloping markets and modernising these markets. This means moving from old structures and considering some ancillary facilities that any modern market should have. PRSP6 was adamant that these

modern markets should have a restaurant, security guards, fire station, etc. However, she acknowledged that redevelopment of the market space comes with a higher rental cost. Many vendors and market traders may not afford to retain a stall within the developed market space. This situation inadvertently evicts this group of traders and makes them return to street trading. This has been the case in Accra, as vendors migrate from one space to another. If development control was adequate, the situation could probably be salvaged.

Planners lament poor development control and the prevailing general sense of indiscipline among the populace. Vendors and city guards were accused of ill-discipline for which reason there is poor conformity of plans to ground situation. The analysis, however, reveals a disjuncture between plan preparation and plan implementation. Most planners acknowledged that stakeholder engagements during plan preparation were inadequate and usually excluded informal sector actors. Second, planners considered themselves responsible for plan preparation but not its implementation. The mental devolution of this rather significant and intricately linked plan preparation and implementation functions raises concern. Is the planner's role only to prepare plans, or is it to ensure implementation? Why do planners feel this separation of function?

Also, some planners feel underpaid and unappreciated, which negatively impacts their performance. Further, all the hard work into plan preparation does not materialise on the ground. This is frustrating. PRSP7 exclaimed, "It is frustrating. Your effort does not make any difference. Nothing is done in conformity. Why should I keep stressing?" Some planners feel it will waste time and effort to try incorporating informality because the system would not allow such incorporation. So even if we spend time on it, nothing will come out of it. History tells us that more attempts to formalise the informal will fail, yet the modalities for incorporating informality need to be set for it to work. This may include a review of salary structures or employee appreciation packages and policy review and probably new guidelines for plan preparation, especially at the local government level. Responses by planners' PRSP1, 14, 7, 16, 2, and 10 were captured.

> "Also, in areas where there is land that we can use, we can designate that piece of land and move the hawkers. That one has been done several times, but unfortunately, due to lack of enforcement, they always get back to the street." (PRSP1)

"Honestly, from my perspective, planners have done their part. The issue has to do with enforcement. You can plan and do everything, but if it is not enforced, basically, you have done nothing. Municipal guards (*aabaye*) do not help us. They are supposed to enforce it, but they are rather there taking money and conversing with them. In a way, we are also contributing to the informality." (PRSP14)

"... It is just organising the space and making sure that they (vendors) can also earn their livelihoods without interfering with anybody else. It takes somebody who is not hungry to think through those things. Yeah, you (the government) are not paying me enough. So I am thinking about paying prepaid (electricity). Because at the end of the day, outside (abroad), city officials are paid better than most private sector. Why?" (PRSP7)

"The most sustainable means is the incorporation. So we should get away from the fear of trying to formalise and regularise it and see how it will be like and replicate it if it works." (PRSP16)

"We cannot always have adequate plans for these people (vendors). Yet again, they will need to also respect the need to obey certain regulations and certain rules that have been placed, and I think that is one thing we have done poorly as a country in many sectors. We set up nice rules, nice regulations, yet we are unable to enforce them, and the people force their way. But the thing is, people will find space for whatever they need to do, but yet again, if measures are put in place, I think we will be able to restrict them to some extent, and it will help structure our communities." (PRSP2)

"For me, I think there is a need for the recognition of the space needs of street traders, and then street traders should be accommodated and allowed to be at some selected locations in the city which would not conflict with other land uses in the urban environment. Their activity is not acceptable because it conflicts with other land uses; that is the crux of the matter. The space that they are using it for other purposes." (PRSP10)

Vendors acknowledge the need for regulations and rules to guide their activities. But the type of regulation they seek is different from that which state actors seek. Vendors seek for their activities to be directed, not cleaned up. See responses from vendors VRSP20, 16 and 26.

"…we are not taking it as an attack on us. And sincerely, if they don't also caution us once a while, we are humans, we could end up taking the entire pavement." (VRSP20)

"… so in this case, if you rule a line for us to sell, you have done good, but to tell us to pack everything and stop selling is evil because there is a way we can still do business here and you also achieve what you want. I am telling you that in 100 years, there will still be vending in Ghana. In the whole world, there is no place

> without a night market. There are night markets everywhere, even in America. Even if they tell us not to sell in the morning, we will agree, but from 4/5pm onwards they must allow us. By that time, all the big men would have gone home then we also start surviving. We cannot all be in government employment. It can never be possible. Government must consider that we sell here and at least grant us the opportunity to sell in the evening. I am saying that in years, Ghana can never change and become like America or Europe. It cannot happen; it can't be possible because of our mentality, and our leaders are also part of it." (VRSP26)
>
> "They can guide us how to set up here for trade and assign some people to ensure it is followed. Because in this place (section A), if you say something, nobody listens to you. So if they can appoint some leaders for us who will ensure that every morning when we come here, everyone will sweep their side and make some rules to guide our trade here, it will help. That is better than always chasing us out and about like what is happening now. We are also Ghanaians, aren't we? Since they started on Monday, I have not sold, so how do I fend?" (VRSP6)

Conflicting rationalities were observed, first between vendors and planners' aspirations for Accra's built environment, precisely the space within the AME. Secondly, dissonance among planners' perception of how to plan, specifically in the concepts of co-planning or top-down planning? Some planners insisted on their professional role to instil spatial order drawing from orthodox planning, and others felt the need to co-create spaces with informal sector actors. Echoing Fält (2020), planners PRSP1 and PRSP3 emphasised the need for state actors to enforce city development plans to attain a competitive world-class city (Le Blanc et al. 2014, Watson 2014, Myers 2018). Here are the quotes of the above planners.

> "As a planner, the fact that they (vendors) are telling you where the business is does not mean we have to. Our planning is to create order; one thing about planning is to ensure safety. We must abide by the principles. There is safety, aesthetics, harmony, etc. The fact that they want there does not mean we should. You must direct them, and then that will enable everybody to move there (their new location) when they need their service. Because in the developed world, they designate those places, and you are forced to comply because there is strict enforcement. If you don't comply, you will be given a ticket, and you cannot hide." (PRSP1)
>
> "You think authorities and lecturers don't know what they (vendors) go through? They know. They know very well that this is the situation on the street; this is their plight. We know it so much, I mean. So not necessarily they coming to us to tell us. I mean, we know it already, and we know what to do too. We know very well what to do to deal with their situation. I think also probably the resources too to do some of these things is the problem." (PRSP3)

Planners PRSP2 and 11 shared a different opinion.

> "…so I think we need to understand what their concerns are, to understand what suits them and also make them understand where their activities are injurious to society and then we can meet halfway because we cannot go all out for what they would prefer. We also need to make sure it makes sense at the end of the day." (PRSP2)

> "... the way we see the informal economy as negative is also problematic. We see them as a nuisance in the city whiles when you critically analyse it they offer quite good number of services for the functionality of the cities. So in terms of designing the urban space, too, it shouldn't be purely just like the Western economies where more than 90% of the people are formally employed. Again when we are planning too, how do we involve them so that the way they move around, the way they engage with vehicles, and all that can help us come up with designs that are safe and inclusive rather than just copying and pasting land use designs from the West. So all these things are some of the more pragmatic ways of solving the challenges. We find ourselves, almost every layout, local plan is almost the same so how do you consider these people who sell on the streets? The kind of stakeholder consultations we do with market queens doesn't help with much understanding. It may be cheaper and quicker but not good enough." (PRSP11)

The planner-in-control, top-down approach has not worked. This resonates with Spire and Armelle (2018) findings, which found resistance by vendors was the result of low cooperation about the decongestion exercise. In this case, PRSP2 and PRSP9 did not agree with PRSP1 and PRSP3 on just enforcing the law. PRSP2 and PRSP9 advocate more engagement with vendors and explore alternative planning approaches.

Some planners would instead let business as usual prevail because there are no clear answers – the 'do-nothing' approach. The situation becomes even more complicated because incorporating informality will require policy reviews and changes in regulations. Some planners felt other state agencies would not accept this shift. See these quotes from planners PRSP8 and 5.

> "vending looks unorganised, there are not many structures to manage or control them, and it is quite haphazard sometimes they are a nuisance. Even though it really affects the aesthetics of the city but then again, what can you do? It is the livelihoods of people." (PRSP8)

> "There must be an alternative for them, or else they will come back. If there are no alternatives, then by the shoulders of the roads, if we can create small shops so everyone will have a cubicle. The road sector agencies too would not advise that; to have people selling along the road, they won't advise that." (PRSP5)

PRSP2 suggests that the do-nothing scenario is not necessarily the case of inactivity but rather the absence of a coordinated effort to tackle the situation at the roots to bring closure to the issue. There is a feeling of hopelessness about the informality situation, so nothing is being done about it except the reactive evictions. A segment of planners and policy makers are increasingly embracing the need for an intentional conversation around the integration of informality and revision of regulations and policies to allow an opportunity for change.

Planners acknowledge the contributions of the informal economy to the functionality of the city – service provision and job creation in particular. PRSP11 advised strongly that "we either incorporate it, or it becomes a nuisance and causes traffic and accidents", and this should be appropriately done in a much more participatory manner.

Policy on Informality?

While some participants might disagree with recommendations for government support to help vendors grow (Bamhu, 2019), a lecturer underscored the need for local government to support vendor businesses to grow. Once they grow, taxes can easily be generated to improve local revenue. As Benítez et al. (n.d) notes, many governments are bent on creating world-class cities by evicting informal workers from city streets. Who are the officials/city planners creating this world-class city for?

In 2012, the Ministry of Local Government, Decentralisation and Rural Development adopted the National Urban Policy (NUP) Framework, which outlined the Ministry's urban policy priorities. Its goal was to promote urban economic development and recommended shifting the government's attitude toward informal businesses from neglect to recognition and governmental assistance. It also recommended that urban design must "address the demands of the informal sector by providing them with serviced sites that have amenities like water, toilets, and storage in cost-effective places" (Bamhu, 2019:2). Currently, by-laws and other local government regulations contrast planners' proposition for incorporating informality. Thus, as noted by PRSP8, there is a need for policy refinement and new policies to take care of informality. There is currently no policy on informality. If there can even be a chance to incorporate informality, policy and regulations must conform to this new positionality locally and nationally.

> "So one policy has captured it (i.e. the NUP), it will be easy for the local governance level to also incorporate them into the planning system. So the first thing now I decided is that we need to have a policy in place. We need a policy direction on incorporating informality into our planning system." (PRSP8)

4.6 Call for Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

Although most city planners agreed on deeper consultation with vendors, they acknowledged it could be challenging because most street vendors do not belong to an organisation. This reflects a particular world view which presuppose that to engage democratically, one needs to do this through “organisations” who have proxies to act on behalf of a vendor. This is in and of itself informed by a particular view of what democracy and organising might mean. It shows a pervasive formal/structured approach to an emergent and fluid situation (informality). Also, some planners fear what could happen when vendors are granted trading permits. These were some quotes from PRSP12 and 16.

> "I think going forward, space should be provided for hawking. We can decide to have various approaches like night markets, weekly markets only for hawkers, so even certain roads can be closed for hawking, so you pedestrianise some of the roads." (PRSP12)

> "You will be surprised how things will be when permits are granted to street traders. Some may even set up within the road. That is what we are afraid of; that is why we don't want to be regularising these things because then they become formal, and they do what they want. The assurance that they will conform and stick to the agreement for regularisation is what the issue is." (PRSP16)

Planners agree to the need for deeper stakeholder consultations where all stakeholders, particularly vendors, are considered and incorporated accordingly. Participatory planning without deeper consultation does not support easy implementation. As past research (Jayasena et al., 2019; Bamhu, 2019; Benítez, et. at., n.d) denotes, timely and effective consultation with relevant stakeholders is of paramount importance for project success, particularly those related to sustainable cities. For example, Benítez et al. (n.d; 16) purported that the international street vendors' organisation, and street net International, launched a global campaign coined "World Class Cities for All" that aims to fight government practices that exclude street vendors. The

campaign calls for vendors and other poor urban workers to be included in decision-making processes about what cities should look like.

4.7 Challenges with the land situation and physical planning in Accra-Ghana

Land ownership plays a critical role in urban development in Ghana. Ownership of the land is either by the state, a family or individuals. In this case, planners PRSP17, 14, and 1 reported the challenges with land ownership.

> "…the Assembly doesn't have any land. I mean, the assembly is even struggling to get land to build its accommodation and other things." (PRSP17)
>
> "We don't have space owned by the municipality. All the spaces have been used up for residential. The municipality has a plan to construct a market in East La-Accra, but the issue has to do with land availability. The lands are expensive, and you see, the funny part is the military has also taken vast of the land. Even if you want to formalise these informal vendors, where will you put them? That becomes an issue." (PRSP14)
>
> "Oftentimes, when we even designate areas for these uses that we are even talking about, the challenge is that these public lands are not acquired, and then at the end of the day, we end up rezoning and changing the use. At the end of the day, if we want as planners to take and ensure that informality is part of our planning system, we have to spatially delineate spaces for them and then ensure that Assemblies (municipalities) acquire those lands because if you don't acquire them, then it will go back to square one." (PRSP1)

This story seems almost a cautionary tale to illustrate the conflict of planners' thoughts in Ghana. I include here that by redesignating areas for other uses, PRSP1 posits the concerns of rezoning and changing the original use of the lands. If land uses can be adjusted to favour formal structures, what hinders a re-zoning of other spaces from accommodating vendors? Redefining the current spaces occupied by vendors is the planners' major conundrum. The challenge of land acquisition is three-way. First, municipalities do not have enough resources for such purchases; second, most of the lands in Accra are already developed. There are limited undeveloped lands, and third, even if lands were procured, will their locations be desirable to vendors?

Muted Voices?

Are the voices of vendors (informal sector actors) heard during city planning and policy formulation? Some planners felt the institutional structures at the local government level made adequate arrangements for elected Assembly Members to speak for their constituents, including vendors. Therefore, there was no need for a special consultation with vendors. Other planners thought otherwise; they felt that the plethora of failed projects and attempts to relocate vendors are an indication that more consultation was needed to understand vendors. Further, some planners were anxious about the future of our cities, especially if physical/spatial planning (not just informal sector actors) continued to be neglected during policy formulation, particularly at the local level. Thus, a striking finding is that physical/spatial planners themselves felt marginalised and unheard.

> "I think that we are not planning for them, neither are we planning with them. We need to make sure that they are included. If you look at many local plans, there are even no open spaces. Where there are open spaces, we quickly sell them to residential properties. So sometimes, we are the cause. And the qualification of the planners is dwindling by the day." (PRSP12)

PRSP16 expressed how the spatial component of planning seems missing in the planning of our cities. Much emphasis is given to development planners who prepare policy documents to the neglect of spatial planners. PRSP14, 11, 7, and Lecturer 1 acknowledged the challenges to urban planning, including lack of political commitment to city planning, threats to planners, political interference, inadequate resources, and failure to understand the people. Overall, these challenges speak to a broader politics of the governance agendas, where short term political cycles fail longer-term planning needs and how politics can dominate in disconnected ways from one election to another. Vendors and, as findings from this research show, planners, are the pawns in these processes because politicians can assert or remove power from vendors and planners so quickly, making them easy to manipulate for short term political gain.

> "So most of the things they do, they will call a development planner but don't call the spatial planners. Sometimes, some letters come, and you note that this needs spatial planning, but since you are not invited, how do you go? You can't go. So we need to change our attitude. It is number one." (PRSP16)

> "Even when you have gained that knowledge, to apply it is also another issue. The frustrations are many. Even in this assembly (municipal), people sometimes speak anyhow, especially against the planners; meanwhile, there are reasons why the planner cannot do what he or she knows the right thing to do. Seriously, it is more

frustrating at the assembly level. People are primarily interested in money at the assembly." (PRSP11)

"There are political factors behind it. Sometimes you know this is what you are supposed to do but orders from above negatively affect our work. It is like you are doing your work, but you are not confident. People will be calling you. Aside from that, the people (vendors, general populace) even sometimes threaten you." (PRSP14)

"...you need to spend time with those guys (vendors) to understand them. You can stay with them for a whole week to get to understand their lives, what they do; they drink water, and they have to use the washroom; where do they do it? If we understand them, then we can come up with a solution for the so-called formal and informal." (PRSP7)

"…their spatial needs may be just two by three meters to keep their wares over there. So as planners, I believe that it is something that we have failed to do. To identify the needs, the spatial needs of the informal sector and then to bring them into our planning schemes. At the local level, the local plans, have we ever created space for the informal activities?" (Lecturer 1)

From the above, it is noticeable that planners are confronted with multiple challenges. These responses resonate with earlier studies by Spire and Armelle (2018) and Morange (2015). They enumerated many challenges to transforming Southern cities, including Accra. They include poor political will and the inability of state actors to dialogue with street vendors.

4.8 Refocus Planning Education?

There is a disconnect between planning education and planning practice. And there is a disjuncture between these two and policy formulation. The study sought to understand the impact of planning education on practice. There was a division as to whether planning education in Ghana was adequate. Some planners argue that there is nothing wrong with planning education because university education is meant to equip students with knowledge and make them critical thinkers for general practice. Others felt that planning education in Ghana should be southern-practice focused, i.e. it should equip planners to deal with the peculiar urban challenges we encounter within our cities. Lecturers spoke of adequate training but admitted that the training was somewhat orthodox. Lecturers shared their aspiration for planning education in Ghana as well. Many practising planners, even recent graduates, felt that the current education system is only partly relatable to the practice of planning in Ghana. See the quotes below.

"We develop our students to understand the trends and changing issues in planning globally and locally, and when they are out, they should be able to apply this. We read books written in Europe, America and others and truthfully some of them are very old. I believe that we need to look at local approaches that can help us plan very well to be able to meet the needs of our people. So let's develop a local balance that will help us plan." (Lecturer 2)

"The focus is still very Eurocentric or Western, but gradually it is changing. Unlike the development planning unit at UCL that focuses on solving urban planning problems in the global South, our Ghanaian planning schools are very Eurocentric. I think the planning system in Ghana has to be changed to help solve more local challenges or problems." (PRSP11)

"Tailor-made training is very important. They take us through bits of informality, but it is brushing the surface. So that when you leave school and come to the workspace, it is as if you are an alien. And the challenge is that we, the heads or senior planners, now are imparting the system to the new planners that are coming. So there is no change coming. We keep going the same direction with different faces and names." (PRSP16)

"For me, I think we are being trained to look at the European way as our model. The gap between what is learnt at school and what we are supposed to do on the job is huge." (PRSP2)

The following quotes from planners argue for the adequacy of planning education.

"… I feel the education will give you the basics, the theories. You get into the real world situation; that's where you have to learn on the job by applying those theories." (PRSP9)

"In school, we learn theories. Even medical students face more challenges on the job than what they learn at school. Planning is a problem-solving subject. So we teach you how to analyse a problem and how to find a solution to it as you go step by step. The problem is that we are always coming against a political decision, a planning decision. The issue happening at the Accra Mall, the best thing KNUST or planning class will tell you is that they need to be ejected or find a place for them to stay. But when you become a mayor or a planner at the district assembly responsible, the question is, is the MCE prepared to sack them? Is there a land appropriate to reposition them when evicted? Are the people willing to go because is the new place suitable for them to make money or a living? This you cannot solve in a classroom. You will have to come out and see how you can interface all these factors, political, economic and human relations." (PRSP4)

"Academia will always be academia, but the industry players will continue to look at implementation issues. I believe that there has been that gap that is

being bridged, although it might not be a total thing. For planning, we have workshops that continue to look at the practical implementation of the taught process, which will help planners to better appreciate what is out there in the industry when they enter it. There is more to be done, but some form of awareness is there for a young student planner who is looking to come and work in the industry." (PRSP17)

Table 7: Research Findings-Research Objectives/Questions Matrix

The table above ties the research findings to research questions/objectives. Thus demonstrating how the two are linked i.e., how findings speak to the research objectives/questions

	Research Questions	**Research Findings**
Q1.	**How are planners navigating the tensions between planning regulations and the reality of street trading around the Accra Mall enclave?**	1. Planners experience psychological tension. This tension was explained through the concept of individuation. Also, planners feel marginalised, unappreciated, and frustrated by failed plans. 2. State officials, when acting in their individual capacity side with the vending profession because the state has not created jobs. Despite this personal understanding, the system, specifically state bureaucracy, generates obstacles, and as a result existing state structures frustrate the planning practice. 3. Findings show that planners see the need to incorporate the informal sector, although the process and nature of incorporation are not yet agreed upon or fully understood either. State actors are not all fully ready for a conversation on the integration of informality into formal structures. But maybe, the preparation of a policy on informality presents a good opportunity to start. 4. There is an acknowledgement that the state/planners have played an active role in the informality situation in Ghana by neglecting the spatial needs of vendors
Q2.	**What are the conflicting rationalities that emerge, including the dissonance between policy, the practice of planners and the practice of vendors**	1. A case of conflicting rationalities was observed within planners concerning the planning profession. Planners are often assumed to be one body, speak with one voice, have one, generally policy aligned, view – this was not the case. Planners disagreed on their comprehension of and ability to deal with informality. They expressed different opinions about incorporating informality regardless of by-laws and argued the adequacy of Ghanaian planning education. 2. The dissonance on what it means to be formalised was also observed. Both state officials and vendors expressed the need to be formalised. State officials express the formalisation of the informal to mean, among other things, to relocate vendors into an organised space. Vendors express formality in terms of taxation. Thus, vendors are calling for the state to collect tolls from them as a means of formalisation, which the state is resisting. 3. Two conflicting rationalities were observed between planners and vendors. First, planners argued that vendors were uncontrollable and unyielding; hence planners are

		afraid to incorporate street vending. On the contrary, vendors expressed the need for the state to acknowledge and guide their activities. The second was the dissonance between what it means to notify and be notified. Though eviction notification was given, (1) this notification was not different from non-actioned notifications, and (2) the notification did not allow vendors enough time to sell their stock, so they had no option but to "play hide and seek" with the city guards. 4. Vendors acknowledge the need for regulations and rules to guide their activities. But the type of regulation they seek is different from that which state actors seek. Vendors seek for their activities to be directed, not cleaned up 5. Dissonance among planners' perception of how to plan, specifically in the concepts of co-planning or top-down planning? Some planners insisted on their professional role to instil spatial order drawing from orthodox planning, and others felt the need to co-create spaces with informal sector actors
Q3.	**What are the logics, strategies, and experiences of street traders within the study scope?**	**Logics** 1. Vendors argue, though the working environments may differ, the working situation or conditions of service on the street (AME) is not any different from working in the so-called formal sector they are exposed to. Therefore, the findings of this research highlight a contradiction in the perception that the formal sector provides financial security. It offers evidence of how labour casualisation or nonstandard work in the formal private sector contributes to the informal sector (ILO, 2016) 2. Street vending at the AME is a long term endeavour/employment for vendors. Also, it is an alternative source of income (a business) for some people in the formal sector. 3. Vendors resorted to vending mostly because it was their best option for what they understand as honest earning. The alternatives to street vending are robbery, begging or prostitution. These alternatives also constitute criminal offences in Ghana. 4. Vendors perceived eviction attempts as a wake-up call to curtail them from taking over the entire pavement as opposed to the notion of permanently clearing them from the AME. 5. There is the notion that street vending at the AME pays better than formal employment **Strategies** 1. Vendors built their businesses/investments incrementally. 2. Although the future was uncertain for most vendors, selling within the AME was still their plan. Vendors with high school & tertiary certificates envisaged to be in the public sector. 3. Vendor Association Leaders acted as gatekeepers to control the numbers. New entrants gained access through familial networks i.e., friends or relatives who already operated within the AME **Experiences**

		1. Vendors have endured evictions and confiscation of their goods. The motivation to evict vendors at the AME may be beyond a planning decision; there may be underlying ethnic/tribal influences. Likewise, granting access to trade within the AME by vendor gatekeepers may be biased towards specific ethnic identities. 2. Initial investment into vending businesses depend on the type of product/business and the scale of the business; ranging from Ghc50 (US$8.3) to Ghc10, 000 (US$1656). 3. Findings from this study reveal that street vending is not reserved for the uneducated. This is worth pointing out because vendors are generally considered in policy circles to be illiterate ignorant migrants, disobedient, and reckless citizens. As findings show, vending at the AME has become a strategic choice and a sector that rewards more than just education or aspects of the formal private sector. 4. Defining professionalism by years of practice contradicts the notion held by some planners that vending is a temporary occupation. People will rarely find themselves in a temporary occupation for 10 years. Therefore, city authorities must acknowledge street vending as a legitimate career option for urban dwellers
Q4.	**How are street vendors negotiating their interactions with the state (police, planning officers, toll collectors, etc.)?**	1. The illegal/illegitimate status of the vending practice in Ghana limits formal channels i.e. invited spaces to seek redress or inclusion. Vendors at the AME have therefore tactfully deployed other avenues i.e. invented spaces to maintain their workspace and activities. These invented spaces include active vendor participation in politics by establishing networks with politicians and influential party executives. Vendors also established relationships with city guards, a relationship fostered through political party campaign activities. 2. Vendors call for toll collection, partnership with the state in the allocation of the yard, and financial contribution to municipal officers show a performative use of existing processes that legitimize access and tenure and also to seek recognition as economic actors, as the same, if not better than formal actors, as viable contributors to the urban space. This is a very different politics to what some Southern theorists (e.g., Bayat, 2010; Ballard, 2015) speak to and is more akin to seeking agency through navigating bureaucracy.

In summary, this chapter laid out the findings from the data gathered through this research. Including the point that planners also feel marginalised and unappreciated. Also, the notion is that street vending at the AME pays better than formal employment. It exposed the conflicting rationalities between politicians, planners, and vendors, and also among planners. Planners generally agree that street vending is pervasive in Accra and there is a need for planning to cater to vendors' spatial needs. However, some planners still lean towards the trope of the planner as a professional who directs as opposed to facilitating the process of co-planning. Another dissonance among planners was the direction of planning education. Should planning education focus on

training planners for Southern practice, or should it be generic i.e. a broader, more global approach?

An interesting observation was the claim of recognition and formalisation centred on toll collection. Two conflicting rationalities were observed between planners and vendors. First, planners argued that vendors were uncontrollable and unyielding; hence planners are afraid to incorporate street vending. On the contrary, vendors expressed the need for the state to acknowledge and guide their activities. The second was the dissonance between what it means to notify and be notified. Though eviction notification was given, (1) this notification was not different from non-actioned notifications, and (2) the notification did not allow vendors enough time to sell their stock, so they had no option but to "play hide and seek" with the city guards. According to pedestrians and patrons, vendors provide a convenient shopping experience that is time-saving and affordable. Recommendations from pedestrians include the official integration of vendors into the AME with guidance and the institution of a monthly shopping fair/carnival.

This study shows that street vendors are not apolitical. They understand the games of politics and take advantage of the opportunities that come from state informality. Vendors leverage their network with political power to lobby and assert their presence within the AME during elections. Findings also revealed the stereotypes and disdain held by state officials against vendors. Figures 9a and 9b depict the perception of planners and vendors concerning why people sell within the AME. Planners argued that people are on the streets because of a lack of jobs in the formal sector, poor economic growth, failure to plan for the spatial needs of informal sector workers and unmatched skills of migrant workers to the formal sector. In addition to lack of jobs and viable alternatives, vendors expressed autonomy and higher financial returns as reasons for choosing to vend within the AME.

The study uncovered that alternatives to street vending are robbery, begging, and prostitution, all of which constitute criminal offences in Ghana. Street vending has evolved from a transition job to a business or employment in its own right, enabled by its ease of entry and convenience of practice. The state must acknowledge this and provide support for vendor organising and empowerment. The first step is the development of a policy on informality.

Chapter 5 offers a discussion of these findings with existing literature.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.0 Introduction

> *"To look into the city is not to look into a complex mechanical entity such as a clock that, once opened and scrutinised with the rules of timekeeping machines, becomes transparent in all its workings and, for this, fixable. Instead, it is to look into a constellation of entities, networks and systems with their own logics and dynamics that are only ever partially visible and always emergent in their combinations"* (Amin, 2013:206).

Chapter 4 presented the key findings of the study. In this chapter, I respond to the research questions by discussing these findings and related literature presented in Chapter 2. The discussion also highlights the implications of the research findings, providing recommendations for practice and future research. First, I engage the research questions followed by a longer more expanded set of discussions and concluding reflections.

5.1 What are the strategies and experiences of street vendors in the Accra Mall Enclave (AME), and how are vendors negotiating their interaction with the state?

5.1.1 Relationships

The vendor's official interface with the state typically happens through eviction attempts. The state has continually failed to permanently clear out vendors at the Accra Mall Enclave (AME), even with the support of the military. Some of the vendors within the AME feel ownership and attachment to the enclave because they were there before the Mall's construction. However, the main reason vendors insist on trading there is the enclave's strategic location and the financial returns they gain. Hence, they have an affective attachment to the space because of the length of their occupation; an economic motivation, i.e., the returns they collect from there; and an aspirational component, i.e., the potential for recognition by the state and what might it mean for their career and futures.

In this study, relationships were identified as an overarching theme. For instance, vendor networks were crucial in settling new entrants within the AME. Further, as noted by both planners and

vendors, city guards have a relationship with vendors. Vendors worked closely with city guards (who were political party foot soldiers at the 2020 election rallies and campaigns); however, they are now at opposing ends. Vendors report receiving tip-offs from city guards regarding unexpected municipal operations in exchange for financial favours. Through their active participation in party politics, vendors established relationships with politicians and party executives who quietly came to their aid in critical moments like evictions. That is, the voter-candidate relationship between vendors and governments in an election year is a relationship that lends credence to their (vendors) continuous stay. These vendor-knitted relationships form part of what Miraftab (2009) refers to as invented spaces.

There is also a relationship between the municipality and vendors within the AME. This relationship centres on keeping the space clean. Vendors from all sections of the AME reported that they were responsible for cleaning the space every day. Vendors within the LaDMa section even contracted cleaners to tidy up the space every morning. The municipal sanitation officers who accompanied city guards during the Make Greater Accra Work (MGAW) campaign were dispatched because of the MGAW campaign. The city implicitly endorsed reliance or partnership with vendors to keep the AME clean, a responsibility well accepted by vendors. A planner insinuated that the state's inaction to evict vendors at some locations in the city can be viewed as an implicit approval of the vending practice since "we don't worry them." Similar to findings by Tafti (2020) and Roever et al. (2016), even though the COVID-19 global pandemic continues to bedevil vending operations, vendors and city planners agree that the practice of vending/informality is a dominant form of livelihood in the city of Accra.

Evidently, there is a complex relationship between street vendors and the state through politics, state reliance on vendors to keep the space clean, relationship with city guards and politicians, etc. Vendors are aware of these invented spaces and engage them in strategic ways.

5.1.2 Incrementality

The concepts of incrementality and the quiet encroachment of the ordinary are reflected in how vendors built their business (capital injection) and the process of occupation within the AME, respectively. All vendors reported an incremental growth of their businesses regardless of their

start-up capital. However, Arias (2019) points out that eviction attempts, and confiscations negatively impact vendors. Also, both vendors and planners report an incremental occupation of the AME. Granted some vendors were present within the AME prior to the development of the enclave, many others joined over time. Before the state could act, vendors had organised.

Before vendors within the AME organised, they resisted evictions by fighting back. One example of the fightback was when vendors reported attacking city guards. Some vendors also reported giving the municipality a substantial amount of money in the past as a token for their restoration into the enclave as a collective. Granted this may be categorised as a bribe, this payment was framed as toll fees, semantics, yes, but it shows a different form of agency – seeking approval – which contradicts the notion of vendors as people who are trying to avoid the law/compliance, escape taxes, and who like to sit in the grey areas of the law and economy. This shows a nuance of vendor politics/active politics, which is opposed to the notion of quiet encroachment.

As an organised body, the vendor association worked closely with one of the major political party's (the incumbent government) during the 2020 elections. This reflects the unpredictability of the state's presence in the process of city-making in Accra. As Bayat (2010), Ballard (2015) and Tafti (2020) point out, these mundane but complex processes of quiet encroachment, non-movement, and eventually movement (organising), and active vendor politics complicate the otherwise simplistic city planning process conceptualised by urban planners/state officials.

5.1.3 Vendor Awareness

Like the bazaaries of Tehran (Tafti, 2020), vendors were self-aware of their positionality concerning their contribution to society/the economy and the state's negative perception of their activities. This understanding has built a resolve in vendors to resist eviction. When the invited intervention of dialogues with the municipality did not yield the desired results, vendors employed the invented measure of presence. Even if the state does not allow them to exhibit goods for sale, they will be present in the space and sell when the opportunity presents itself. Vendors understood the operations of the state. They knew that the state could not afford such eviction operations for exceptionally extended periods. So, they play the time game – *"… Let us see who can wait longer."*

(VRSP22) While they did this, their leaders kept calling on the political connections they had established through the campaigns.

Historically, the state withdraws after a while, and vendors resurface in operation, awaiting the next surge of state power. In the MGAW case, the persistence of vendors paid off. Vendors worked with the state for the assignment of the yard to temporarily break the cycle of unwantedness/eviction. As research by WIEGO correctly points out, this cycle affects vendors' business growth. The state of being in perpetual limbo in business means you cannot expand, or you expand at your own risk. Thus, though temporary, the assignment of the yard means vendors can enjoy a measure of peace and stability. It also signals the states increasing recognition of vendors within the AME.

The actors keep changing, but the system, the cycle, persists. Vendors recounted their experiences under various MCEs/regimes and how they have been resilient. Their past victories against the state amidst the significant loss of assets empower them to keep fighting. Some vendors try out new locations and opportunities in moments of active waiting during eviction attempts. Others seek better opportunities abroad or travel back to the village for a while to be with family.

In summary, street vendors within the AME have been discriminated against by the state and planners, and have experienced state neglect and evictions. They have also experienced patronage and financial rewards for their labour. As VRSP26 points out, *"Right now in Accra, from Tema, Prampram, Kasoa and other areas, if people want shoes – sneakers, executive leather shoes – this (AME) is the place they come to."* Through vendor awareness and relationships, vendors have successfully negotiated their way into the yard through a complex collaboration with the state, with historical loses. Vendors have shown resilience and have incrementally built their business incomes and where possible, financial reserves (some may lose these reserves during evictions and confiscations).

5.2 How are planners navigating the tensions between planning regulations and the reality of street trading at the AME?

Most planners and state officials expressed frustration. They levelled blame against the central government for several reasons: poor economic development, evidenced by the lack of jobs, the

challenges faced by planners in the execution of their duties such as municipal governments focus on administrative duties instead of its city management duties, the absence of economic planning and the marginalisation of physical planners and spatial planning. Planners also felt unappreciated and marginalised and expressed the absence of political will to urban planning.

Planners found themselves in a complex tension where they bemoaned indiscipline of the populace, which has contributed to failed plans. Yet they rationalized and sided with street vendors by arguing that people had to vend since there were no other options. Further, planners blamed themselves for not including the spatial needs of the informal sector in plans. Still, they explained that there were no lands available, and engaging vendors posed several challenges, the principal one being that vendors were not organised.

The do-nothing scenario is the norm. There is no long-term approach to the situation. Planners find themselves in a state of helpless stasis where actions – usually evictions – are made possible by a new political appointee or a funded significant project or public event. There were no apparent solutions. This calls for an intervention.

Although city planners admit to the complexities and impacts of street vending, there is unmistakable evidence of the state's role in the informal production of space in Accra. Further, although some planners insist that they know how to deal with the vending situation, the analysis shows otherwise. Thus, affirming Allmendinger's (2002:88) argument that "planners are no longer conceptualised as technical experts (as under the positivist conception) but rather as fallible advisors who operate like everybody else, in a complex world where there are no answers only diverse and indeterminate options." Amin (2013) urges that practice must transition towards a more holistic, modest, and experimental style of knowing and acting.

This study revealed that planners/state officials experience individuation – a consistent switch between acting as state officials and individuals. This switch which allowed state officials to identify with vendors, was observed particularly as planners expressed the tensions they faced with the informal situation and their frustrations. At which point they project their sense of individuality separate from the state's identity. As Schlamm (2020: 1163) explains, at this point, state officials "divest the self of its false wrappings of persona, the mask the personality uses to confront the world..." The lens of individuation opens another window to Allmendinger's (2002) argument of de-professionalising the planning practice. Do planners themselves question their professionalism?

Also, the interference of politicians and central government in the affairs of planners and local governance adds to the complexity of the urban management function of planners. Some planners expressed frustration. The state is not a homogenous entity, and its actors are not necessarily aligned towards the same urban ambition. The conflicting rationalities revealed is made evident through the tensions that planners face in dealing with their failed plans.

5.3 What are the conflicting rationalities that may exist, including the dissonance between policy, the practice of planners, and the practice of vendors?

5.3.1 Disconnect between planners and vendors and conflicting rationalities

Findings from this study demonstrate that planners/state officials are not informed about vendors and their practice, even though some planners claim otherwise. For instance, both municipalities were not aware of the vendor association within the AME. For that reason, they did not engage vendors during the preparation of their Medium-Term Development Plans (MTDP). Also, a few planners thought vendors bought their stock from the Mall and resold it. Thus, they thought of the Mall as a bulk breaking point which was erroneous as far as the AME is concerned. Vendors bought their stock either from the central market in Accra at wholesale or travelled to neighbouring country Togo. Some planners thought vendors within the AME were from the Northern parts of Ghana, which was not the case.

These inaccurate conceptions of planners about vendors are due to their disconnection with the ground situation. Bhan (2019) points out that informal sector actors and their activities are emergent, and therefore, understanding them requires constant engagement. He cautions that decision-making is thus transcending from certainty to experimentation. The absence of an established municipal presence and engagement plan with vendors was evident. But for the Greater Accra Regional Ministers MGAW campaign, which required state presence at the AME, it would have been business as usual – no connection. Thus, to capture and relish the aspiration of harmonious and inclusive cities from both planner and vendor perspectives, there must be deep-seated conversations and connections between all parties as (equal) partners. As Miraftab (2009) and Allmendinger (2002) point out, planners must accept their evolving role as facilitators in the city-making process and not as professionals who purportedly have all the answers. The protagonists of city-making have shifted from planners to the masses.

Two conflicting rationalities were observed between planners and vendors. First, planners argue that vendors were uncontrollable and unyielding; hence planners were ambivalent about incorporating street vending into the formal structure. On the contrary, vendors expressed the need for the state to acknowledge and guide their activities. The second was the dissonance between what it means to notify and be notified. Though eviction notification was given, (1) this notification was like non-actioned notifications, and (2) The notification did not allow vendors enough time to sell their stock, so they had no option but to "play hide and seek" with the city guards. Planners' felt vendors were brazen, but vendors expressed consideration for the state. For example, vendors at the LEKMA side explained that they decided not to mount umbrellas to reduce their visibility in the AME. They endure the sun's intense heat, so there will be some harmony within the space.

The dissonance on what it means to be formalised was also observed. Both state officials and vendors expressed the need to be formalised. State officials express the formalisation of the informal to mean, among other things, to relocate vendors into an organised space. Vendors express formality in terms of taxation. Thus, vendors are calling for the state to collect tolls from them as a means of formalisation, which the state is resisting.

Interestingly, street vendors in other parts of the city are taxed. Still, those within the AME are not taxed because they understand taxation to mean formalisation. The state is being careful, which reveals the state's vulnerability in this instance. As one municipal planner pointed out, "we are losing money." Vendors are present and generating income, but the state is hindered from acting because of vendors' understanding of the law. This finding reinforces the work of Bamhu (2019) that when regulations are accessible to vendors, they become more informed and empowered. Thus, the inaccessibility of municipal by-laws to vendors may be a conscious effort to disempower informal sector actors by ensuring state actors remain the only authoritative voice on such regulations (Bamhu, 2019; Roever & Skinner, 2016).

A case of conflicting rationalities was observed within planners and the planning profession. Planners are often assumed to be one body, speak with one voice, have one, generally policy aligned, view – this was not the case. Planners disagreed on their comprehension of and ability to deal with informality. They expressed different opinions about incorporating informality regardless of by-laws and argued the adequacy of Ghanaian planning education.

5.3.2 Length of Service as a definition of professionalism and evidence of permanent occupation status/intention

Roever (2014) shows that most street vendors have extensive experience working on the street. Findings from this study show similar trends. On average, vendors report a 10-year vending experience at the Accra Mall Enclave (AME). While the most recent had operated for only two months, the longest was 26 years. Planners had an average of 14 years of practice. At what point does one become a professional? Planners obtained professionalism primarily through four years of tertiary education, while vendors attained theirs through apprenticeship or on-the-job training. Following İpeks' (2018) findings, vendors within the AME must be acknowledged as professionals in their own rights and be recognised. El Makrini (2015) and İpek (2018) argue that vendors' years of experience must be considered instrumental in explaining and determining eviction intentions and strategies. More so, findings from this study reveal that street vending is not reserved for the uneducated. It has become a business and employment option for educated persons and an alternative source of income for others employed in the formal sector.

This is worth pointing out because vendors are generally considered in policy circles to be illiterate ignorant migrants, disobedient, and reckless citizens. As findings show, vending at the AME has become a strategic choice and a sector that rewards more than just education or aspects of the formal private sector. Some of the educated respondents choose to vend through carnivals. VRSP2 was part of the exhibitors vending at the AME. She had this to say,

> "I am a graduate. I read marketing in school. The perception that informal sector workers are not educated is not true. Because even now when you go to the fairs the calibre of exhibitors you meet, you will be amazed. Some of them have their masters and PhD." (VRSP2)

Defining professionalism by years of practice contradicts the notion held by some planners that vending is a temporary occupation. People will rarely find themselves in a temporary occupation for 10 years. The perceived temporary status of the vending profession arguably explains why state actors/planners relegate vendors in a situation of permanent temporariness, as observed even at the AME. The general view, misplaced as it is, of temporaryness is also useful for planners and politicians as it is an easy way to reject the claim of a right to the city. The temporary label is also part of the othering, exclusionary tactic applied to negate action in terms of vendors. Therefore, city authorities must acknowledge street vending as a career option for urban dwellers.

Before they arrived at the AME, most vendors were vending at other locations. Findings from this study clearly show that vendors have long-term career plans within the AME. The categories of vendors within the space are like those within the formal sector and are not homogenous. This reflects what Arias (2019) found in Johannesburg: both employers and employees possess business sense and have defined working hours. As argued by one of the lecturers and some planners, our notion of the formal sector must evolve. The state has the power to redefine formality and informality (Roy, 2005). For example, as the FTC Tracker shows, during the heat of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Indian "government changed the definition of small and medium-sized business enterprises, or SMEs, to open up relief funds for larger companies" (Akibo-Betts et al., 2021: 1). The Ghanaian state can similarly expand the definition of the formal sector to include street vending. Not in the typical top-down fashion, but through a collaborative approach. This, as vendors in the AME request, will allow the state to regularise and guide their activities.

According to Hart's (1973) definition, the distinction between formality and informality centres on whether labour is recruited permanently for fixed rewards. This definition may not hold today because the formal economy engages significant casual and contract workers who are typically not entitled to benefits. In Ghana, a substantial proportion of workers in the formal private sector are job insecure (Torvikey, 2018; Aye, 2017; Ayele et al., 2018). The global pandemic has exacerbated this situation. Public servants and most private-sector workers do not receive many benefits. Two vendors report that they left the formal sector because the company's defaulted several times on paying their monthly salaries even though they reported to work daily. Hence, as most vendors argue, though the working environments may differ, the working situation or conditions of service on the street (AME) is not any different from working in the so-called formal sector they are exposed to. Therefore, the findings of this research highlight a contradiction in the perception that the formal sector provides financial security. It offers evidence of how labour casualisation or nonstandard work in the formal private sector contributes to the informal sector (ILO, 2016).

As rightfully noted by Hart, the informal sector provides an opportunity for multiple income streams, unlike the formal sector in Accra, Ghana. In an era where the world of work is rapidly changing, job options that provide opportunities for supplementary income will expand. This explains why some educated vendors wish to join the public service, and some vendors, with formal qualifications and histories of working in the formal sector, chose, for strategic economic

reasons, to vend within the AME. Although this study did not dig deep into vendors' wages, findings suggest, as shown by Short (2020), that street vending often provides higher wages than the formal economy. The discussion points above bring to light the complexity of the state-vendor relationship within the AME. They underscore the everyday experiences of vendors, and the psychological tensions, and considerations that planners/state officials must think through.

5.4 Concepts and Their Inflections, Overlaps and Relevance to Understanding African Cities

This section offers a summary to the discussion. It specifically teases out the different concepts, their intersection and relevance.

Similar to Operation Restore Order/Murambatsvina in Zimbabwe, it was observed in this study that the MGAW campaign aimed to clear street vendors from the urban scapes in Accra, particularly the AME where this study was located. Such eviction attempts align with official state position on informality in Accra, Ghana. The simple plan to rid the AME of street vendors exposed underlying issues hitherto imperceptible and considered unscientific. The knitted webs, resolve and ingenuity of vendors within the AME was observed as they worked in a complex way with the state for the allocation of the yard within the AME. Vendor's reflections of other eviction attempts, particularly the 2017 crackdown offered a historic perspective to the planner-vendor relationship at the AME.

Miraftab's (2009) framing of invited and invented spaces offered the lens to identify the tactics employed by vendors in their bid to resist eviction and secure the yard within the AME. Given the illegal classification of informal activities in Ghana, there are limited invited spaces for vendors to seek redress during such state planned forced removals. Street vendors therefore resort to invented spaces. For example, in the heat of the eviction attempt at the AME, vendors employed the invented space of presence even though they couldn't openly sell. The vendor association leaders also engaged the political connections they had established during the election campaigns. Vendors within the AME complied with the directives to clear off the pavements to the extent that they would be guided to reintegrate into the space, not to be removed from the AME. They secured a loan to grade the yard and maintained order among themselves even though some vendors wanted to forcefully occupy the yard before the long awaited cautious official approval was given. Thus,

through the lens of invited and invented spaces, it was observed that vendor association was profitable to both vendors and the state.

On the other hand, planners/state officials found themselves in a complex psychological space where despite their professional stance to maintain spatial order had to side with street vendors because planning has not made provision for the spatial needs of vendors. The lens of individuation helped explain the psychological tension faced by planners as they switched between acting as state officers and individuals. Through the lens of individuation, it became apparent that planners themselves felt unheard, marginalized and used – a similar sentiment held by vendors. Thus, showing the vulnerability and heterogeneity of the state as an institution and exposing state illegality. That is, how other state officers circumvent regulations to have their interests carried out through various means including the issuance of orders. These findings give credence to Allmendinger's (2002) argument for the deprofessionalisation of the planning profession and Miraftab's (2009) position to maintain planners as facilitators of the planning process not as experts issuing orders but rather guiding the process of co-planning with the people/community. Consequently, the role of the state in the production of "*the unplanned and unplannable*" (Roy, 2005: 156) is observed as the apparatus of planning remain adamant about incorporating informality, hence leaving street vendors in a state of permanent temporariness (Bailey et al., 2002).

One explanation to why orthodox planning has failed in most Southern cities is Watson's (2003) concept of conflicting rationalities. The dissonance observed among planners and between planner and vendor logics tell the story. Through the lens of Conflicting rationalities the study also noted the disconnect between the state/planners and street vendors, an instance which explains why some planners abhor the idea of co-planning and the incorporation of informality as proposed by Southern thinkers. Conflicting rationalities as a concept explained why orthodox planning attempts in Accra keeps failing. The integration of vendors into the AME (the yard) through vendor-led approach and a complex collaboration with the state is proof.

5.5 Discussion Highlights

This study sought to uncover the positionality of state officials on informality and street vending in Accra, Ghana by using the AME as a case study. Findings show that planners see the need to incorporate the informal sector, although the process and nature of incorporation are not yet agreed upon or fully understood either. State actors are not fully ready for a conversation on the integration of informality into formal structures. But maybe, the preparation of a policy on informality presents a good opportunity to start. The study also investigated everyday street vendor experiences within the AME and how they navigate their interaction with the state. Vendors had to employ various tactics to maintain their presence within the AME including engaging actively in politics and physically fighting off city guards and journalists when they deemed necessary. The demography of vendors is not homogenous. Vendors varied in their length of service within the AME, products sold, business hours, educational background, and how and why they operate at the AME. As to how planners deal with the reality of informality and failed plans, findings show planners experience psychological tension. This tension was explained through the concept of individuation. Also, planners feel marginalised, unappreciated, and frustrated by failed plans. Finally, the study disclosed several dissonances between planner and vendor logics, and among planners. This shows that the conception of the state as a homogenous entity is not always the case. Findings from this study laid out some of the ways the state practices and create informality in the City of Accra.

Conclusion

This thesis follows several Southern focused studies (Azunre, Amponsah, Takyi, & Mensah, 2021; Bigon & Njoh, 2017; Fält, 2016; Lindell & Ampaire, 2016; Lindell et al., 2019; Lund & Skinner, 2004; Myers, 2018; Parnell & Pieterse, 2014; Swilling & Annecke, 2012; Watson & Agbola, 2013), each speaking to the idea of incorporating informality into city plans and programmes in the global South with a specific focus on street vending as a lens to informality. However, planning practice in most African cities is based on colonial and post-colonial framings and logics which stand counter to the incorporation of informality into formal structures (Brown et al., 2014; Fält, 2016; Lindell & Ampaire, 2016; Lindell et al., 2019; Morange, 2015; Roever & Skinner 2016; Watson, 2009). Watson (2014) observes that most African cities are motivated to build world-class

cities modelled after Dubai, Singapore, and Shanghai, devoid of any trace of informality. Hence marginalising the majority urban poor, worsening already precarious livelihoods in the face of jobless population growth with a prominent youth bulge in waithood (Honwana, 2013).

This research responds to Roy's (2005) call to confront the dominant Eurocentric planning apparatus and the demand for more empirical data to canonise mundane everyday practices that shape cities in developing countries through bold empirical methodologies (Bhan, 2019; Pieterse & Simone, 2013). This thesis is situated in the current political moment of evictions through Ghana's Make Greater Accra Work campaign. Eviction is common in most Southern cities (Boonjubun, 2017). Amidst the global pandemic and its negative economic impact, the urban poor were not spared (Short, 2020). Findings from this study speak to how street vendors within the Accra Mall Enclave (AME) have existed, adapted, and operated within the planning system that outlaws them. It also unpacks how city officials and planners deal with the tensions resulting from the disharmony caused by expressions of informality, e.g., street vending owing to planners' notion of what an ideal city should look like based on Eurocentric models.

Vendors within the AME made contributions and went for a loan of Ghc4000 (US$653) to hire a bulldozer to clear the yard (the new location assigned to them) for occupation within the shortest possible time. Vendors are virtually begging the state to collect tolls from them. In the past, when the need arose, although inappropriate, vendors made contributions to bribe/influence eviction decision as part of a set of deliberate actions, forced on them by the treatment and rejection of their trade as a legitimate city economic activity. Vendors also take opportunity of the window created by politicians during election years to lobby and establish networks with the state/politicians. When the situation becomes tough, vendors confront city guards and other hegemonic powers that come to the space including journalists. In their words, *"we match them boot for boot."* (VRSP26)

The points elaborated above highlight the nuance of vendor politics of seeking legitimacy and recognition. It shows how vendors understand city politics and bureaucracy and play the game to be heard by employing a blend of tactics. Their call for toll collection, partnership with the state in the allocation of the yard, and financial contribution to municipal officers show a performative use of existing processes that legitimize access and tenure and also to seek recognition as economic actors, as the same, if not better than formal actors, as viable contributors to the urban space. This is a very different politics to what some Southern theorists (e.g., Bayat, 2010; Ballard, 2015) speak

to and is more akin to seeking agency through navigating bureaucracy. In effect, vendors are living the advice given by a senior planner, that, *"if you want to change the system, lead it"* (PRSP12) i.e., urging planners to go into politics. Vendors are getting into politics but in ways that suit them and their needs, not to be political, but in recognition of the politics needed to secure viability, income and tenure, through recognition – *"we are not invisible and won't just go away"* (VRSP26)

This thesis sought to uncover: (1) How planners are navigating the tensions between planning regulations and the reality of street trading around the Accra Mall Enclave? (2) The conflicting rationalities that emerge, including the dissonance between policy, the practice of planners and the practice of vendors? (3) What the logics, strategies, and experiences of street traders around the Accra Mall are? And finally (4) To understand how vendors negotiate their interactions with the state.

Findings show that the state is reluctantly, if not unwillingly, coming to terms with vending within the AME. This could however change quickly if politics change, so still precarious. There are no viable alternatives to relocation, and vendors have established significant relationships and tactics that somehow entrench their position howbeit insecure. Besides all these, state officials, when acting in their individual capacity side with the vending profession because the state has not created jobs. Despite this personal understanding, the system, specifically state bureaucracy, generates obstacles, and as a result existing state structures frustrate the planning practice. This is complicated further by politics. Hence, planners themselves feel helpless, marginalised, and trapped. Further, spatial plans do not adequately provide access to the land needed by informal sector actors. The state resorts to occasional evictions when there is an adequate budget for this action. Politics rejecting informality prevail, i.e., imaginations of world class cityness dominate perceptions of the space. This is a candid depiction of the do-nothing scenario – the active contribution of the state in the creation of informality within the AME and the city of Accra, Ghana.

Lecturers, pedestrians, and planners all acknowledge the significant contributions of street vendors to life in Accra. All respondents, including vendors, expressed the need to organise vending practice. However, despite a recognised need to integrate vendors, the state's position is to clear vendors from the AME, largely because it is a ceremonial route, but for other complex reasons as well. All eviction efforts by the state have failed in the long term because vendors are resolved,

and they always return. This is depictive of vending in similar locations within the city of Accra. What is the way forward – for vendors, for officials, for longer term city planning in African cities?

Findings indicate a readiness for conversations on the incorporation of informality in the AME with some wider thoughts for Accra. As planners propose, the first step is to develop a policy on informality through an inclusive methodology and open/sincere conversations. Also, municipalities must establish a presence within vending spaces not just as law enforcers but more importantly, as action-research partners with vendors to co-create functional models for smooth incorporation of street vending activities into city spaces and spatial plans.

Planners are senior officers in Ghana and therefore have other administrative tasks. This limits planner's ability to be physically present within these spaces. Like the city of Cape Town's Violence Prevention through Urban Upgrading (VPUU) Programme, the city of Accra can establish a programme or a unit committed to sustainable integrated urban open spaces in dialogue with informal actors to shape their future cities. This unit/programme will advance research-based experimentation of 'planned vending' in open spaces in Accra. The inclusive planning objective can also be attained through collaboration with educational institutions. This research showed that there was a disconnect between planning education and practice. Since planners complained about not having enough understanding/exposure to the informality situation while in school, planning, sociology, geography, and anthropology students can obtain experience by conducting these active engagements during their vacations as interns. Such partnerships may address this disconnect in some ways. These recommendations are not meant to resolve all the tensions completely because the challenges are systemic.

When vendors or their association leaders leave their work to attend municipal meetings, their wages may be affected, which becomes a disincentive to play governance and leadership roles for the benefits of all vendors. Municipalities must therefore devise innovative ways to reinforce partnerships with vendors. As noted from this study, vendors at the Ayawaso West section of the AME requested state assistance to organise. The organisation of vendors within the LaDMA and LEKMA sections made it easy for the state to engage and control vendors during the MGAW campaign. Therefore, it is in the state's interest to encourage vendor organising.

Further, vending enclaves that intersect multiple municipalities must be co-planned. This research observed vendors moving from one municipal section to another during the eviction process. In

the case of the AME, LaDMA, LEKMA, and Ayawaso West, municipalities must work together with vendors in the incorporation process when the time comes from designing, planning to the implementation stages. This raises interesting points about the nature of governance and the imagined benefits derived from decentralisation. Does this perpetuate different forms of governance splintering?

As noted, most planners were dissatisfied with their working conditions, including remuneration and planning structure. Innovation is impeded when one feels marginalised and criticised. To deal with the systemic issues at the structural level, planners, city managers, and the state must conduct a proper needs assessment to identify the key areas needing urgent attention. Further, since the public wage bill is overdrawn, the state can employ alternative income sources to supplement planners' salaries. This could include applying for project grants to attain development agendas like the SDGs, Paris Agreement, and Agenda 2063. However, the state must determine the Terms of Reference of such externally funded projects, not donor partners. Planners can be compensated as project coordinators and executors. The Ghana Institute of Planners (GIP), Land Use and Spatial Planning Authority (LUSPA) and Municipalities have a vital role to play.

This study has contributed to our understanding of how street vendors navigate spaces against and in response to formal logics within the Accra Mall Enclave (AME), by extension locations with similar characteristics in Accra and other African cities. Even though the state can effect change, the state is not a homogenous/unified entity. The individuation triggered by the psychological tensions faced by planners/state actors reveals the state's role in this mode of urbanisation.

The results reveal the blurred lines between what is considered formal and informal, and in so doing legal and illegal. It highlights key issues that planners, city managers, and policymakers must consider if commitments to sustainable development and harmonious cities are to be realised. Findings show that street vendors not only quietly encroach but also engage in nuanced politics, including the performative use of existing processes that legitimize access and tenure. Findings point out that even street vending is becoming an option for the educated and state actors (and wider society) need to let go of stereotypes. This study contributes to Southern theory by providing evidence from the city of Accra. Finally, to academia, findings show that a section of planners feel it is time for Ghanaian planning education to focus on Southern practice through a sustained partnership with the Physical Planning Departments (PPD) at the municipalities.

In conclusion, the planning practice must be more humane and relatable to the masses. Planners in Accra, in Ghana, and the global South, must acknowledge their shifting role from officers who give orders to one that facilitate the planning preparation and enable the execution process through deliberations and collaborations with the actual planners of the city. Street vendors may find themselves in a state of permanent temporariness, yet they practice active waiting through which they invent avenues to navigate state bureaucracy. Uncertainty is a characteristic feature of contemporary urbanisation and city planning in the global South. As Roy (2005) advice, informality must be approached as a conceptual tool, a mode of practice, rather than a segment of the economy. Hence built profession professionals, academics, policymakers, and urban actors must think experimentally and approach the urban as an exploratory odyssey.

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APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW GUIDE
VENDORS

Exhibitors

1. Why did you choose to be part of the exhibition?
2. Where is your main location?
3. Did you pay to be part of the exhibition?
4. How did you know about this exhibition?
5. How do you see sales at the Accra Mall?

All Vendors

1. How is business?
2. What do you sell? Why this product?
3. How long have you been in the business?
4. Why did you start this business?
5. How long have you been selling here (AME)?
6. Why did you choose to sell here (AME)?
7. Where were you before you came here?
8. What were you doing before you started this?
9. Do you work alone?
10. Is this your own business?
11. What is your educational background
12. In terms of earnings, is the business able to sustain you?
13. Where do you get your products/goods from?
14. How did you start your business?
15. How much money did you start your business with? Start-up capital
16. Have you had any interaction with the municipality?
17. Do you pay tolls or anything to the government?
18. Are you part of any association/group?
19. What is the best time for your business?
20. Do you still see yourself doing this business here in like a year or two?
21. What are your desires/needs?
22. When do you come to work and close?
23. How did you get this location? Did you have to apply or pay something? What was the process?
24. Is this the only thing you do or you do something else aside this?
25. Where do you store your things?
26. Where do you live/sleep?

Eviction

27. How did the eviction happen (2017 & MGAW 2021)?

28. Has the eviction affected you in any way?
29. What do you think about the evictions?
30. What can government/municipality do to help your business?
31. I heard they will be giving you this yard, will you go there if they give it to you?
32. Do you think you will get a space here (yard) when they start sharing?
33. Were you aware of this eviction? Did they notify you? How did you hear it?
34. Were you here in 2017? Were you affected by the 2017 eviction? What happened?
35. So what are your plans now?

PLANNERS, STATE/MUNICIPAL OFFICIALS, AND LECTURERS

1. Please tell me a bit about your educational and work background
2. What role can we as planners play in the informality situation - street vending
3. What do you think is limiting us from implementing your recommendations?
4. Do you plan for informality at present (including livelihoods)?
5. Should we incorporate informality/vendors into our planning/plans? Why? (If yes) how can we do this?
6. In your view how can we transcend informality? 24% of the Ghanaian labour force work on streets (World Bank, 2021) yet the local government by-laws prohibits street vending, it is an offence by law. Do we think we can attain inclusive, sustainable cities in Ghana through our current planning model?
7. Do you collect tolls from the AME?
8. Do you think that vendors and informal sector actors should be part of the planning process, e.g. planning/policy meetings?
9. Are vendors/ and informal sector actors currently represented in decision making process? How?
10. In 2017, Vendors were asked to move to the trotro station but somebody sacked them instantly. What is the way forward?
11. Even though the National Urban Policy (2012) made recommendations to incorporate informality, the strategic policy of government did not consider that. Their interest is to formalize the informal sector. Any thoughts?
12. Are our planning institutions training planners for 21st century African cities or for European cities in Africa? Do you feel school prepared you adequately for what you are confronted with on the job?

Evictions

13. Why the eviction?
14. What do you think about these evictions?
15. Do you think this is a sustainable approach?
16. How did the “Make Greater Accra Work (MGAW)” come about?
17. Were vendors consulted or included in the decision making for MGAW?

18. Is there any document/policy about the MGAW initiative?
19. What made you approach the AME in the way you did? It seems to be quite different from the other areas.
20. When you confiscate vendors goods what happens? – City Guards

Lecturers

1) Planning education informs planning practice. Are we training our planners in light of the current urbanisation trends happening in Africa or are we using the Eurocentric model. Will the current models/practice help us attain SDG11?
2) Do you think that we should incorporate informality into our planning system? Why?
3) What are your thoughts on evictions and the current MGAW initiative?
4) Should informal sector players be at the policy formulation table?

City Galleria – Private Sector

1) This is a relatively new development. Are you satisfied with how things are going on within the AME?
2) Some vendors are of the perception that your facility is part of those influencing the evictions. What do you have to say to this?
3) How can the municipality support your business to grow within the AME?

Pedestrian

1) How do you see what is happening here – street vending/evictions?
2) What are your thoughts on these evictions?
3) What are your recommendations?

Customer

1) Do you usually buy from here?
2) For how long have you been using this route?
3) What do you think of the evictions
4) What are your recommendations?
5) What is your back ground?