

# Ogbete Main Market in the Historical Development of Enugu Metropolis: a Contemporary Appraisal (1909 - 2020)

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## Abstract:

Trade and markets are aspects of economic activities of man in every section of Igboland. Ecological variations among different communities had enveloped societies to come together to trade, first through barter, and later the invention and introduction of currency by the colonial masters. Ogbete market, one of the earliest developed markets in Igboland, grew to meet people's demand for goods and services. This development was as a result of colonial infrastructures which gave rise to intra-ethnic and inter-ethnic transactions. These activities in the market attracted migrants, thereby increasing the growth and advancement of the market. Unfortunately, this well-structured market was affected by the outbreak of the Nigeria – Biafra War (1967 – 1970). During this debacle, Ogbete became an abode for the Nigerian military occupationary force, and a sex resort for raping and molesting Biafran ladies. Some parts of the market even got burnt. However, sequel to the undaunting entrepreneurial spirit of Enugu indigenes, Ogbete was not only rebuilt after the war, but has continued to significantly assist in the development of Enugu metropolis in many ways. Apart from serving as a melting pot for viable intergroup relations and economic succor, it is not without certain negative impacts within its location, including some emergent challenges. Retracing and reconstructing the evolutionary growth and the strategic importance of Ogbete main market demands detailed reliance on both primary and secondary sources, to aid historical objectivity. In doing so, both qualitative and quantitative methods of inquiry received the pride of place.

## Keywords:

Market, Metropolis, Development, Colonial, Coal, Entrepreneur

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## 1. Introduction

The strategic importance of Enugu city has continued to manifest even before the eventual birth of the Nigerian entity in 1914. Traced to the discovery of coal and its accompanying variegated British colonial exploitative depredations, migrations and forced movement of human populations resulted. Development as a multi-dimensional process involving the reorganization and re-orientation of the entire

economic and social systems, manifested through another spectre at the end of the Second World War, when through a controversial parameter, some countries were labeled as underdeveloped, less-developed, developing, third world, developed and the South. Developing nations in exhorting their citizens towards development. (economically, socially, politically and educationally) did formulate policies and implement programs towards this end. In tandem with this, development represented the capacity of a state to increase its human resource with the aim of achieving higher involvement outcome and benefits, even from participatory governance.

Undoubtedly, post-independence, Nigeria's effort at development has remained chequered and slippery. However, sustained emergent realities on the discordant tunes posed by the disparate Nigerian nationalities have not helped either. The Igbo, as one of the three dominant ethnic nationalities remain historically, commercially endowed and socially, extremely mobile and adaptive. On commercial endeavours that include investment, buying and selling, dynamic dogged perseverance, frugal fiscal management and prebendal entrepreneurship, lie its survival instincts through its pre-colonial and post-colonial period, and even after the three years annihilative invasion of the Igbo enclave between 1967 to 1970.

Amongst the major markets that has helped to create and sustain the Igbo story in Nigeria, is the *Ogbete* main market; reputed to have sustained Enugu city, the primordial capital of the defunct Biafran Republic. The Igbo appear to believe succinctly in the words of Todaro which stipulates that; it is incumbent upon communities to remain attractive places that can stimulate new economic opportunities through all sorts of economic cycles, hence communities that are intentional in supporting their businesses have better economic and social results than those that do not [1]. Though available historical information may classify *Ogbete*'s inception and evolutionary growth to be circumstantial, one cannot completely dismiss the art of trading as the need to fill the gap of human needs and resources. Nonetheless, that desire not only drives the market system, but equally stimulated the inception of *Ogbete* Main Market in the first place, growing to be the largest and busiest in the city.

Cities always seek to expand and diversify their tax bases. The expansion of an existing business is beneficial to the owner, the workers, the locality and even stakeholders far and near. Business engagements bring additional tax revenue and provide citizens with new employment opportunities. Buying and selling, more so in a large market like *Ogbete* Main Market, apart from promoting social conviviality and cohesion, promotes liquidity and veritable cash circulation for environmental economic wellbeing and the development of Enugu metropolis. Exploring its inception, structure and facilities, its merchandise, its objectives, achievements and challenges *vis a vis* vision and mission, including its partnership with the many autonomous Local Government Structures of Enugu State, as well as other markets within and outside the state, would generate veritable information for gainful interrogation and improvement.

Paucity of credible information about *Ogbete* Main Market is not only nauseating to researchers, economic analysts and developmental technocrats, but primarily tends to dissuade the populace on the importance of indigenous economy generators that elicit ingenious entrepreneurship and commercial engagement, in place of the unavailable white collar jobs. This study presents a beautiful historical amalgam of the account of coal exploitation in Enugu with *Ogbete* Main Market as its eventual fallout.

## 2. Methodology

Though certain secondary information proved useful during the course of this research, the foundational base is the primary sources. Deliberately stepping back to the earliest times, the colonial period, the post-colonial era, up to the present, the part played by the large-scale coal mining in Enugu, the eventual growth of the market, the burning of the market during the war, and its eventual growth today present an important complementary referral.

Be that as it may, this study may not holistically produce credible results, devoid of exposure to certain formulated theories that are designated towards explaining and predicting certain phenomenal issues, hence extending existing knowledge within the limits of critical bound assumptions. To be successful in selling, one must know a great deal about certain concepts and perceptions that exist in the minds of potential customers. At this juncture, certain economic and social theories appear relevant.

Maslow, in his 1943 paper, *Hierarchy of Needs*, introduced five levels of human needs in order of priority. The psychological needs are first, followed by safety and security, social belonging, self-esteem and self-actualization. Having huge value in selling, this theory expects sales people to know and explore basic prospects in a buying situation through asking questions. Consequently, certain background information of a potential customer on the Maslow Pyramid is an important part of a seller's emotional intelligence. For instance, some car buyers may be most concerned with their basic survival or security, and so would rather prefer an economically dependable vehicle, even as some simply buy cars for social esteem reasons [2]. On the other hand, the Buyer Resolution Theory, also known as the 5w's, provides a simple framework of questions sales people must address if they are to attract a prospective buyer, since these nagging determinants guide, propel choice and decision. The questions are – 'why should I buy?' 'what should I buy?' 'who should I buy from?' 'what's a fair price?', and when is a good time to buy?' [3] These questions equally relate to the five common categories of buyer concern. In essence, if a sales person can effectively answer all these questions in an optimal way for a prospect, he should be able to close a sale. This consumer decision-making process is the common steps buyers go through *en route* to a purchase. This process begins with need recognition, which triggers a buyer to consider a purchase. He then moves to information search and development of a consideration set. After evaluating options on priority or crucial criteria, he purchases based on best value solution, and finally assesses value relative to expectations, only when such customer has put the product or service to use. Understanding this systematic approach buyers use, can actually assist sellers from the beginning by suggesting needs or desires buyers may not even recognize [4].

However, patterns of developmental approach may be dictated sometimes by size, resources and relative comparative advantages [5], hence cities, communities and nations could become wealthy through different trajectories. Be that as it may, significant aspects of the buyer – seller platform on which this study is predicated relates in tune with the Greater Fool Theory. One can always profit from investing as long as there is a greater fool than oneself to buy the investment at a higher price; hence one can make money from an over-priced stock, as long as someone else is willing to pay more to buy it [6]. *Ogbete* Main Market as the largest market not only within Enugu metropolis, but within Enugu State, has viably continued to provide a

reliant economic base where traders and consumers from other local markets buy from, but has continued to empower that environment infrastructurally and fiscally.

### 3. Concept of Marketing

Economic empowerment is a broad concept that entails changing the living condition of people in terms of their capacity to create, as well as access goods and services necessary for the collective well-being of the society for which they are members. Markets, in providing an efficient platform towards the successful allocation of limited resources, more so in today's economic times, not only ensures the most use of one's limited resources, but supports fairness in availability, affordability, investment, entrepreneurship, need and choice. Along this pedestal, Philip Kotler *et al* goes further by opining thus:

*Marketing is everywhere. Formally or informally, people and organizations engage in a vast number of activities that could be called marketing. Good marketing has become an increasingly vital ingredient for business success. And marketing profoundly affects our day-to-day lives. It is embedded in everything we do – from the clothes we wear, to the websites we click on, and the apps we see.[7]*

Societies could still suffer greatly under the burden of economic backwardness, even with abundant available natural advantages or generosity, once recourse is not taken towards investing in dynamic ventures. Innovation and advertising as veritable aspects of marketing, in creating proper visionary direction, promotes the exponential sales growth of brands [8].

Through an explanatory simplicity, with due reference to basic human daily needs, Seth Godin pointing a direct accusing finger on marketers behavior, dismissed them simply as liars, citing their deceptive inclinations aimed at profit-making [9]. Marketing and Servicing occupy the final phases of production and manufacturing, which forms a compact value chain. A positive effect is created in an economy through market, by bringing supplier and customer together in a facilitated exchange transaction. Though markets transact both structurally and online, their conventional approach remains almost the same. *Ogbete* main market remains a tangible edifice, not devoid of certain paraphernalia of a 21<sup>st</sup> century commercial institution. The law of supply and demand, remains the invisible hand that regulate the interaction of households and firms, leading to desirable market outcomes, so long as governments remain cautious of impediment and unnecessary interference through unregulated taxation [10].

Today, all over the world, from the Flea-markets and advanced super markets of the developed world, to the heavily-accessed infrastructurally-deficient conventional markets of many developing nations, the parallel linkage is in the area of timely provision of human needs under basic fairness. However, marketing as a concept is commonly misunderstood as an ostentatious term for advertising and promotion, though in actual terms, it extends beyond. As a function, marketing is an organizational set of processes for creating, communicating and delivering value to customers and for managing such relationship in ways that benefits the organization and its stakeholders [11]. Profit-making as the centerpiece of marketing, changed in the mid-1950s. Instead of a product-centered 'make and sell' philosophy, business shifted to a customer-centered 'sense and respond' philosophy; from 'hunting', marketing became 'gardening'. The job is not to find the right customers for your

products, but the right products for your customers, hence superior customer value [12]. Beyond the confusion created by extreme packaging on the part of the consumer, companies and even marketers/sellers go beyond the literal promises of specifications, advertisements and labels to provide reassurances. Through studying the consumer, the marketer influences both services, products, quality and prices, since information garnered are synthesized by the producer. The end-product output would always reflect the competitive engagement with other producers over customer patronage. Once need is strived in the customer, marketing is complete.

Historically, physical markets developed according to necessity, to assist a given population in sorting their immediate challenges of allocation of resources. Such consumption centers or transport hubs, before long, stimulate innovation. In Africa, this goes beyond needs provision and exchange medium to a channel of cohesion and inter-group relations.

#### **4. Ogbete Market in Historical Evolution**

The present Enugu metropolis is located and subsisting within a contiguous large expanse of land within the Igbo enclave of South Eastern Nigeria. Sited at Enugwu Ngwo and Udi, within an area naturally endowed with enormous hilly undulating plains, deep gorges and water courses, including detailed alluvial-supported extensive vegetation, the scenery remains alluring to behold. Relying on evolved values and the fallouts of pre-colonial intergroup relations, one could aver that the people did manage their lives well. Reports have it that the first notable external incursion into this area – a zone later referred to as the Milliken Hill was in 1909, though since the 1463 Portuguese trader's visit to what later came to be known as Nigeria, mission work had been in progress in both Calabar and Onitsha for many years [13]. With several British advance missions fully engaged in Igbo hinterland and economic explorations with intent on exploitation, a British scientist named Kitson later discovered coal within Udi/Enugwu Ngwo cuesta. Developing into a major mining district in the West African region by 1914, the mine began official production in 1915 [14]. Accounts have it that five years after Kitson's official discovery was communicated to his superiors in England, a contingent of Britons, led by Mr. W.J. Leck got attracted and hence equally settled there. They built their first temporary home in a mass of land covered by thick vegetation, situated on top of the ridge/upland expanse in the Enugu Ngwo area Leck also brought with him, a handful of labourers from Onitsha later, when it became certain that the indigenous inhabitants proved uninterested working in the mines. A greater number of these 'Onitsha men' came through the personal contact and directive of one Alfred Inoma, whose popularity and leadership skills eventually proved advantageous to the task. They erected portable mud houses on a spur 200 feet up the ridge for habitation, which soon acquired the name of 'Alfred Camp', but later as 'Coal Camp' [14].

Urgent and increasing labour demands spurred the colonial authorities to relocate the District Prison formerly at Udi to Enugu in early 1915, thus enabling the inmates to work in the mines. Thus the first occupants of the Camp, Mr. Alfred Inoma and his group, were aided by in-mates from Udi Division Prison in the mining of Coal, which was of great economic value to the British authorities [14]. Understandably, progressive and lucrative engagement in this project, attracted more people into this area who settled down, leading to the cluster of population near the mines. Consequently, resort to buying and selling in response to natural human needs progressed from mere part-time engagement to a productive planned investment,

meant to not only provide particular needs of these settlers, but an enterprise in wealth creation. Thus, as Enugu continued to receive British Colonialist coal exploitative revolutionary attention, it equally appeared a worthwhile “Eldorado destination” to many African migrant workers. Its urban status, coupled with population increase continued on the geometric lane, hence both space and availability of the increasing daily demands of the people proved a nagging challenge. In 1909, a virgin site called *Ogbete*, situated close to the later established University of Nigeria Teaching Hospital (UNTH), and the colonial mines, officially took off as a local market [15]. The aim of establishing this market was to provide for the Colliery mine workers; hence the first commodities sold there were food produce such as; vegetables, yam, rice, pepper, fruits, kola, firewood, Garri and even local palm wine, among others. Nnamoko went on to assert that the land was a virgin land owned by the people of Enugwu Ngwo [15].

Controversy however still persists on the origin of the name – *Ogbete*. The first version trace the name to one of the reputable South African miners who worked as a fore-man, named *Obwette*; hence *Ogbete* appears to be a corruption of his name. Another version however posits that the word ‘*Ogbete*’ means the presence or abode of a large expanse of ‘ete’ (palm wire twine) that abound in the first site of the market naturally [16]. Once established, in the words of Mr. Ogbodo, an Enugu Ngwo indigene;

*Merchants from far and near visited the market, and traded on items like; gun and gun powder, foodstuffs, gin, carbide, blankets, clothes and machetes, among others. The market opens at 6am and closes at 6pm, Monday – Saturday.*

*Operating under strict compliance, a trader or buyer, found inside the market any minute after 6pm, must pay a definite fine to the market authorities, though on Sundays, country folks are allowed to sell and display their wares, vegetables and food commodities at nearby street corners [17].*

Along this pedestral, Ojiugo stated thus:

*Women from nearby communities such as Ogui-Nike, Enugu-Ngwo, Amaechi and Okpatu were in the habit of leaving their bases early enough, so as to comfortably make it to Ogbete not later than 10am on daily basis, and they leave after 5pm. The town traders used to arrive in the market with their goods on their heads or on bicycles, and stream away again around 6pm. The market is always full of buyers in mid-morning and late afternoons. At times, there are 2,000 to 3,000 buyers in the market and there are always streams of people making their way to or from it, along the half dozen main paths. During an average day, probably not less than 20,000 adults visit the market [18].*

Rapid growth in business engagements before long, exposed *Ogbete* to serious accommodation challenges. Detailed proactive consultations and calculations led to the relocation of the market to its present abode in 1940, finally succumbing to the dictates of the Enugu Township Advisory Board. *Ogbete* provided an ample opportunity for the people of Enugu to have access to their wants and needs. Moreover, just as many people flooded Enugu in the 1940s to learn profitable trade, serve as apprentice traders, page to artisans and craftsmen, suffice it to remark that *Ogbete* market did not restrict its act to the marketing of only agricultural produce; other trade by artisans within the confines of the market include tailoring, blacksmithing, slaughter rooms, fashion centers (boutiques, hair salon, barbing salon,

cosmetics) electronics, mini restaurants, chemist stores, clothes and shoes apartments [19].

By the 1960s, *Ogbete* market has transformed into a notable commercial entity, just as it did not only continue receiving investment capital inflow from the politically strategic heart-throb position and status of Enugu metropolis, as the capital of the Eastern Region, but equally from the commercially famous and reputable Onitsha Main Market, which narrowed distance, products demand and availability, including experience, technical support and originality. However, Enugu as the Eastern Region's political capital, continued to maintain form, growth and development in the structural pattern of a non-commercial city, a well-planned and organized place of habitation for 'government workers'. Apparently, apart from the good number of people working in the various government offices and parastatals, a significant chunk of Enugu's metropolitan population have either one or more things to do with the lucrative coal-mining project in the city. The implication was that *Ogbete* was looked upon, and had no alternative than to provide for the varied needs of the locals, the learned government employees and the professional miners.

Between the 1940s and 50s, Urban authorities were only occupied with the allocation of spaces and the collection of rentage fees, while the stall-holders erected at best, semi-permanent half mud walls, wooden frames and thatch roofs; and since they cannot be locked up, the holders had to carry their goods away at night, and bring them again in the morning [20]. Veritable information has it that, in 1944, there were about 720 stalls in the market, which grew to nearly 1,500 by 1954, though within this number were a total of 90 bush huts arranged in lines, each possessing 6 or 8 partitioned stalls on each side. Stalls were grouped together according to the commodities sold. Ukwu opined further that, commodities were sold under a roof except yam, garri, rice and firewood, which were sold in the open, successful allocation of stall to any applicant, solely starts with thorough proof of uninterrupted tax payments of such individual to the Enugu tax Board [20].

*Ogbete* Main Market grew and thrived, until the fallout of the 1967 to 1970 Nigeria – Biafra war. The collapse of Nsukka on July, 11<sup>th</sup> 1967, threatened Enugu, Biafra's capital. At the battle of 'Amadim Olo', Udi fell to the enemy, who linked this gained ground with other positions it had under its control along Nsukka – Enugu area [20]. Following the continued Nigerian military offensive, *Ogbete* main market not only turned into a resortful abode of the Nigerian military, but a strategic center for the storage of ammunitions [21].

Elder Ugwu further alluded thus:

*While the Nigerian soldiers were camped within and even beyond the Ogbete axis, women and young girls were molested and raped there, except those between the ages of 9 – 15 years, because they were seen as kids. Young men were forcefully conscripted into serving the occupying force, hence people withdrew to neighboring communities like Awkunanaw for safety. Only children were allowed to sell cigarettes and hot drinks to the Nigerian military. The military had constant supply. military had constant supply of food stuffs/canned foods from the Government, thus were not under any dire need for trade. Just as some parts of Ogbete market was burnt down in 1968, Enugu hinterland communities started experiencing the nefarious random penetration of the Nigerian army contingents [22].*

Increasing devastation, hunger and death brought by the war situation within this area led to a high rate of Kwashiakor and other malnutritional deaths. Some women resorted to ‘Ahia-attack’ (illegal market engagements) across dangerous frontal conflictual lines of demarcation between the Biafran and Nigerian troops, towards sourcing salt, fish and other consumerables. Riverine areas like Anam, Omor and communities bordering Oji River, provided some comfortable opportunity [23].

While the war progressed, the mining of coal took off at Odagbor, later known as *Okaba* coal, which later became the Nigerian Coal Corporation, while the one in Enugu was known as the Biafra Coal Corporation, though at the end of the war, the two were merged [24]. The alteration, confusion, despair, misery and insecurity in the life of the Igbo during and the immediate post war period created an unimaginable suffering which triggered dogged entrepreneurship, community development and ingenuity, which it effectively applied against orchestrated oppression and marginalization. The Igbo were not only denied their money in the banks, the Biafran currency was equally declared illegal [25]. Unfolding events later proved that *Ogbete* market was not left out in this people’s survival mission.

Under General Yakubu Gowon’s controversial 3R recovery programme after the war, the Eastern Nigeria Market Authority which was established in the late 1970s [26], embarked on massive reconstructions of major markets in Eastern Nigeria, which included *Nkwo* Nnewi, Onitsha Main Market, *Ariaria* Market in Aba and *Ogbete* Market. Unfortunately, in the midst of myriads of reasons, accusations and counter-accusations, the Eastern Market Authority was reputed to have repaired only a little over 10 percent of the damages in all these markets [27]. Actual reconstruction in *Ogbete* market was done by the traders who survived the war, overtime. Lock-up shops were erected, though most traders still carried their goods to and fro, each day for fear that the war could come back.

The importance and benefits of business ethics and orderliness, more so in a market situation cannot be ruled out, hence the formulation of policies, laws or decrees to regulate the activities of both consumers and traders. Market Trading Associations which produced ‘organized trading or selling’ appeared on the Nigerian Scene from the late 1960s to the early 1970s [27]. The *Ogbete* Main Market Traders Association (OMMTA) was formed and registered in 1974 [28], with its first chairman – Mr. S.U. Anyanwu. Its head office or secretariat was located at Block PI *Ogbete* Main Market, Enugu. Other leaders after Anyanwu include; Ichie Ben (1973 – 1994) as caretaker, Amaechi N. Nwobodo (1994 – 2000), Chief Osy Peter Okoye (2000 – 2017), Hon. John Eze (2017 till date) [29], the *Ogbete* Main Market Trading Association (OMMTA) is composed of – the old motor park, the Rail line, the public toilet between *Mgbemena* street and the commodity section.

From all intents and purposes, the Eastern Market Authority found it easier relating and coordinating with the individual Local Market Associations in Igboland towards the encouragement of infrastructural development and the provision of social amenities. Both government and many private motor parks, road side mechanics and vulcanizers, including banks and the large Holy Ghost Catholic Cathedral, were all attracted near *Ogbete* site. Just as the market grew larger, relief sections were carved out and relocated from it as such; the fish market at Asata area of Enugu metropolis, Tinkers market at Coal Camp, though otherwise all marketing is done at the main site [30]. Currently, stalls are allocated by the Local Government Authority, who lease out such for a couple of years [31].

Before long, progressive and involving partnership condensed and produced a positive platform known as the ‘Market Masters’ that function as a unit, though operationally divided into commodity zones which traders dwell on – (Market Women Union, Union of Butchers, among others) [32]. Membership into any of them is free and fluid, though such could be refused on account of proven questionable character. It may be observed that ‘Market Masters’ function as the primary nucleus of the democratic organogram in *Ogbete* Main Market, since its officers coordinate revenue collection, sanitation, electricity, security services, among others. Moreover, the state government and the local government authorities have consistently relied on counterpart funding on major challenges in the market, such as the tarring and maintenance of the roads inside and beside *Ogbete* [33]. The consistent activities of the Enugu State Waste Management Authority (ESWAMA), the Fire Service Unit and some lucrative World Bank assisted loan schemes among others, remain viable help channels from the state government to the market traders.

## 5. Reflections

Any historical account of Enugu city with its accompanying socio-political, educational and economic feats, without due reference and recognition to the developmental impact of *Ogbete* Main Market, remains pathologically incomplete. What started as a mere *ad hoc* response to immediate human commodity needs, tied along the beautiful and adventurous story of Coal discovery and exploitation within the quiet and sleepy plains of Enugwu Ngwo and Udi axis has blossomed over the years, helping in a special way to really place Enugu metropolis as an enviable melting pot. *Ogbete* main market has successfully attracted great infrastructural amenities, enormous population, bulk internally-generated revenue, good road networking, good income and wealth, great investors and entrepreneurs to the Enugu environment. This has not only cushioned unemployment, but has reduced poverty even within Enugu environs, since local traders are opportuned to relate with people outside their community. Cordiality, shared ideas from different backgrounds by and large, breed social harmony, conviviality and intergroup relations, more so for the disparate peoples of Nigeria who may be drawn by certain circumstances at a given time to be within *Ogbete* main market. Market conditions remain viable avenues for rekindling established relationships, while providing grounds for healthy and lasting contacts, sustained through today’s social interconnectivity. *Ogbete* main market has consistently provided a comfortable commercial venue for the creation of wealth and generation of income by facilitating the sale and purchase of both agricultural and industrial products from indigenous and migrant traders. This has continued to impact positively on the lives of the people. *Ogbete* Main Market has so significantly heightened the metropolitan status of Enugu Urban that just as the residential rentage rates of accommodations lying within its locality are always on the high side, underdeveloped plots of land if any, continues to appreciate by the day. This has led to a high population density of the area.

However, one cannot help acknowledging the many adverse challenges bequeathed to the market primarily, and to the Enugu metropolis generally, due to its progressive massive congregational attraction. The *Ogbete* main market as a sprawling commercial edifice, has continued to attract serious environmental challenges, which include, noise pollution, poor waste management/sanitation and environmental discomfort due to expansion. Noise is a proven contributor to ill health. On the other hand, empirical evidence ranks Nigeria as one of the countries that produces high qualities and

quantities of solid wastes [34]. Virtually, all cities in Nigeria are characterized by mountain of solid wastes. The uncontrolled generation and disposal of these wastes in the market have deteriorated the otherwise conducive Enugu urban environment. One wonders the impression a visitor may get observing the fish and meat stalls thick with flies, the old public convenience located at the corners of the market remain unapproachable without one holding his breath [35].

Though it may be peculiar to big markets, the veracity of the number of fake and substandard products sold in *Ogbete* market remains worrisome. It adds to, and helps to boost the other accumulated social challenges exhibited through the display of certain nasty characters, who engage in gambling, stealing and pickpocketing. These produce and promote fear, tension, anxiety, distrust and suspicion on especially visitors to the market. Such atmosphere of insecurity appears heightened from another angle by the many petroleum and gas stations and depots that could be illegally located very close to the market on all sides. Again, the many irremovable landmarks hedging the *Ogbete* main market on all sides, not only denies it of equitable parking spaces, but accumulates the traffic gridlock on the two major road axis servicing it. Since location and ‘packaging’ remains important condiments of proper advertising and serious marketing strategies, the influx of major private transport companies, certain sales outlets, commercial banks among others, on both the Nigerian Prisons road, extending to the *Ogbete* main market, the Holy Ghost Cathedral dual carriage way, coupled with heavy human/pedestrian movement; complicated by the widespread mischievous activities of motor park touts and urchins, have created a realistic psychological fear and deterrent to people who may have one thing or the other with such location. *Ogbete* main market’s proximity to, and commercial assistance from the bigger Onitsha main market is not under contestation, but the bottom line lies in its accessibility to the inhabitants of both Enugu metropolis and the local inhabitants.

## 6. Conclusion

Markets attract development to a community; ‘while encouraging local investors, for instance, a lot of shops in *Ogbete* are not owned by the indigenous people; they are owned by some local investors [36]. *Ogbete* main market, as an evolving concentrated centerpiece of socio-economic cohesion, has not presented itself only as an urban market, but a platform of wide range of business opportunities that converts the production of goods and services into revenue and profit for the individual and the state. Just like many other major markets in Igboland, *Ogbete* was stung by the venom of war during the Nigeria/Biafra war. Not folding their hands watching their economic hub perish, Enugu people proceeded through their concession tables to kick off development, though local politics has contributed immensely to weigh progress down. This has continued to complicate the challenges of the provision and fair allocation of more market stalls, the provision of pipe borne water and proper drainage system within the market, especially in the abattoir section, among others.

Against this backdrop, this study advocates that the local government in collaboration with the state government should towards modernizing the market, provide at least two proactive firefighting units and the deployment of massive CCTV cameras monitored by a standard local vigilante group. This would help to checkmate the activities of criminals and swindlers within the market. In working with the *Ogbete* Market Committee, the government should ensure proper hygiene through the appropriate disposal of waste on daily basis, while discouraging the current long-time

pile-up and burning method which is hazardous to health. In response to emergent emergency demands *vis a vis* the market's average host population, about four well-equipped units of first responders are advocated to attend to victims needing urgent attention before referral to secondary centers.

Solutions to the problem of space inside the market, overflow of goods inside the stalls, coupled with the complexities of barrow pushers, the free flow of goods and movement of people, solicits for standard warehouses selectively put in place for traders to pack their excesses. Human traffic on the two major roads bordering and servicing *Ogbete* main market could be reduced when the many banks located there effectively and collaboratively trigger on their ATM machines and service outlets to their many customers on daily basis. This would assist traffic flow, moreso when 'loading' and 'offloading' on the major road by the transport workers is put on hold. On the other hand, tailoring the many Fuel/Gas Stations near the market to use government-regulated vapor recovery boots on the car nozzles, which limit the release of gas vapors while refueling vehicles would help prevent unnecessary fire outbreaks.

On the long run, Enugu State government should make contingency plans to relocate the market to a new strategic place, since the demand for new stalls is increasing, and there is no room for expansion, since *Ogbete* is hedged-in on all angles by irremovable landmarks, or else an alternative annex of the market should be located in another place, since there continues to be a geometric increase in the population of Enugu metropolis and environs. Uninterrupted Power supply to the market would enhance accelerated involvement and engagement of the traders within, to key into the fast trending socio-commercial connectivities of the 21<sup>st</sup> century world. From wider reach online advertisements to the domestic smart neon informative regimen, consistent valuable electricity from the national grid remains well ahead of the varied generator sets, considering its lesser economic expenses, safety and absence of noise pollution.

## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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