



Critical Challenges of Street Users in Inner Cities

—The Case of Kariakoo, Commercial District in Tanzania

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Abstract

Urban streets in developing countries are essential in meeting the needs of city populations. Unfortunately, Kariakoo's streets cater largely support business and accessibility, with no consideration for other activities such as walking, resting, skating, and biking. Due to poor design which creates congestion and competition for space among different users. The study focused on exploring the challenges these streets face in rapidly growing cities, with the Kariakoo commercial neighborhood as a case study. The study revealed the crucial opportunities these streets provide, but their effectiveness may be hindered due to inadequate design to accommodate multiple functions within the streets. The study identified various challenges across the four streets, including competition for space use among different users, poor drainage system, traffic congestion, lack of pedestrian walkways, inadequate parking spaces, and narrow streets. These issues were more prevalent on Swahili and Sikukuu streets from noon to 3 p.m., while Congo and Nyamwezi streets faced these challenges from morning till evening. As the urban population grows, these challenges will persist, particularly with no designated spaces for street vendors to conduct their business. Poorly designed streets have planning and development implications, including traffic congestion, competition for space, narrow streets, and delayed journeys, mostly during noon hours. The study suggests managing street use through time allocation or time-based space use zoning as the only solution.

Subject Areas

Urban Design and Public Spaces

Keywords

Streets, Use Pattern, Inner City, Challenges

1. Introduction

Urban streets have been primarily planned and designed for mobility. However, recently it has been observed to accommodate street vending, food trucks, markets, artistic interventions, political expressions, comfortable benches, and green spaces transforming into a public space (Schönfeld & Bertolini, 2017) [1]. Urban streets, as the backbone of urban infrastructure, serve a diverse array of functions, including transportation, recreation, socialization, and reproduction (Jin & Othengrafen, 2023) [2]. As the arteries of the city, urban streets not only facilitate transport and commuting, they are also placing for recreation and connectivity on different scales, with a commitment to enhancing urban mobility and liveability (Jin & Othengrafen, 2023) [2].

The space does not have a core meaning: its multiple meanings are determined by the activities and subjectivities of the diverse groups of people who make it, through the phases of planning, development, management, representation, exchange, and use. As a response to the crisis of vacant space, temporary use is a flexible method of spatial production, which cannot be separated from the processes of production and consumption of space, with their political economic, and cultural dimensions (Lefebvre, 1991 [3]; Harvey, 2010 [4]). Space is usually pictured in contrast to time, so it is considered as not containing time, but lively space contains time within it, Space and time are essentially one (Agnew, 2011) [5]. This is also true of space in physics, Einstein's theory of relativity shows that space and time are not independent from each other but inseparable (Agnew, 2011) [5]. Although the inseparability of human space and time is not the same as in physics, they both contain a common aspect because they equally show the limit of our usual concepts of space and time (Agnew, 2011) [5]. The theory of relativity means that space and time are not absolute nor are they basic elements for describing the world (Agnew, 2011) [5].

A Theory of Good City Form by Kevin Lynch (1981) [6] is a product of the research for patterns that effectively augment the interrelation of human purpose and city form. Accordingly, it defines the form of a city as the spatial arrangement of people doing different things. This definition comprises both the social activities and the physical features that encompass and modify them. The aim of this theory is simply to describe how settlements work rather than to evaluate how they ought to work. This theory is model of cities as ecological systems, as fields of force, as systems of linked decisions, or as areas of class conflict. Lynch puts his own theory of good city form, which can produce good settlements, qualities that allow "development, within continuity, via openness and connection". He presented five dimensions of performance vitality, sense, fit, access, and control.

Temporary use of space was the fourth form of flexibility, which showed the limitations of price adjustment, supply reduction, and functional conversion. It was especially used in retail, which suffered from a phenomenal number of empty units and an existential concern for the future of the high street (NEF, 2010) [7].

Temporary use of empty space became an instrument of filling the gap, an interim measure until the improvement of the economic cycle (NEF, 2010) [7].

Space utilization is a measure of whether and how space is being used. The utilization rate is a function of a frequency rate and an occupancy rate. The frequency rate measures the proportion of time that space is used compared to its availability, and the occupancy rate measures how full the space is compared to its capacity. Utilization rates can be assessed in terms of both actual use and predicted use (Smg, 2006) [8]. Cities are changing and expanding faster than ever before. The world is becoming more interconnected while rapid societal, cultural, technological, and economic transformations are breathing uncertainty and insecurity to the size we cannot control or regulate. In this new status, urban interventions must be re-evaluated to seek a more resilient and flexible method to respond to the emerging needs of new land uses, new space availabilities, and new city dwellers (Koyama, 2017).

In contemporary Chinese towns, dynamic street vendors are a common presence, often occupying spaces where many people frequently walk, leading to functional changes to the streets (Sun, Bell, Scott, & Qian, 2019) [9]. Vending activities in urban streets are important for giving life to urban areas and increasing the activities of people in urban streets (Sun, Bell, Scott, & Qian, 2019) [9]. In China, studies show that there is a positive spatial autocorrelation between the intensity of urban land use and vibrancy or vitality in urban areas (Xia, Yeh, & Zhang, 2019) [10]. Rapid population growth creates pressure on transportation systems and public spaces in urban areas (Schönfeld & Bertolini, *Urban Streets between Public Space and Mobility*, 2016) [11].

Tanzania is urbanizing at a fast rate of 4.7%, and 30% of the entire population lives in urban areas (Layson & Nankai, 2015) [12]. The human settlement vibrancy is made from planned land uses, marketable activities, and improvement effects. Urban voids exist due to land underdevelopment and negligence of development controls by landowners but they can be planned to improve the built environment (Msuya & Mosha, 2020) [13]. Since 1967, Tanzania's cities have become home to more than 30 million new residents [14]. Dar es Salaam primate city has experienced the largest increase in population. Between 2002 and 2012, its population grew by more than 6 percent per annum, with over 70 percent of this increase being counted for by in-migration from other regions [14]. Dar-es-Salaam is expected to grow by 85 percent through 2025 [14]. The changes in building functions in Kariakoo affected the building components and positively transformed the area into a mixed-use with working and living at the same time (Ombeni & Deguchi, 2009) [15]. The unguided urban transformation affects public realms and the walking environment in inner cities (Mosha & Mosha, 2012) [16].

The increasing popularity of street redesigns highlights the intense competition for street space between their different users (Ropars, Morency, & Poblete, 2021) [17]. It's the role of designers and professionals in construction to ensure

public safety in the urban built environment and there is a correlation between the built environment and public safety through crime statistics (Park & Garcia, 2019) [18]. The urban design practice must be informed of how the spatial morphology of an area can impact value economically and socially (Narvaez, Penn., & Griffiths, 2012) [19].

2. Methods of Data Collection

2.1. Method

The study used Kariakoo as a case where an in-depth study was done on four streets which include Congo Street, Nyamwezi Street, Swahili Street, and Siku-kuu Street. For the purpose of consistency and clarity, the research objectives used for the study are applied in this chapter. This section analyses the challenges existing within the streets and causes with respect to time intervals. In order to have a meaningful information chart, photos are prepared so as to provide a clear picture of how street users suffer. This section intends to discuss the fourth objective of this research which is based on analysing challenges existing within the streets.

2.2. Location of Kariakoo in Ilala Municipality

Kariakoo is one of the wards in Dar es Salam City, Tanzania. It is accessed by the major trunk roads such as Morogoro Road, Nyerere Road, Uhuru Road, and Kawawa Road. The whole area of Kariakoo is part of the Dar es Salaam CBD which functions as a Commercial hub for the country.

3. Presentation and Discussion of Results

Research findings indicate that there are some advantages or benefits of multiple uses of spaces in areas with shortages or limited spaces like inner cities.

3.1. Benefits of Current Space Use

The following are the opportunities for the multiple uses of space with a shortage of limited space. The study has discovered some opportunities due to the use of urban streets within inner cities, whereby some of the opportunities are for individual benefits and others are for the government.

1) ***Increases revenue to the municipality:*** as street use increases within inner cities, it also increases the revenue to the government, given the fact that the increase of users within the streets is leased to those involved in the business. The more sales increase the more the government collects taxes from the street users, especially street vendors, shopkeepers, and motorists.

2) ***Maximum utilization of space within the streets:*** streets within inner cities are accompanied by maximum use of street space available, given the fact that many people are attracted to the CBD which leads to concentration and competition for limited space available, where each space within the street is

used accordingly unlike to suburbs.

3) ***The vibrancy of the streets from morning to evening:*** multiple uses of street possess critical mass of people that gives good urban places their vibrancy. A mixture of people and activities makes streets become active throughout the day. More activity on the streets improves security by increasing eye on the street, meaning that more people are out on the streets deterring crimes simply by being there.

4) ***Employment opportunity for people:*** many street vendors have engaged themselves in the informal business, where they find a place to support their lives, therefore streets space within inner cities has increased the living standard of many people in urban areas.

3.2. Critical Challenges of Current Space use

Also, the research discovered a number of challenges emerging as a result of street use patterns in inner cities.

3.2.1. Lack of Pedestrian Walkways in Inner Cities Streets

Study shows that streets have no clear separation between pedestrian walkways and Motorist, hence pedestrian is forced to use street shoulders and carriageway for their movement. During the morning time, Congo Street becomes less congested whereby pedestrian mostly uses the carriageway. During Noon and evening time, the movement within Congo Street become worse for pedestrian since all part of the street has been taken by street vendors. Also, during this time pedestrians contest for space with street vendors and motorists. As known that streets are supposed to have separate walkways because streets within urban areas are public spaces that contain different activities such as social interaction and leisure. Street is perceived as being for people whereby people feel comfortable walking down the street, even if there is a motorist. But in Kariakoo's streets, people are not comfortable because there is no separation between the walkway and the motorized way.

3.2.2. Narrow Street in Inner Cities

Historically Kariakoo was designed as a residential neighbourhood with narrow streets and a grid iron pattern. The transformation of Kariakoo from a residential to a commercial neighbourhood resulted in mobility challenges due to narrow streets. According to field observation done in Congo, Nyamwezi, Swahili, and Sikukuu Street shows that Congo Street becomes narrow during noontime. During this time streets become narrow due to high concentrations of people and activities within a street. The size of the street is constant but due to the occupation of spaces by street users such as street vendors, therefore street becomes narrow and sometimes it becomes like an open-air market. Pedestrian sometimes compete with vehicles so as to reach their destinations and sometimes they have to wait for vehicles to pass and then they proceed.

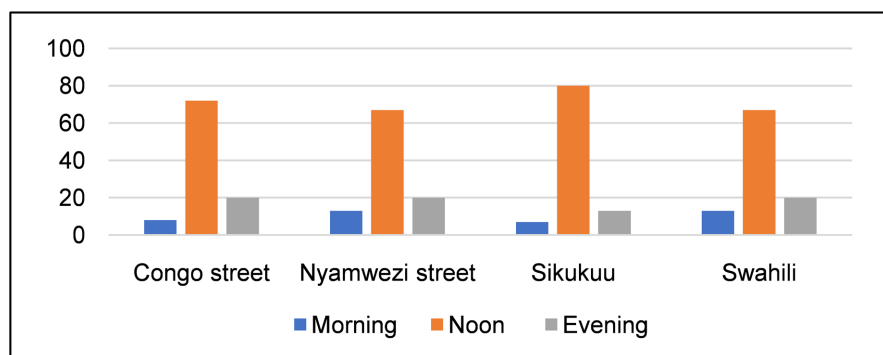
The study also shows that almost all streets become narrow from 12 am - 15

pm when streets become occupied by many activities and uses. During this hour street vendors take every part of the street and use it to display their wares on the roadway and others display along the shops. This situation makes streets narrow due to concentrations of those activities that have occupied the street space from the shoulders of the street to the carriageways. **Figure 1** illustrates more on the time of occurrence for narrow streets in Kariakoo.

Figure 1 indicates the percentages of responses on the time in which streets become narrow. The figure shows that 72 percent of the respondents said that streets become narrow at Noontime when a lot of activities are taking place. While 18 percent of responses indicate that streets become narrow during the evening when people get back to their destinations, and 10 percent said that streets become narrow in the morning hours. Although the inseparability of human space and time is not the same as in physics, they both contain a common aspect because they equally show the limit of our usual concepts of space and time (Agnew, 2011) [1]. This indicates that in the noon hour street become congested and a lot of crimes such as pickpocketing occurs in this time. **Plate 1(a)** and **Plate 1(b)** illustrate more.

The analysis further indicates that the inner-city streets in Kariakoo are unique in the following aspects

- 1) Gridiron pattern of streets which increases the connectivity within the commercial neighborhoods.
- 2) Narrow streets with limited capacity compared with the number of street users.
- 3) Presence of temporal use of street spaces to accommodate more than one activity. This is evidenced by temporal structures such as tables for selling goods by petty traders.
- 4) High density of people compared to automobiles. Pedestrians form a dominant group using streets.
- 5) Dominant use of on-street parking due to limited spaces.
- 6) Kariakoo streets are predominantly gray spaces with a lack of green spaces.
- 7) The intensity and type of street activities vary from time to time.



Source: Field survey, 2019.

Figure 1. Time of occurrence of narrow streets in inner cities streets.



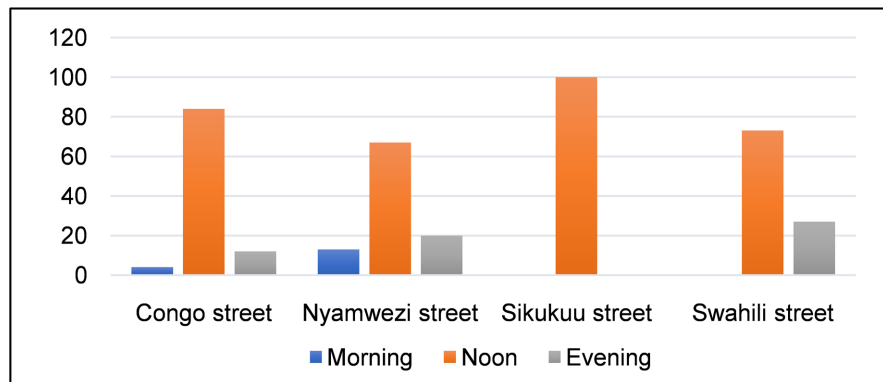
Source: Field survey, 2019.

Plate 1. Narrow streets in inner cities streets.

3.3. Space Competition among Users of Urban Streets

Study shows that 100 percent of response indicate that, in Congo Street, there is high space competition from different users. Competition for space in Congo Street starts from morning to evening but mostly from 12 am - 15 pm when there is a high concentration of people in the street. 100 percent of the response indicates that people prefer using Congo Street since it's the center for business in Kariakoo, and it offers affordable goods at low price. The study shows that Congo Street has many activities and users which takes place at a different time interval. Due to this street becomes congested and leads to competition and conflicts between the users of the street. The respondents also said that street vendors have taken part of the street leaving very little space for people to pass, and sometimes other street vendors are forced to stand on the carriageway waiting for the customers and in so doing, lead to competition within the street. The study also shows that Nyamwezi Street experiences high competition in street space due to the high number of people and activities conducted there. 60 percent of responses from street users indicate that space competition mostly occurs from 12 am to 15 pm when the majority of the street users occupy the spaces for different purposes. But in the case of Swahili and Sikukuu, there is average competition for space unlike Congo and Nyamwezi Street. Study shows that 100 percent of the response indicate that space competition within Sikukuu Street do occur in noon hours because this is the time when most people uses the street.

On **Figure 2**, indicate 84 percent of the respondents stated space competition occurs in noon hours (12 am to 15 pm), while 12 percent were of the opinions it occurs in the evening. 4 percent of the respondents said space competition occurs during the morning. Noontime occurrence can be attributed to the fact that this is the peak hour of the day when many people use Congo Street generally,



Source: Field survey, 2019.

Figure 2. Times of occurrences of space competition.

the study shows that 81 percent of respondents said that space competition within the street normally occurs during the noon hours, and this indicates that competition for space is influenced by time.

The analysis further indicates that the inner-city streets in Kariakoo experience space competition in the following aspects.

- 1) Gridiron pattern of streets which attract motorist users with perceived easy permeability due to increased connectivity within the commercial neighborhoods.
- 2) The presence of a wide variety of street users including pedestrians, cyclists, petty traders, car users, and others with no separation from each other increases the competition within the street.
- 3) Time determines the user of the street and the type of competing street activities. The number of street users differs from time to time in a day which further determines the intensity of activities within the streets.
- 4) Streets act as market space for goods sold in adjacent shops.
- 5) Multiple activities with the streets.

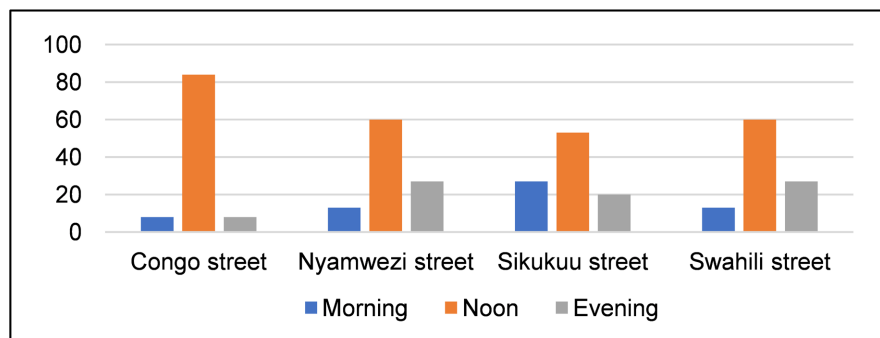
3.4. Inadequate Parking Space in Inner City Streets

According to field surveys and observations in Congo, Nyamwezi, Sikukuu, and Swahili streets, there are inadequate parking spaces to accommodate vehicles within a street. Street vendors have occupied almost all parts of the street especially vendors who usually use wooden structures, and have invaded the parking area. Street vendors have taken the parking space by putting their structure on those spaces which become difficult for drivers by the time they want to park their vehicles. Taxi drivers have to wait for the vendor to move their wares so as to leave space for vehicles. The study has also found that the action of drivers to wait for vendors to move their ware in the parking spaces causes many challenges within the street such as congestion and delay of the journey to pedestrians. During noon time parking spaces become inadequate due to the fact that street spaces become occupied by street vendors and they compete for customers

because this is the time when more pedestrians visit the streets for shopping.

Figure 3 indicates the percentages of responses on the time in which parking spaces become inadequate in the streets. Opinions from the street users shows that 64 percent of the users responded that, parking space becomes inadequate in the noon time (12 am to 15 pm) when many activities and people occupy the parking spaces, while 19 percent the opinions it occurs in the evening. 15 percent of the respondents said parking spaces become very challenging in the morning hour. This indicates that the peak hour when parking spaces is challenging is noon time, given the fact that many activities and people do concentrate and congest the street. After people have occupied the spaces, especially street vendors parking spaces become very challenging. Most streets with inadequate parking space are Congo Street, Nyamwezi, and Swahili Street, as seen in **Plate 2(a)** and **Plate 2(b)**.

The analysis further indicates that the parking facilities and services in inner-city streets of Kariakoo experience the following aspects.



Source: Field survey, 2019.

Figure 3. Times of occurrences of inadequate parking.



(a)



(b)

Source: Field survey, 2019.

Plate 2. Drivers struggling for parking spaces in inner city streets.

1) Kariakoo being the national commercial hub attracts a wide range of street users including car drivers who need parking facilities or parking spaces.

2) On-street parking practices have become common on most of the streets creating challenges for pedestrians.

3) The presence of small plots in Kariakoo has created difficulties for developers to design and provide parking within the building spaces. As a result, vertical parking facilities are not available within Karikoo commercial neighborhoods.

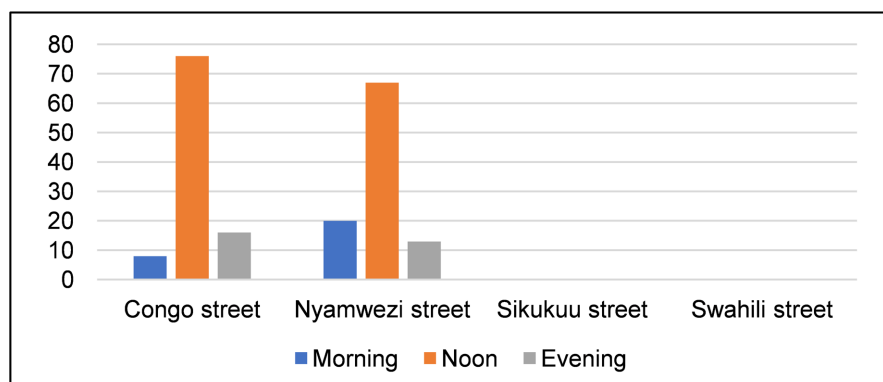
4) During peak hours, pedestrians dominate the streets and on-street parking becomes difficult.

5) Street spaces have become market spaces used by informal traders creating challenges for motorized users and parking spaces.

3.5. Crimes in Inner Cities Streets

Pickpocketing is the most common crime in Congo Street, where ladies are the most victims. A study shows that 74 percent of respondents singled out that crimes in Congo Street do happen from 12 a.m. to 15 p.m. when congestion and concentration become high (Figure 4). Ladies have to hold their bags and wallets at the chest so as to protect themselves from crimes. All these happen due to the fact that there is no proper organization of street vendors and poor design of streets which separate pedestrians from other users. A study shows that 64 percent of respondents said Congo Street is not safe to use, Due to this fact even the level of comfort become less to different street users especially pedestrian who is the main victim of pickpocketing. As a matter of fact, Congo Street not be in such a situation since the street in the CBD should be safe and comfortable to use, since many visit this street for purposes such as leisure, social interaction, and shopping.

The study shows those urban crime occurs in Congo street is pick pocketing, where 76 percent of the respondents singled out that pickpocketing most occur during noon time (12 am to 15 pm), while 16 percent said the pickpocketing most occur in evening hour the time people go back to their home. And 8 percent



Source: Field survey, 2019.

Figure 4. Times of occurrences of urban crimes in inner cities streets.

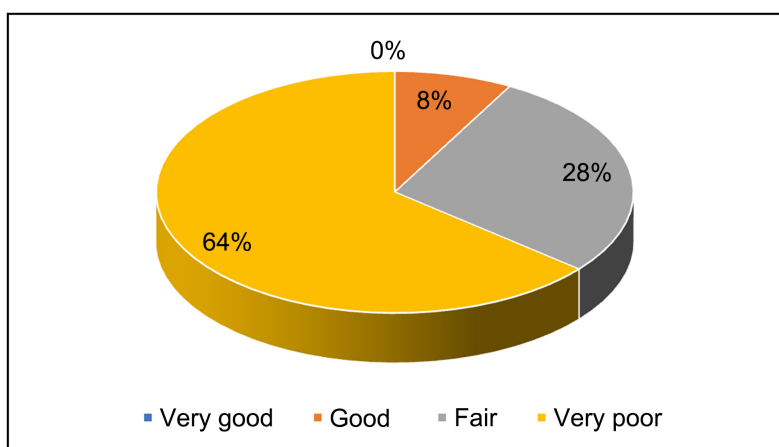
of the respondents stated that pickpocketing occurs during the morning. This shows that crimes can be influenced by time, since during noon hours people concentrate in the street, and given this fact, people do take the opportunity of congestion to commit crimes as the study tells that the majority of the users are attracted to the street using noon hours.

Also, **Figure 5** indicates that 64 percent of the respondents singled out that, the level of security within Congo Street is poor due to the increase in population within the street which leads to improper organization of activities. Therefore, this congestion and concertation of people in the street lead to urban crimes such as pickpocketing.

3.6. Mobility Problems in Inner Cities Streets

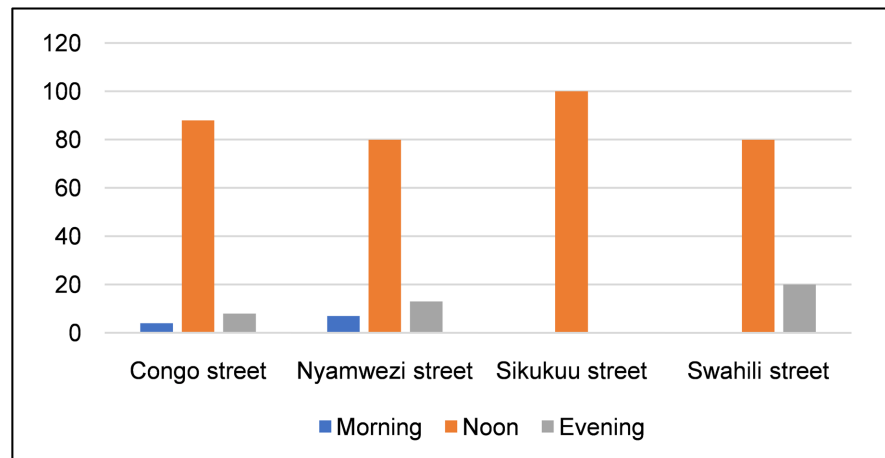
Study shows that, with the increasing concentration of population and activities in a street, particularly during noon time, congestion has become a major problem in Congo Street. Whereby the main cause of congestion in Congo Street is due to increase in urban population with a high number of activities conducted within there. According to field observation in Congo Street, pedestrians and street vendors move from different areas to Congo Street for business and shopping. Street vendors believe that only Congo Street is a place with opportunity to sell their goods. Mostly congestion occurs at each junction of Congo Street because they are the entrance point for the customers and street vendors. The study also has identified that, time has an influence on urban street utilizations as most of the activities and challenges do occur during noon time (12 am to 15 pm). **Figure 6** indicates the percentages of respondents at the time of occurrence of street congestion.

Many respondents singled out congestions as being one of the problem rearing competition for space within Congo Street. Respondents said that sometimes street tight even space for movement become inadequate to all users. Study shows that 88 percent of the respondents said congestion normally occurs in noon



Source: Field survey, 2019.

Figure 5. The level of security in Congo street.



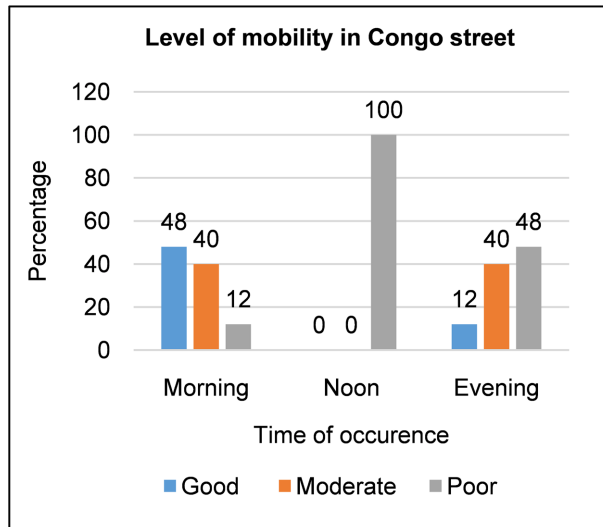
Source: Field survey, 2019.

Figure 6. The level of congestions in inner cities streets.

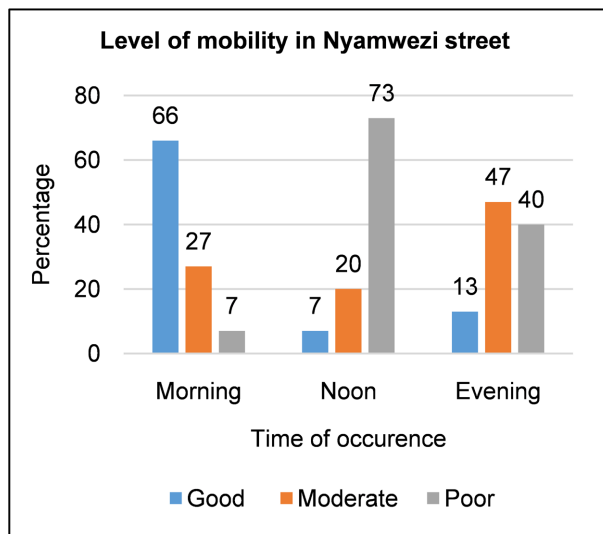
hours, most of the street vendors move from other street to Congo Street for potential customers who come to shop there as seen in **Figure 6**. This situation reduces the level of mobility within the street and some create conflicts between the users. **Figure 7** indicates the level of mobility within Congo, Nyamwezi, Sikukuu and Swahili street as well. Level of mobility is different from one street to another whereas Congo street have poorest level of mobility which normally occur from morning to evening, but mostly in noon hours (from 12 am to 15 pm).

On **Figure 7**, numbers on the vertical axis represent the percentage in terms of mobility, while the horizontal axis represents different time of occurrences. The figure indicates 100 percent responded said level of mobility is poor in noon hour (12 am to 15 pm) and the rest of time mobility is moderate. Level of mobility within Congo Street is poor compared to Nyamwezi, Sikukuu, and Swahili street, this is due to high concentration of people and activities conducted within the street. Other streets such as Sikukuu and Swahili level of mobility are moderate during the day and good in the morning hours. This indicates that the mostly visited street in CBD is Congo Street and Nyamwezi given the fact that both offer business opportunity to users and affordable goods.

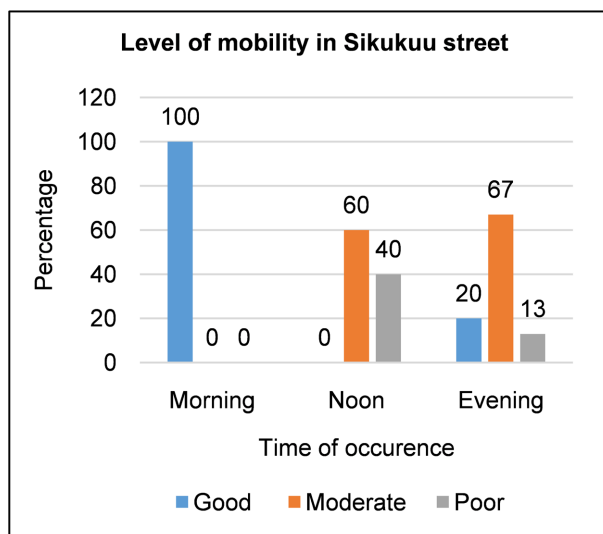
Activities that have occupied large area in Congo Street are apparels and shoes business which almost each part of the street has this business. Congo Street attracts a lot of traffic as evidenced from the fact that it is a main street with good business opportunity since then. This traffic is viewed as potential customers by street vendors and tax drivers who then get attracted to wards the street from other streets within kariakoo. Another source of congestion in Congo street is due to the fact that, Government have started to register street vendors which gives them freedom to display their wares everywhere, as they view Congo street as no man's land where they do not require any permission for use. Because of this perception, a large number of vendors have occupied all section of Congo Street where they have put up wooden temporary structure from where they operate. Some of them who do not have temporary structure to move along the



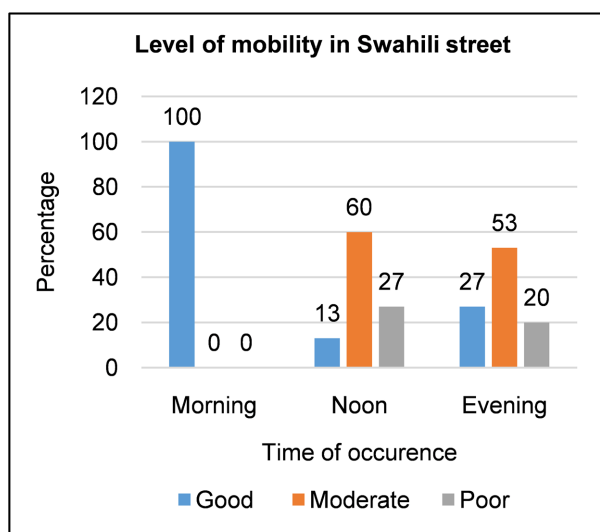
(a)



(b)



(c)



(d)

Source: Field survey, 2019.

Figure 7. The level of mobility within Congo, Nyamwezi, Sikukuu and Swahili street.

street from one part of the street to another, and others are just standing on the carriage way waiting for pedestrian to come. Some of the street vendors compete for space with other street users by occupying carriageway using wheelbarrows and handcarts on which they carry their goods. This action inhibits the movement of pedestrians and vehicles within Congo Street (**Plate 3** and **Plate 4**).

3.7. Limited Capacity of Drainage Channel in Inner Cities Streets

Study shows that, Congo street have poor drainage system whereby the street become flooded during raining season which reduce the mobility and level of comfortability to street users, especially pedestrian and street vendors. The drainages are small in size that do not allow runoff water to flow effectively in which water exceed the size of drainage channel and overflow on the carriageway. The drainage channel available in Congo street are open which means people dispose their waste on the channel and block the flow of water. Most of the street vendors have put up their wooden structure on the drainage channel which sometimes blocks the flow of water. From these scenarios, study has find that poor street design has many effects to livelihood activities and users of urban street (**Plate 5**).

During raining season, street users have to wait until the flow of water on carriage way become over. This action inhibits the movement and sometimes leads to delay of journey to pedestrian who are in hurry. Pedestrian and street vendors do stand in front of the shops along the Congo Street where they rest while waiting for over flow of water to complete.

Study also shows that sometimes blocked channel of drainage retains storm water which stagnates, realising bad smell to the street.



Source: Field survey, 2019.

Plate 3. Vendors with handcart.



Source: Field survey, 2019.

Plate 4. Vendors with wooden structure.



Source: Field survey, 2019.

Plate 5. Small drainage.

4. Conclusion

The study has also shown that the streets play an important role in operations of urban centres, but such a role may be weakened if the street is not well designed to accommodate the multiple functions it ought to serve. Kariakoo's streets are not well designed to accommodate multiple functions as street is supposed to serve, rather it is only used for business and accessibility. The other functions such as resting, walking, skating and biking are not applicable due to poor design with no separations of motorized and non-motorized traffic. The concentrations of people within Kariakoo's streets which lead to congestion and competition for spaces from different users have influenced the perceptions that Kariakoo's streets offer good business opportunity and affordable goods to people. The study further shows that people have different perceptions about the streets e.g. as a place which can be accessible to all by any kind of activities, whereby this view is mostly propagated by people involved in the informal sectors activities—the majority of whom are street vendors. The study has also shown the Planning and development implications of poor street design which include traffic congestion and competition for spaces among users, narrow streets, and delayed journeys where most of these challenges occur during noon hours (12 am to 15 pm).

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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