



## “Getting Free Stuff”: A University Campus Periodic Market and Wednesday Ritual

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Received : 16/05/2020

Accepted : 21/05/2020

Published : 10/06/2020

### Abstract

*In anthropology, the marketplace is conceived of as ‘culture center,’ that is, a constellation of social and cultural processes. This is the case with the New-Dawn-Biz, a periodic market in a large public university in the South. Peculiarity of the New-Dawn-Biz provokes inquiry given its location (within the confines of a university campus) and modus operandi. While literature on periodic markets and analyses of the informal economy are associated mostly with non-Western societies, the context of this ethnographic study reveals a highly organized enclave. Therefore, findings from this study suggest a link between the formal and informal economies, and how the two function within a highly bureaucratized setting to foster primarily social, economic, religious, and political interactions among student populations.*

**Keywords:** Periodic market; the informal economy; economic anthropology.

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### I. Introduction

A market is a place and an arrangement where the distribution of goods and services takes place. It is regarded as an appointed meeting place of authorized public actors which includes producers, sellers, collectors, and final consumers (Hodder 1969). Markets are primarily classified into one of three types: daily markets, special markets, and periodic markets (citation needed here). Daily markets can both be day and night markets and are found all over towns and cities. Special markets are often held during annual festivals like Christmas, Ramadan, and Easter. They also take place during special events like state trade fairs. Periodic markets operate regularly on one or more fixed days every week, fortnight, or month. Most periodic markets are rural, and several larger ones are bulking centers where local produce is arranged for onward movement to urban centers (Bromley et al. 1975; see also Singh 1965).

Using the previous typology, the market under examination in this study, the New-Dawn-Biz, is as socio-economic and cultural context that operates once a week within the larger university community. Also, it is characterized by formal expression of code of conduct as well as explicit policies and prohibitions that guide the undertakings among operators and stakeholder’s vis-à-vis traders, market staff, and so on. A decision made by the market management is regarded as final and thus implies some sort of bureaucracy, ultimately impacting and shaping the affairs of the New-Dawn-Biz.

The New-Dawn-Biz operates on Wednesday and based on ethnographic research conducted in Fall 2016, activities that characterize this social space revolve around commerce, socio-religious identity, and group mobilization. With the following specific objectives, the study

looks at peculiarities of the New-Dawn-Biz as a social space and how they shape buying and selling (which ideally constitute the hallmark of any spatial arrangement referred to as a market):

- i. Identifying different trade items sold in the New-Dawn-Biz.
- ii. Examining the nature of social interaction taking place.
- iii. Examining processes involved in buying and selling.
- iv. Investigating socio-political and economic networks.

## II. Research Questions And Aim

In exploring the New-Dawn-Biz as a social space, I consider the following questions:

- i. What constitute the trade items sold?
- ii. What is the nature of social interaction taking place?
- iii. Who is visiting the New-Dawn-Biz for buying and selling?
- iv. What are the socio-political and economic networks characterized by the New-Dawn-Biz?

## III. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

Over time, the scholarly literature on periodic marketing has taken on different dimensions; there have been emphases on economic analyses of non-Western societies and foundation of social scientific explanation of traditional periodic markets. For instance, a major part of the earlier works on periodic markets particularly constitute elements of exchange and how they relate to commodities, transactions, and actors involved (Bromley 1977; Plattner 1989). Beyond this position, scholars shift arguments to marketing and consumer research (Arnould 1989; Belk et al. 1988; McGrath et al. 1993; Sherry 1990a, 1990b). Another fragment of literature engages with financial trade activities under periodic market closure (Hong and Wang 2000).

A major observation is that existing literature on periodic marketing has been predominantly spatial (Jones 1978), that is, largely emphasize geographical analysis. It is worthy of pointing out that Stine's (1962) idea of periodic marketing emphasizes central place theory, a concept that is concerned with "hierarchical ranking of urban centers according to functions (e.g. hamlets, villages, towns, and cities) and associated market areas and transportation networks" (Berry and Garrison 1958: 107). In the same vein, Skinner (1964) and Smith (1971) follow similar approaches. Others have instead attempted to emphasize a locational theoretical position on periodic marketing (Hay 1971; Webber and Symanski 1973; Symanski and Webber 1974). More importantly, a few of the scholarly works on period marketing largely emphasize economic analysis of non-Western societies (Bromley 1977; Plattner 1989), modernity and social change (Liu 2007), as well as rural retailing institutions of periodic marketing (Velayudhan 2014; Masaru and Badenoch 2013;) with the exception of Mary McGrath and colleagues' ethnographic study of an urban periodic marketplace among Midwestern farmers (McGrath et al. 1993). Hence, an ethnographic account of the New-Dawn-Biz fills this gap among other contributions.

A major criticism of contemporary periodic marketing posed by economic anthropologists is an attempt to artificially separate informal from formal activity in retail analysis. However, humanistic approaches (e.g., Sherry 1989) have emphasized relevance of extra-economic marketplace behavior and the privileging of externality over embeddedness. Evidence in this study shows distribution taking place in the New-Dawn-Biz extends beyond buying and selling activities. However, the study implicitly focuses on a single form of periodic market, perhaps one which is situated within the confines of a highly formalized setting, but it considers extra-economic marketplace behavior. Therefore, it reinforces how formal and informal activities/practices are closely embedded and reproduce little or no clear boundary in terms of how the market is operated and sustains its essence by serving functions other than buying and selling.

The functionalist perspective and the ritual process are the main theoretical bases upon which I ground the evidence from this ethnographic study. In my analysis I consider Bronislaw Malinowski's notion of function: "function, in this simplest and most basic aspect of human behavior, can be defined as the satisfaction of an organic impulse by the appropriate act. Form

and function, obviously, are inextricably related to one another” (1944:83; see also Moore 2009: 139). The account of form and function of social interaction within the New-Dawn-Biz explains how relationships are organized among all participants in such a way that the needs of all its participants and operators (including bureaucratic institutions) are met accordingly. Victor Turner’s concept of ritual symbols explains the temporality of the New-Dawn-Biz social space as a site where transaction, distribution, and exchange of trade items as well as socialization among student populations are taking place. Turner considers ritual symbols “as originating in and sustaining processes involving temporal changes in social relations, and not as timeless entities” (Turner 1974:55).

#### **IV. The Description of the New-Dawn-Biz Social Space**

The map (see Figure 1) represents the social and spatial configuration of the New-Dawn-Biz every Wednesday. The market operates in a central location on campus, near the Student Center (SC). In this map, the front view of Student Center building represents the north, and it is the major landmark to which other features in the social space are associated. In the northeast of the SC building, is the university’s Book Store, and just way down the slope is the Student Health Services Annex. Around the southwest is the Student Service Building and the way on the west of the SC Building will lead to a plaza that honors the late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr..

The New-Dawn-Biz social space lies in-between the underlined major landmarks. These physical features are permanently and accurately represented in this social space. Right before the entry and exit point of the SC building are statues of the university’s mascot (totem), in a water fountain. Other aesthetic spatial features such as grass, flowers, trees, are patterned along different walkways that run across the space. They aid easy flow of traffic as depicted in the map and also serve as supporting items that aid arrangement of tents, tables, and chairs within the New-Dawn-Biz in fulfillment of every Wednesday ritual.

Moveable items such as tents, tables, and chairs are relatively unpredictable in terms of arrangement on every market day. The same thing is applicable to the types of trade items arranged in the market. However, there is an exception to this observation as regard the moveable objects; this is obvious in the arrangement of the New-Dawn-Biz staff tents, tables, and chairs. The New-Dawn-Biz staff’s location is relatively permanent and that is where the disc jockey’s (DJ) table is placed to play music during the weekly event

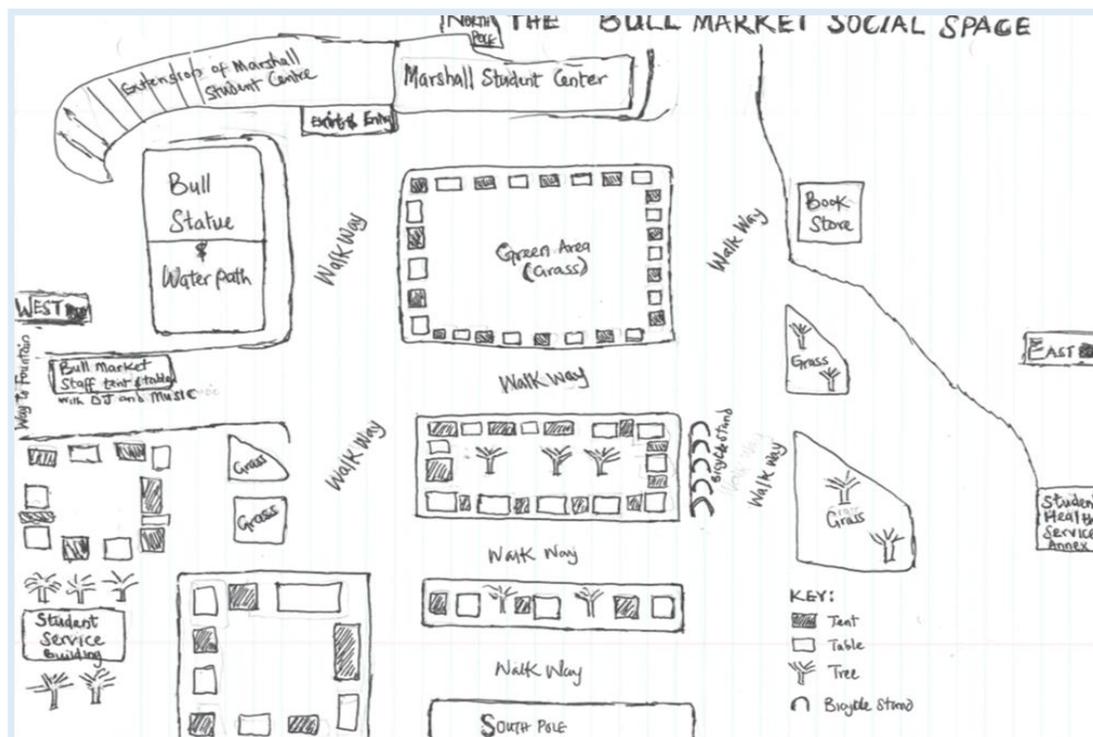


Figure 1: The New-Dawn-Biz Map

## V. Ethnographic Data Production

Overall, the study adopts an ethnographic approach. I map the study site using a mapping model format by Crane and Angrosino (1992) to capture the New-Dawn-Biz's space and location and track different activities every Wednesday. I use participant observation method throughout the entire fieldwork. This method allows for "near-total immersion" of my presence within the New-Dawn-Biz (LeCompte and Schensul 1999: 92). Participant-observation as a method enables the researcher to take part in the daily activities, rituals, interactions, and events of a group of people in order to learn their explicit (what people are able to articulate about themselves) and tacit (what remains outside of people's awareness and consciousness) aspects of their life routines (DeMunck 2009; DeWalt and DeWalt 2011; Emerson, Fretz and Shaw 2011).

I use non-probabilistic sampling techniques such as purposive and convenient sampling techniques (Bernard 2011, 2012) to select the key informants and other participants in this study. I explore informal interviewing and informal conversational interviewing methods particularly because it is useful in opening up conversation while doing participant observation. This method is useful throughout ethnographic fieldwork for building rapport, uncovering new topics of interest that might have been overlooked, making a field diary, as well as writing and developing fieldnotes (Pelto 2016). In all, I conducted eighteen interviews ( $n=18$ ), then I sampled opinions among people visiting the New-Dawn-Biz to know why people visit. I use non-probabilistic random sampling techniques (Bernard 2011, 2012) selecting ten individuals every Wednesday for five weeks consecutively ( $N=50$ ). The research instruments used are: question guide, recorder, camera, fieldnote, and diary.

## VI. Analysis and Interpretation of Results

According to LeCompte and Schensul, “analysis reduces data to a story ethnographer can tell while interpretation tells reader what that story means, and why or how it is important” (2013: 2). From this standpoint therefore, I base the analysis of this ethnographic study on thematic frames generated from the research objectives with which this study is foregrounded. It takes the form of traversing through the description of trade items identified in the New-Dawn-Biz. The nature of social interaction characterized of the New-Dawn-Biz. Also, the processes involved in buying and selling observed in the New-Dawn-Biz, and finally the socio-political and economic networks as investigated in the New-Dawn-Biz. This approach also is in line with the point of view of Patton (1980), where he asserts that analysis does three things: one, it brings order to the piles of data an ethnographer has accumulated; two, it turns the big piles of raw data into smaller piles of crunched or summarized data; and three, it permits the ethnographer to discover patterns and themes in the data and to link them with other patterns and themes.

### *The Identified Trade Items in the New-Dawn-Biz*

The context of this ethnographic study can best be described as a social space where sales of “concrete” and “abstract” products are taking place. These two terms (concrete and abstract) suggest a contrast between vendors who are selling “goods and services” (i.e. a physical and tangible item bought to satisfy human want) and those that their presence in the market is an indication of extending “social services” which does not necessarily connote exchange or direct profit making. Table 1 (see also Figure 2) comprises of all the tangible items vendors put on display every Wednesday.

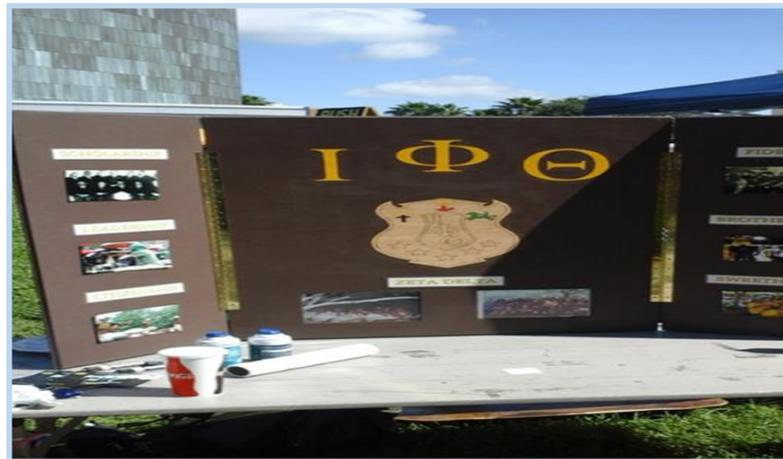
S/N	Tangible Trade Items Displayed by Vendors in the Bull Market
1	Headbands & hand bands
2	Men and Ladies accessories (bracelets, necklaces, ear-rings & rings)
3	flags (of different countries in various sizes)
4	Cardholders and banners
5	Boxing gloves
6	Himalayas’ healing stones
7	Yoga clothing
8	Indian Skirts and trousers, singlet
9	Mirror
10	Soap, lotion, shrubs, cream, body wash, deodorants
11	Medicinal/gourmet honey

Other activities taking place in the New-Dawn-Biz include product and service promotion by social and philanthropic clubs such as Sierra Club, Relay for Life -American Cancer Society, Project Sunshine, Friends of the Internationals, Omega Phi, Sigma lambda gamma, Delta Phi Omega, Chi Upsilon Sigma, Delta Epsilon Sigma, Chi Alpha, Vietnamese Students’ Association, Swahili Organization, medical School Forum, Jewish Students’ Center and Harmony Choices (see Figure 3 and Figure 4). Also, religious groups are involved in this category. They include Nichiren Buddhism, 5 Solas Evangelism, Chi Alpha Christian Fellowship, Impact Campus Ministries, fellowship Tract League and Famous Mormons). University departments and student government body (for example, Arts, School of Theatre and Dance, Bureau of Fire prevention, Hillel, State Park, College of Public Health) and commercial companies (for example, Image Depot Express, Bobacup, Campus Palms, The Retreat) are all involved in the New-Dawn-Biz activities.



(Source: Author, Fieldwork 2016)

**Figure 2:** The Display of Trade Items from Himalayas



(Source: Author, Fieldwork 2016)

**Figure 3:** A Table Stand of One of the Fraternities



(Source: Author, Fieldwork 2016)

**Figure 4:** A Cross Section of Activities

### ***The New-Dawn-Biz as Social Space and the Nature of Social Interaction***

The Student Center on the university campus often wears a “new look” on Wednesdays, that is, the spatial arrangement is different from its everyday look and there are often more people moving around the space than usual. This is due to the presence of New-Dawn-Biz. This market that operates on the fourth day of every week and activities that characterize the periodic market revolve around commerce (see Figure 2), socio-religious identity (see Figure 3) and group mobilization (see Figure 4). Around 8 o’clock in the morning on the 29<sup>th</sup> of September, 2016, I made my first visit to New-Dawn-Biz in quest of mini-ethnography. At this time, they must have organized tables and tents around this space. This organization of tables and tents starts right in

front of the Student Center and it goes down, having in its right-hand Student Service Building and to left is the Book Store and a bit down the slope is the Student Health Service Annex (see Figure 1). Within the physically demarcated space are trees. Flowers, and grass on the lawn are set along the pathways through which people walk around. These tables and canopies are arranged and aligned side-by-side along each of these lawns in different shapes such as square, rectangle, and triangle. The trees provide natural shield inbetween the paths that go through the MLK plaza and the edge of the Student Service Building. Just before the Student Center are located statues of the university's mascot around which water flows. This scene gives provides a natural aesthetic and people move up and down as they engage in various activities. Also, between the Book Store and somewhere before the edge of the Student Service Building are stands where people clip their bicycles.

The description of the New-Dawn-Biz as a physical space raises a further question as to the essence and derivative upon which this story stands. In other words, the New-Dawn-Biz as a physically demarcated space equally presents itself as a social space within which social interaction and mobilization process reside. Alluding to Turner's (YEAR) description of the *Ndembu* word for "ritual" called *chidika*, which means a "special engagement" or an "obligation," here in the New-Dawn-Biz every "actor" is under obligation to follow strictly the "rules of the game" every Wednesday. In the New-Dawn-Biz as social space, the ritual begins as early as 7 am when tables, chairs, and tents are arranged as prescribed and assigned. The market staff are usually in black shirt and they ensure that their hourly routine walk-around is dully observed by keeping eyes on everything going on.

Vendors are not allocated a fixed boundary where they can display and sell their items. In other words, allocation of space is done on the basis of "first come first serve" and interaction flows among vendors in no particular order, but maintenance of order is guaranteed by the New-Dawn-Biz staff who do surveillance around the market hourly. In unravelling this, participant observation as a method helps intellectualize what is within the realm of "obvious" (Bernard 2011: 258). The social atmosphere of the New-Dawn-Biz is often filled with music, largely hip-hop, and a corner is set aside for this activity. Usually, men and ladies in black tops are conspicuously seen all around the New-Dawn-Biz, having around their waist a cell phone-like device, walkie talkie headset commonly seen with the police. Perhaps, they are best referred to as "police" in this context given their undertaken responsibility. They maintain orderliness, allocate space to sellers, and inspection of the whole market is what they do with frequent communication with people around the market. A close watch of them warrant this assumption. In my opinion, they first ask; "hi... hi... I hope all is going on well with you...?" with a snappy smile. They do this as a routine with constant feedbacks to one another among them. Of course, I can recognize some faces among them who have spoken to me in the process of making contact in the field. They are called New-Dawn-Biz management staff. Here is excerpt from an interview:

From our side...basically we have to be here...as people coming, they sign in and we only have a set of limited tables and special assigning has to be on the list. Every table out there is registered for an organization...we don't have more we don't have less. We do turn away a lot of people too...like today, we just have to turn away an organization because you just have to register. We have to make sure that all of the vendors and students' organizations they stay within the guidelines...USF policies...SC policies as well as our own policies. So, there are three overlaying policies they have to follow...there are some specifically for SC...some are specific to USF...so they have to keep to all those policies in mind. Because if they don't follow those...we just have to ask them to leave. Sign starts at 8am...sign up by 8:30am and activities open at 9:00am and by 2:00 to 3:00 activities are closed

(Source: *Fieldwork*, 2016)

The music is rocking and loud from the stand which is mounted by "men and ladies in black" and at the same time, holds/tents belong to some organizations have music paralleling with their handy blue tooth speakers, guys flowing in different dancing steps, yelling at one another with smile. This experience reminds me of similar performances observed in the Theatre Arts Studio (University of Ibadan) I observed where performing arts students do all sort of parades actively to earn some credit points and boost their academic grades. In my view, the New-Dawn-Biz is a fashionable one, an embodiment of social milieu.

One day denoted as "Multicultural Day," quite a few students' sororities and fraternities came out to showcase their identities and values. All of their members presented in different colors that symbolize their various groups. Also, they used the opportunity to recruit for more members and were willing to talk about their values to virtually everyone who moves around their stands, doling out free comestibles (ice cream, drinks, sweet, etc.) to share with anyone who stops by. All organizations in attendance are intermingling and I recall a point where some of their members form circles before the main tent of the New-Dawn-Biz staff, where Disc Joker blows music in its loudest form. They all perform "chorographic-like dance" just for about ten minutes. However, it depicts a market-like scenario where people pay attention to different scenes at the same time and same scene at different times.

As a fieldworker, I pay attention to this vividly as it seems to give credence to my thinking based on peculiarity observed since the beginning of this study; that a lot of activities here in the New-Dawn-Biz tilt more to socio-religious and group mobilizations than it is to the commercial under the umbrella of a market. This interpretation, therefore, represents the second or third order of description Clifford Geertz suggests:

In finished anthropological writing... this fact that we call our data are really our own construction of other people's constructions of what they and their compatriots are up to- is obscure because most of what we need to comprehend a particular event, ritual, custom, idea, or whatever is insinuated as background information before the thing itself is directly examined" (1973:9; see also Moore 2009: 265).

However, to ensure to a reasonable extent that interpretations of my observation are closely in line with the emic perspective, I further engage my informants and a clear distinction of what their primary goal is can be deduced from the following excerpt:

New-Dawn-Biz is for students' organizations to promote their stuff and basically that is what it is for...students' organizations are the ones we are encouraging to come out and participate...come out...recruit...fund raise you know...and do their events. Definitely we are promoting the students and organizations more than anything else. They are our primary focus and they definitely always come out...they always have interest and want to promote something. So basically, students' organizations are the reason why we are here.

(Source: *Fieldwork*, 2016).

In the New-Dawn-Biz, social interaction is maintained and sustained through implementation of overlaying policies that are largely enforced by the management staff. It appears that hierarchies and flows of interaction are seen at different levels; there is a vendor-to-vendor interaction, vendor-to-the New-Dawn-Biz staff interaction, the New-Dawn-Biz staff-to-SC interaction, and finally the SC-to-University interaction. This kind of arrangement (social interaction) further confirms the criticism of studies in contemporary periodic market of attempt to artificially separate informal from formal activity in retail analysis. Evidence from this ethnographic study shows that social interaction is shaped through policy adherence, but its

expressions and forms are embedded in formal and informal activity. For instance, at the level of vendor-to-vendor interaction a high level of informality is into play compare to other levels of interaction. However, the whole arrangement of these hierarchies of form are geared towards maintaining orderliness and smooth interaction in the marketplace. Looking at this from functionalist point of view (Malinowski 1944; Moore 2009; Radcliffe-Brown 1952), it can be predicted that the New-Dawn-Biz is connected to the university as a unit (of the system) which forms part of a “whole” by being integrated and interacted with other units (SC) to ensure smooth running of the whole system. This assertion is logical given to opinion coming from one of the key-informants:

It is definitely a university’s baby in the sense that it is a tradition and it is born by the university and we have a lot of popularity and everyone comes out...it is run directly under my position and it is directly connected to the university. It is here in Marshal Students Center and events are happening here...so it is well connected to USF and it is not separated from USF.

(Source: *Fieldwork*, 2016)

Vendors are given style of arrangement of their chairs, tables and tents which constitutes a pattern of design allowed in the marketplace. Two tents are not allowed to stand or touch another and there must be a table without a tent in-between. This practice has become a tradition of spatial arrangement in the New-Dawn-Biz, although, there is a precautionary function (prevention from escalation in case there is fire outbreak) serves by this tradition. However, this approach does not necessarily hinder social interaction among vendors. Quite a number of vendors do not take cognizance of the reason but all of them consider it as a practice and part of the laid down regulations of the market. This is how social interaction flows among vendors in the New-Dawn-Biz and some organizations and religious groups have their tents and tables as well. People notice them with the displayed tract on their tables and banners tacked to the front views of their tables. There are a few students' groups (discipline based such as Medical School Forum and Public Health Major) that are interested in meeting new students to offer detailed academic advice and supplying them with relevant information. Some tables cluster with relatively bigger tents, which host traders that are into direct buying and selling.

### ***The Processes Involved in Buying and Selling in the New-Dawn-Biz***

The vendors in the New-Dawn-Biz go through the same processes to participate but requirements differ based on categorization. The processes involved are ritualized through application to become a vendor and adherence to spatial arrangement by all vendors. In this study, it is revealed that there are two major categories of selling activity taking place; the profit-making vendor and non-profit. As argued earlier in this analysis, social interaction is maintained and sustained through close monitoring and enforcement of rules and regulations. This equally applies to process of getting involved as a vendor. For instance, profit-making vendors are supposed to provide business license which will state their eligibility to participate in trading activity within the state.

Vendors interested in selling food must provide food sample for screening purpose, students who are enterprising and willing to become vendors are urged to present business license as well. More importantly, students’ organizations are not supposed to pay anything to participate in the New-Dawn-Biz while departments and units within the university are charged to participate. However, payment/fees taken from vendors vary depending on the type of category each belongs. Table 2 shows different options available to vendors for subscription in the New-Dawn-Biz.

Category of Vendors	Payment options by Category			
	Prepaid	4- Week Deal	Semester Deal	Prime Location
Departments	\$17	\$48	\$140	\$65
Student Vendors	\$17	\$51	\$170	\$65
Non-Student Vendors	\$35	\$120	\$378	\$65

*Source: Student Center office record (September 2016)*

Students' organizations like sorority and fraternity that are interested in raising fund by providing some food items (e.g. snacks) for people in return for a token of two dollars are exempted from making payment. However, such students' organizations must provide pre-packaged certified food with receipts. Selling in the New-Dawn-Biz does not accommodate serious competition among vendors. It is worth mentioning that all vendors go through the same process of application but who is allowed to participate is a function of discretion of the New-Dawn-Biz staff even if all the requirements are fulfilled. In this context, it can be argued that elements of formality are incorporated to shape informality and thereby serve as internal logic use to achieve what the stakeholders consider to be of primary interest without necessarily compromising interest, be it that of profit-making vendors and/or non-profit. For instance, the excerpts that follow are views coming from two participants, one is non-profit making vendor and the other sells to make profit:

We are all organizations and we are all trying to get all stuff out there and get new members and do fund raising and just have fun...having college experience as we do things side by side...as we are doing stuff another organization is doing stuff and there is competition...and it's like a funny competition and you get new ideas from people like they are doing something like that...some people get to give me free stuff...like am gonna get things too. Like we all kind of have the same goal and it's all kind of funny with our special skills.

*(Source: [non-profit making vendor] Fieldwork 2016)*

You can sell anything because nobody comes to say other vendors are selling this...you can't sell it. But when you go to different markets...different festivals the manager screen you...you allow to sell this one...you are not allowed to sell this one.

*(Source: [profit making vendor] Fieldwork 2016)*

Given the views from two different categories of vendors, it can be argued that sense of competition here is quite weak unlike a typical periodic marketplace. One way of explaining this reality is that to look at the level of regulatory measures and routine checks put up by the authority of the New-Dawn-Biz. Although there is no which states competition is not allowed in the New-Dawn-Biz, just as there is nothing of such in any other marketplace, but this unusual situation could be sustained through the incorporation of bureaucracy (as it appears in this context) which determines who sells what and who does not. In other words, there is a tendency that any vendor found displaying any form of unhealthy competition and confrontation may be heavily sanctioned and banned from participating in the New-Dawn-Biz. Another way is to agree with the substantivist school of thought in economic anthropology which asserts that "material acts of making a living" many a time inform people's decision unlike strict "rational decision-making" argued by the formalist school of thought (Polanyi 1944: 3-5, 1957; see also Wilk and Cliggett 2007: 6).

Furthermore, efforts to inquire about existing regulation prohibiting competition prove there is none, but a peculiar case presents itself with the aid of participant observation in one of the days spent in the marketplace during the fieldwork. We (two close vendors and I) engage in a long informal conversation and they suddenly disclose this:

Informant A: There was a time Hanna came to me...saying how come you are selling what I am selling. Then I say Hanna...look they don't make this stuff for you. They make this stuff for everybody to buy and sell. They make the stuff for everybody because I am a vendor and you are a vendor. I go online where I can find stuff, I buy but you sell the same stuff. Hanna, how much do you charge for your stuff? Ok 10 dollars...then I will say I charge 10 dollars, so I don't go down because of your stuff. Simple as it is, and she makes profit.

Informant B: Like...Hanna doesn't know how to make business. In a business when you have a slow time you don't pull back...you just have to find other products and play with it...just like gambling but people don't know that.

*(Source: Fieldwork, 2016)*

This catches my attention and I begin to inquire as to when... how... but they respond that it is not here... they are talking about another marketplace. Convincingly, I come to realize that competition does not necessarily characterize buying and selling activity in the New-Dawn-Biz. However, some sort of "soft and polite approach" could be a strategy used by vendors use to gravitate would be buyers toward their stands/tents. For instance, my first appearance to the New-Dawn-Biz appears to be a welcoming one. My first interaction with a vendor (name not mentioned) who later become my key-informant, who sells items from Himalaya captures this observation characterized of the New-Dawn-Biz:

Fieldworker:	Hi (as I move close to his table and begin to check his stocks)
Seller:	Hi! How are you? Are you from Africa?
Fieldworker:	Yes! I am from Nigeria.
Seller:	Whoa!!! I like Nigerians...they are smart (then he stretches out his right hand, and we exchange handshake as we have brief but warm discussion due to rainfall)

*(Source: Fieldwork, 2016)*

Then, this observation raises a fundamental question: how do the sellers make profits? On the one hand, the zeal to make more money propels competition but, in this context, it is not really applicable. On the other hand, a preponderance of responses gotten from majority of the buyers and people who visit the marketplace support the foregoing argument that rational decision-making motive does not explain everything going on in the New-Dawn-Biz. Hence, it is thoughtful to ask if really people come to the New-Dawn-Biz to buy or to get free stuff? Based upon informal interviews conducted with 50 participants (n=50), it appears that 60 per cent of them come "to get free stuff", 30 per cent of them "may be to buy and get free stuff", while the rest of them (10 per cent) come "to see and get free stuff." Hence, overall "getting free stuff" is the significant part of what defines the New-Dawn-Biz.

Most of the traders receive payment for goods and services (money) with electronic devices (point of sales payment machine, handheld/cell phone with micro device attached). In a few cases, vendors take cash but there is high preference for electronic payment generally. Also, corporate organizations and companies often come for sales promotion, awareness and advertisement. For example, Project Sunshine, Keep Fit, Boba Cup, Campus Palm, and The Retreat to mention just a few.

### ***Socio-Political and Economic Networks***

The concept of networks depict strings of (often instrumental) links between individuals, not necessarily suggesting any wider sense of belonging to a collectivity (Mayntz 2010; see also Cotterrell 2013). It is a practice in a marketplace that people are organized in different forms ranging from what they sell to where they buy what they sell. Also, traders build their networks around social group formation such as trade associations. The ultimate reason behind such networking could be ascribed to building social capital through connections amongst individuals (Putman 2000). The foregoing represents an ideal situation expected of a marketplace as a social space.

However, the peculiarity of the New-Dawn-Biz presents a different dimension in that vendors do not have any association or any platform for social aggregation, rather activities are shaped based on procedure of rules and regulations by the New-Dawn-Biz management with strict observance by its staff. Traders' account regarding web of relationships in the New-Dawn-Biz presents a different situation compared to typical anthropological account of as a periodic marketplace. It is important to make a distinction between the vendors who are selling goods and students' organizations including non-profit organizations categorized earlier in that, the latter maintain strong sense of socio-political and economic networks both within and outside of the New-Dawn-Biz unlike the former. The vendors who are selling items maintain some sort of social networks outside of the New-Dawn-Biz and a very few of them connect beyond the New-Dawn-Biz, but they do not maintain concrete social networks. As observed, strong sense of social networks within the New-Dawn-Biz social space manifest through by religious group mobilization and socio-political organizations among students. In other words, motivations and drivers of social interactions and patronage in the New-Dawn-Biz are strongly tied to "free stuff" not necessarily socio-economic transaction based on payments and rational decision making.

## **VII. Conclusion, Policy Implications, and Future Research**

This study contributes to literature on periodic market and the informal economy, particularly by providing ethnographic account of a periodic marketplace within the confine of highly bureaucratized establishment. Furthermore, it provides insights as to how formal and informal activities are structured to achieve a platform for community building through social interaction and socio-economic engagement. What comes out clearly in this study is a focus on the functionality of the informal sector rather than an emphasis on its nature (Rooney 2019), brings out the material consequences essential for human survival. This evidence counters scholarly works (particularly during the twentieth century) which view the informal economy as a leftover from a previous mode of production as crude, less sophisticated, traditional, and gradually fading away with the introduction of the modern formal economy and global capitalism (Geertz 1963; Gilbert 1998; Packard 2007; Williams 2013).

The New-Dawn-Biz comprises of profit-making and non-profit vendors. It is characterized by commercial, socio-religious identity and group mobilization. Hence, the New-Dawn-Biz is capable of serving as a platform of alternative medium of communication and means of relaying information among the students on the university campus. More importantly, it is equally a means of reaching out to students who need essential items such as the ones distributed by companies that come to advertise products and services.

In the New-Dawn-Biz, social interaction is maintained and sustained through implementation of overlaying policies that are largely enforced by the management staff. There are four major hierarchies through which interaction flows; vendor-to-vendor, vendor-to-the New-Dawn-Biz staff, the New-Dawn-Biz staff-to-the SC, and finally the SC-to-University.

In light of this ethnographic account, future research should focus on comparative study of periodic markets across institutions and organized setting such as this, particularly in less economically developed nations. This approach potentially would enhance corporate organizations reaching out to indigent students, not only in distribution of free stuff but also by providing relevant information about career path after school. Also, it is important to investigate how they are structured within the system as well as the roles they play in building a peaceful and fulfilled academic community.

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