

LEVERAGING ICT AND INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE IN THE NIGERIAN FLEA MARKET BUSINESS

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ABSTRACT:

This study is an exploratory investigation of the role of ICT and indigenous knowledge in the relative success of “Flea” Market vendors in Nigeria in spite of the close proximity that bites into their pricing and patronage. Observation and interviews techniques were used to elicit information from vendors selected through stratified and convenience random sampling techniques. The information were subjected to qualitative (rational logical) analysis. Even though quite a lot of these vendors have no higher than a high school diploma, most of whom are women, they somehow manage to survive the crunching economic meltdown happening all around them and despite the close proximity competition. The explanation for these are found to be in the way the traders apply their indigenous knowledge (IK) for conflict resolution and mediation, methods of production, and training, plus their simple ICT gadget, the cell phone, for customer relationship management, product promotion, and access to resources (family and political). It was indicated that since each major Flea Market has its own strength in terms of product specialty, ICT resources like cellphones, website and other related facilities showcase and developed to showcase advance and IK, as well as the strength and market opportunities of each market to create opportunities for economic development and tourism to Abeokuta, among others.

Keywords: *Flea Market, ICT, Indigenous Knowledge, Trade Group, Kampala, Competition.*

1. INTRODUCTION:

“Flea Market” has become a major characteristic of informal economic sector in several developing countries. The Informal Economic Sector has been described to encompass everything not under the control or regulations of the government, including the “invisible, irregular, parallel, non-structured, backyard, underground, subterranean, unobserved and residual” businesses [Ekpo and Umoh, 2011, p. 2]. Muljarijadi and Thio (2008) describe it as, “making the best of bad situations.” Others call it “shadow economy” (Schneider, 2002, p. 7) because it is not accounted for in the GDP, which hurts the economic growth of the country (Loayza, 1997). Studies, such as Loayza (1997) and Schneider (2002), have demonstrated that huge size of informal sector is a characteristic of a developing country. For instance, the size of Nigeria’s informal sector was 57.9% of her GDP in 1999/2000, third largest in Africa, behind Zimbabwe (59.4%) and Tanzania (58.3%), while that of South Africa was 28.4% [Schneider, 2002, pp. 6-7]. Most developed countries kept their share of this shadow economy below 20% (Japan 11.1%, United States 8.8%) of their GDP in 1999/2000 [Schneider, 2002, pp. 8-9 & 18-19]. Among these informal businesses are the flea markets. The flea markets in Nigeria is however different from those in other countries in terms of the structure. The focus of this paper is the fact that the structure in Nigeria is contrary to the usual economic or business strategy. This contrast is shown in Brookes’ (2011) suggestion in “How to Make BIG Money at a Flea Market”, where he said that “not to sell the same things other vendors offer, because the competition can **reduce pricing and visits to the stand**” [Brookes, 2011, p. 2].

In Nigeria, in particular, Abeokuta, groups of products, called Trade Groups, are located in very close proximity to each other, that is, side by side. For instance, one would easily find Trade Groups like, live stock group, meat parts group, soup ingredients group, grains (gari, elubo, rice, beans) group, cloths group, and so on, with the traders within each trade group, side by side. This is quite unlike flea markets elsewhere, where they are organized so as to minimize close proximity competition. The minimization of the proximity in these organized markets was done in order to ensure their survival. However, in Nigeria, one finds vendors of the same (homogeneous) products (i.e. Trade Groups, as they are called) together, side by side, with very high competition, yet surviving together! A logical assumption is that some peculiar indigenous knowledge must have accounted for this survival. If so what are these peculiar indigenous knowledge. What is the role of ICT in this survival? Can modern ICT be leveraged to optimize the survival and growth of these markets? In the light of this, the study investigates the structure and operation of flea market in Abeokuta to determine how they survive contrary to the inference from the traditional economic theory.

2. OBJECTIVE:

The general objective of this study is to understand how these “Traders” survive in the business despite their close proximity with special respect to the role of their indigenous knowledge (IK) and use of simple ICT devices. Specifically, the study aims to discover a way to help them advance further by answering questions such as how are the flea market vendors/traders able to

compete without “killing” each other? How do they resolve any conflicts arising from such close proximity? How do they attract and keep customers? What “banking” system do they operate and what are the roles of indigenous knowledge and ICT in achieving these?

3. LITERATURE REVIEWS:

CONCEPT OF FLEA MARKET

The real origin of the label, “Flea Market”, is unclear. Some claim it originated from France, from “marché aux puces,” meaning “market with fleas” [Arkansas Department of Parks & Tourism, 2010], and some thought it originated from what the Dutch call their market, Vlie Market, meaning Valley Market, and later mispronounced as Flea Market [Mike, 2011].

Though, there are many theories regarding the origin of this label, the meaning is clear enough, in any language or culture, to distinguish it from other types of markets. They are generally open-air, sometimes indoors (as in some other countries), a little bit organized but still not strictly regulated by the government. Flea Markets are called Traditional Markets in Nigeria. In the Philippines, they are called Tiangge (aka Sidcor) and open every Sunday [Tan, 2010]. In Pune, India, they are called Juna Bazaar and open on Wednesdays and Sundays (Shetty, n.d.). They are large, open-air markets with stalls and counters (some with doors and some without doors) to display varieties of products, some of which usually would attract flies, or fleas, hence the name; “Flea Market”.

Literatures discuss Indigenous Knowledge Management (IKM), ICT, and the flea markets. None discussed how IKM and ICT can be or are being leveraged in the Flea Market sector in Nigeria. It has been noted that huge size of informal economy is often associated with developing countries (for example, Loayza; 1997 and Schneider; 2002). Informal economy accounted for about 57.9% of its GDP in Nigeria between 1999 and 2000 [Schneider, 2002].

ICT AND INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE AND INFORMAL ECONOMY

Seach CIO (2003) defines Information and Communication Technology (ICT) as, “an umbrella term that includes any communication device or application, encompassing: radio, television, **cellular phones**, computer and network hardware and software, satellite systems and so on, as well as the various services and applications associated with them, such as videoconferencing and distance learning.” There are numerous articles on the benefits and impacts of these devices in various areas of human endeavor, such as in education [Agyeman, 2007], healthcare [Okonji, 2009], government [Ajayi, 2003], both formal [Vickery, Sakai, Lee, and Sim, 2004] and informal [Opiyo and K’Akumu, 2006] economic sectors, just to cite a few. People around the world are now leveraging the power of these devices to accomplish great feats that were impossible or nonexistent just a few years back. For instance, a multimedia projector (an ICT device) was used by a UNFPA-supported program to make the people of Iganga district of Uganda become more aware of maternal mortality issues, [Musoke, 1999]. In Senegal, a powerful presentation (PowerPoint and a multimedia projector) against Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) by a local NGO, TOSTAN, tapping their indigenous knowledge (IK) and empowering local community group of women from villages like Malicounda, made possible the illegalizing of FGM in Senegal in 1999, affecting some 200 communities in Senegal and neighboring countries, [Easton, 1998 & 2001]. The Ethnos Project (2011) created a website showcasing the artifacts and history of the Australian Aborigines while preserving their traditional way of life [Oppenheimer, 2011].

There have been clamors from all corners of the world to use ICT in the management of our knowledge, especially, Indigenous Knowledge (IK), [Jain, 2006]. Akinola (2009), however, submitted that, structures for knowledge sharing and utilization in Africa are nonexistent. While acknowledging Indigenous Knowledge, Qhakijane (2009) presented a comparison between African and Western knowledge paradigms. He described western knowledge paradigm as a *pyramid* where at the top is the “highly refined knowledge” with surrogates of the original ideas flowing down to the bottom where one finds the real experience. By contrast, he described the African knowledge paradigm as *concentric* with the traditions and ancestral teachings at the center and knowledge transmission and transfer through “song, dance, daily chores, rituals, play and mentoring by elders”. The challenge, according to his is the difficulties in the attempt “to integrate and adapt African Knowledge Management System (KMS) into the modern technologies.” (Qhakijane, 2009; Ekpo and Kimoh, 2011) categorized the Informal Sector into three sub-sectors: a) The Informal Productive sub-sector, b) the Informal Service sub-sector, and c) the Informal Financial sub-sector. The Flea Market sector encompasses all these three sub-sectors. They further stressed that, “Informal economic activities in Nigeria encompasses a wide range of small-scale, largely self-employment activities. Most of them are traditional occupations and methods of production,” [Ekpo and Kimoh, 2011]. This underscores the role of Indigenous Knowledge that is being applied to sustain such “traditional occupation and methods of production” in the production of Kampala and Aso Oke in Nigeria.

4. METHODOLOGY:

The exploratory survey research design was adopted in this study. The population consist of market operators and officials in the flea market in Abeokuta. Data were from collected 8 main markets in Abeokuta (i.e. 4 periodic and 4 daily fleas markets respectively). Thus stratified and convenience sampling techniques were used to select respondents from a sample size of hundred respondents.

Table 1: Classification of Market

S/N	Period	Markets
1.	Periodic Flea Market	Kuto
		Omida
		Iberekodo
		Lafenwa
2.	Daily Flea Market	Ijaye
		Sapon
		Oke Saje
		Itoku

Source: Field Study (2013)

Then within each of the trade group (stratum) in the markets, convenience sampling method was used to select each of the respondents.

The main instruments for the collection of data from the traders and the officials of the Abeokuta Chambers of Commerce, Ibara, Abeokuta, Ogun State, were interview and observation of the organization and operations of the informal market or the Flea Market in Ogun State with the aid of checklist of questions. The questions are uniform, interactive and deliberately simplified to be answered by anyone, irrespective of level of education.

In order to become familiar with the market leaders and to reduce chances of interview refusals, preliminary contacts were made through attendance at the:

1. Meeting of the State’s market leaders, called by the wife of Ogun State governor and

2. Meeting called by the Iyalode of the Yoruba.

After these preliminary contacts, systematic information gathering started with visits made to eight major flea markets in Abeokuta, Ogun State, to observe and interview the traders so as to understand their products strength, spread and operations. The visits were made on different days and not on scheduled market days, to minimize chances of interview refusals and avoid business disruptions. Also, some of the officers of the Trade Groups (Iyaloja, Iyalate, Iyalaje and Iyalode) were interviewed when information received from the traders were considered insufficient or inadequate or to confirm earlier information. This was facilitated by the use of contact persons within the trade group interviewed.

5. FINDINGS:

5.1 Organizational Structure of Flea Market in Ogun State, Nigeria:

Administrative Organization

Flea markets are spread over 20 Local Governments and three Senatorial Districts of Ogun State. According to Abeokuta Chambers of Commerce; (2013), some of these are periodic, day-time or daily markets located in Abeokuta. In the Ogun Central Senatorial District, there are 64 major Indigenous (Flea) Markets. Each market is headed by a female leader called Iyaloja and a male counterpart called Babaloja with their respective executive staff. There is also a male market's coordinator and the enforcer of rules, called Oloriparakoyi.

Iyalaje, Iyalate and Iyaloja are all traditional market chieftaincy titles. Iyalode, the head of women in a Yoruba kingdom, is also a traditional chieftaincy title, all conferred by the paramount King of that kingdom. Each major market, however, has its own (local) Iyalode, and then one Iyalode for the whole kingdom. The organizational structure below is however not a reporting, but an organizational relationship, they represent a group of elders, like a Governing Council with no controlling power, but as overseers, charged with the peace and smooth running of the markets. This is based on their belief in the traditional proverb that, "So long as there are elders in the markets; no evil should befall the children." Thus, any person at any level has access to the Iyalode, who is their Grand Matron, Facilitator and Enabler. She is also the liaison between the state's market women and the government machinery. Within each Flea Market are Trade Groups. Each Trade Group is then headed by a Trade Group Leader, as shown in the Figure I below.

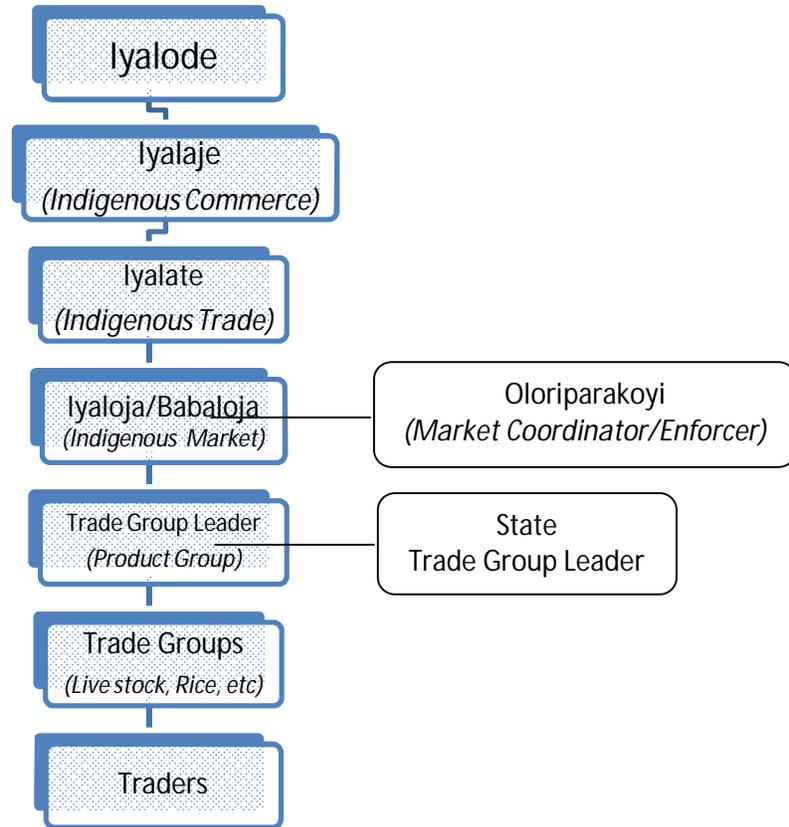


Figure 1: Flea Market Organizational Structure (Field Study; 2013)

Trade Groups

Below, in **Table 2** is the list of some of the most popular products found at the flea markets. There are however, other products like fried foods: fish, akara, plantain, yam, and many more, that are neither structured in Trade Groups nor found side by side. All trade stalls attract a small fee as charged by their respective local governments.

Table.2: List of Traded Products

	<u>Trade Groups</u>	<u>Traded Product Components</u>
1	Livestock	Goat, Ram, Sheep, Cow
2	Birds	Chicken, Hen, Fowl, Turkey, Pigeon
3	Grains and Flower	Beans, Cassava Grain and Flower, Yam Flower, Rice
4	Vegetable	Okra, Leaves (Water, Ugwu, Igbo, Bitter, Spinach)
5	Soup Ingredient	Tomato, Onion, Pepper, Salt, Locust Beans
6	Cloth and Dress Material	Usually new ones, locally and foreign made
7	Jewelry	Bracelets (Ankle, Waist, Wrist, Ear, Neck and Head)
8	Medicinal Items	Plants and Animal Parts
9	Arts and Crafts	Locally Produced in different varieties

Source: Field Study (2014).

Days, Periods and Regularity of Markets

There are four major periodic Flea Markets (i.e. Kuto, Omida, Lafenwa and Iberekodo, in that order and then cycle back) in Abeokuta with a four-day rotation (five-day rotation counting from the day of the market), as shown below in figure 2:

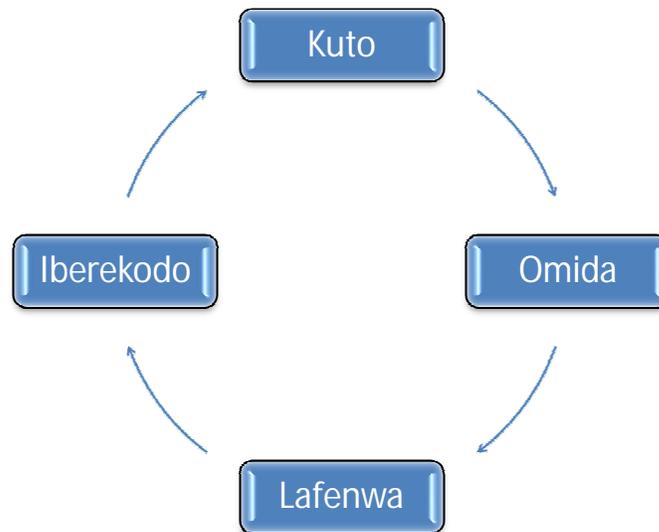


Figure 2: 4-Day Market Cycle

The diagram above shows that a market will take place, given that a certain market has taken place, by simply following the arrows around the circle in the established order of occurrence. Even though market days are cyclical, some traders, nonetheless, hold markets every day. The difference between periodic market days and others days is the level of congestion of crowd and traffic.

The other major markets, Ijaiye {further divided into three market areas: Oja Ale (evening), Oja Aaro (morning), Oja Gbamgba (open)}, Sapon, Itoku and Oke Saje, hold daily. Even though, according to the traders, they are also supposed to be periodic, they hold daily, nonetheless, with the attendant implication for congestion of crowd and traffic, though not as bad as the periodic markets. There are a couple of other night markets and other smaller daily markets scattered around the city and its environs which were not part of the study.

5.1. Characteristics of Traders

The cloth traders have the highest level of education; some had university, level education. The soup ingredient traders have the lowest in term of education. Some have no formal education. The livestock traders range from no education to university level. The reason for having university-educated traders in any of these markets was traced to the family Trade Group line, either taking over from their elderly mothers and fathers, or simply following the trade of their ancestors. Even though quite a lot of these vendors have no higher than a high school diploma, most of whom are women, they somehow manage to survive the crunching economic meltdown happening all around them and despite the close proximity competition.

The explanation for these are found to be in the way the traders apply their indigenous knowledge (IK) for conflict resolution and mediation, methods of production, and training, plus their simple ICT gadget, the cell phone, for customer relationship management, product promotion, and access to resources (family and political).

Application of Indigenous Knowledge (I.K) In production processes:

The traders also apply indigenous knowledge in their training and methods of production, the knowledge passed down from their parents, who got it from their parents, and so on. This is what Qhakijane (2009) describes as the concentric nature of African knowledge paradigm, that is, the way knowledge flows within the African family structure. The followings are some examples of areas of application of I.K by the traders in flea market in the manufacturing process of their products which Ekpo and Umoh (2011) describe as “traditional occupations and methods of production”:

- ***Kampala***: A particular type of indigenous clothing material and design which was first manufactured by a family in Kemta (one of the local areas in Abeokuta), and still in existence today with majority of the Kampala manufactured (dyed) there. Another dyeing center, for distributors and wholesalers, is very close to Itoku market. These Kampalas are on sale mostly at Itoku market. Knowledge of production method was passed down within the family.
- ***Aso Oke***: Another traditional clothing material and design is Aso Oke, also called Aso Ofi (analogous to the western Tuxedo in terms of its symbolism, and hence rightly called Aso Oke – the top dress/clothe). This clothe is indigenous to the Yorubas from Iseyin, and requires training in cloth weaving, and it can be being learned from one’s family or another family.
- ***Livestock***: All else, but cows. The cow traders are usually found elsewhere and mostly by themselves, and are not part of the study. Most of these traders are descendants of livestock traders, the knowledge of which was passed down through generations. The livestock are on sale at almost any market, good bargains, is however found to be at Kuto and Lafenwa Markets than other markets surveyed. Though there are some apprenticeships going on in some areas, it is not very prevalent. A very important knowledge passed down through generations is the fact that sheep are not to be tied or roped down, but to be let loose. It is believed that they would die otherwise This knowledge is being, jealously guarded within the family. Those outside the family seldom have access. Beside, each family seems to be contended with “protecting” its own indigenous knowledge or trade/family secret.

5.3. Indigenous Banking System: Generally, the traders do not patronize the conventional banking system that much, because, as they claimed, they found it hard to get loans from these banks. In alternative they, operate Esusu or Ajo which operates differently and separately from their respective Trade Group organizations. The Esusu (or Ajo) membership admits any interested trader, not necessarily from the same Trade Group. These “organizations” have their own “banking” procedures, rules and regulations. This is what Ekpo and Jimoh (2011) discussed and described in their “Informal Financial Sub-sector”. For example, penalties for late Esusu/Ajo contribution payment could either be suspension of one’s payout for a period or a fine of anywhere between 20% and 50% of the periodic contribution. A fine for tardiness to a meeting is from ₦20 to about ₦100. It is from these fines that members are able to obtain loans not available to them from the conventional banks. It should be mentioned here that no financial protection (pension or insurance) of any kind was noted. This is a typical characteristic of the informal sector [Loayza, 1999, p. 3]: lack of access to some social services, including insurance and police protection.

Marketing Strategy: Some traders complained that the way these traders are currently organized, in rows and side-by-side, provide inequitable market opportunities. This is because potential customers would usually stop at the first few traders for what they want. The traders down the row do not have the same opportunities of being patronized by a given potential customer as the traders at the entrance. The survey shows the followings in connection with this apparent conflict arising from inequitable market opportunities and sources of conflicts.

- **Approach:** It was observed that some vendors do, engage in aggressive approach (such as grabbing or pulling of customers, business card seizures, customer snatching and impersonation) by vendors. Most customer do not appreciate this approach. Thus, customers who are turned off by such aggressive approach often move to other vendors along the line. Vendors at the entrance, who engage in this type of aggressive approach, therefore, lose customers to other vendors down the line.
- **Special Need or Request:** Customers also may require a special type of product. For instance, a customer may be looking for an all-white ram, or one with a special look to it, or a particular cloth design, or just some special kind of product, like a special kind of gari (cassava grains) at Iberekodo Flea Market. So, customers will keep moving from one vendor to the other, regardless of the former's approach.
- **Price:** It was also observed that price is sometimes the major determinant (of course, there are other factors other than price to make a sale) of patronage. So, since the vendors sometimes try to outbid each other, a bargain-hunting customer would keep moving until the price is right. It is common for customers to first survey the price level before deciding whom to patronize.
- **Business Cards:** As strange as it sounds to most people who were informed about this study, these vendors, even the live stock vendors, do have business cards which they give to customers with the hopes that they would return or that the cards be passed to other potential customers. Consequently customers do visit particular vendors based on previous contacts and pleasant experience, regardless of the location of the vendor.

5.4. Conflict Resolution and Mediation.

Conflicts do occur arising from customer "stealing", card seizure, impersonation, etc. These are typically resolved in two ways;

- a. The vendors all concurred that "patience conquers all". Even when a vendor engages in "stealing of customers" from another vendor, they try to settle the dispute amicably (as in the family) by exercising patience with each other's exuberance. This is not always the case as they sometimes fist-fight. The *patient solution* is to ease by the family connectedness of members of the trade group.
- b. Any conflict (customer stealing, business card seizure, impersonation, etc) that cannot be resolved by the *patient solution* is referred to the *local* Trade Group Leader first, and usually stops there with the guilty party sanctioned, sometimes with fines or trading privileges suspended for a period. Otherwise, it goes to the *state* Trade Group Leader for final resolution. Some trade groups simply utilize the services of their Oloriparakoyi (the Coordinator/Enforcer) and will usually end there. Resolution or mediation procedure at each level, utilized traditional jurist prudence – Traditional or Indigenous Knowledge of justice, to keep it all in the family so that, it never has to go to the modern courts system. After all, "we cannot have elders in the markets and the children not feeling safe". Besides, it is believed that "you cannot go to court and be good friend thereafter".

5.5. Use of ICT Device, the Cell Phone:

About 90% of the traders have at least one cell phone (the other 10%, mostly older females, found the phones too technical) which they generally utilize to

- Communicate with family and friends
- Communicate with customers (most of the traders have business cards, too)
- Promote and market their products
- Have access to political and Trade Group resources. One such access was a meeting called by the wife of Ogun State governor of all “Iyalojas” and “Babalojas” in the State, followed by another meeting, the next day by the Iyalode, the Grand Matron.

Most of them simply use the phone only to make and receive calls. Very few know how to send or receive text messages. And fewer still (the cloth traders) know how to receive multimedia messages from their distributors or wholesalers. Very few have phones with camera, and fewer of those know how to use it. The traders use no cash registers in their daily business transactions, but their mental resources and simple hand-held electronic calculators to compute sales, and they are very accurate and very rarely wrong. None of them has a computer in the store or stall, though some have at home, especially those with college children.

5.6. Willingness to pay for services

Survey showed that traders are willing to pay for some services. This becomes obvious from their response to the questions posed to them to elicit some reactions to the call by the Iyalode that the traders should be alert to the sanitation of their surroundings which could potentially become a major health hazard. In contrast to the once once-a-month general sanitation directives of the State government, as this study learned, the traders do conduct general cleaning of their surroundings about five times a month: every Thursday and the last Saturday of the month. They however complained of the lack of necessary support in terms of adequate supply or provision of garbage bins and regular collection process. This demonstrates a sense of duty and solidarity among the traders. This might be one of the explanatory factors of their survivals.

6. DISCUSSIONS:

It is clear from this survey that Indigenous Knowledge plays a very vital role in the survival of the family trades. Trade knowledge was passed from grandparents to grand children, employing no conventional method of teaching or training that would require modern tools. One such knowledge knows which livestock to tie or rope down and which ones to let loose to roam around. This also exists for methods of production and their “banking” system. They also apply their Indigenous Knowledge in the mediation and resolution of conflicts by keeping it all in the “family”, this obviates the need for conventional courts. This is in contrast with what obtains in most other flea markets as observed earlier.

Secondly, contrary to the perception of most people about the Flea Market vendors in Abeokuta (as illiterates), some of them are actually college graduates, just continuing in their family trades, the knowledge of which had been passed down through “daily chores, rituals, play and mentoring by elders,” as Qhakijane (2009) already observed. Most of the Flea Market vendors (including the uneducated ones) do actually utilize the power of cell phones, either to contact families and customers, promote their products, or simply for networking with other traders and commercially relevant political machineries. With the use of cell phones, the traders are now able to reach more customers from their shops, thereby reducing the need for hawking. However, the use of those phones is still at a low level in terms of the number of functions that are still in used as found in Akintunde (2013). For example, there exist opportunities now to show these traders how to share photos of their products through their phones. Only a few casual Informal Sector traders are

currently doing this to advertise, promote, and market their products. Though some of the traders are not able to distinguish written characters, but they can recognize figures in a picture. This could enhance their marketing strategy. In fact some cloth distributors are already using this multimedia texting capability of their cell phones to share the arrival of new designs with their customers, the cloth (Kampala) traders. The idea is to help them leverage more of this device's power in their trades. A trend in this direction is the broadcast of the different days of each markets, what may be bought in them and their price on radio. Such are already in use in Uganda and Senegal with astonishing results [Masuko, 1999].

Another major insight from the survey is that knowledge is still being hoarded by the traders. These are trade secrets. This is not likely to further the expansion/advancement of the market. It is thus suggested that it would be a good idea if some of this knowledge is captured and stored somewhere in a knowledge database for other people to appreciate how these vendors manage their businesses. Such knowledge database could be designed to store the organizational structure as it exists in these markets as well as to preserve their traditional or indigenous knowledge, and their way of life. This type of arrangement already exists in Australia, capturing and preserving the traditional and indigenous knowledge of the Aborigines. Now they have a website showcasing their artifacts, their traditions and their stories [Oppenheimer, 2011].

It was also noted that despite readiness to pay for service, no form of insurance exists against economic disaster through death, accident, adverse change in health, or business as also observed by Loayza (1997) concerning most of informal economic sector contributors in other economies. This suggests a need to organize an insurance scheme and other social services that could be consumed by these Flea Market vendors to protect themselves, especially in terms of healthcare interventions, for which they are willing to pay. Doing this might facilitate, (rather than empower) and foster the use of their indigenous knowledge and the little ICT gadgets such as the cell phone, which they already have at their disposal, while at the same time preserving their traditional way of life.

7. CONCLUSIONS:

This paper has explored how traders in "flea" market are able to compete without "killing" each other; how they resolve any conflicts arising from close proximity; how they attract and keep customers; the "banking" system they operate as well as the roles of indigenous knowledge and ICT in achieving these. The explanation for these are found to be in the way the traders apply their indigenous knowledge (IK) for conflict resolution and mediation, methods of production, and training, plus their simple ICT gadget, the cell phone, for customer relationship management, product promotion, and access to resources (family and political). It was, therefore, suggested that since each major Flea Market has its own strength in terms of product specialty, ICT resources like the cellphones, website and other related facilities could be developed to advance and showcase IK, as well as the strength and market opportunities of each market to create opportunities for economic development and tourism to Abeokuta, among others.

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