

ABSTRACT

Periodic marketing systems engage 84% of women working in the informal sector and are characterised by inadequate infrastructure and poor organisation. Allocation of space is on first come first served basis, disadvantaging women, who have less time than men due to reproductive gender roles ascribed to them. This creates room for inequitable distribution of resources considering that periodic markets tend to be self regulating. The purpose of this study is to understand the gender dynamics within a periodic market and their effect on allocation and use of space to provide a basis for improving equity and efficiency. This was conducted in Kibuye market of Kisumu, Kenya. Specific objectives of the study were; to establish the relationship between gender and use of space in a periodic market, to examine the relationship between gender and allocation of space in a periodic market, to determine the link between gender and use of time in a periodic market and to evaluate gender responsiveness of the institutions managing a periodic market. A case study research design was adopted for the market with a population of 6,674 traders, from which a sample size of 392 was drawn. Key informants included the local authority, self help groups and non-governmental organizations. Primary data was collected using structured questionnaires, interview schedules and focus group discussions. Key informants were selected using purposive sampling and traders through simple random sampling. Findings indicated sale of food as the dominant trade at 41%; a trade dominated by women at 68%. Chi square analysis (p -value $7.9 > 7.815$) indicated that male traders had better access to larger spaces indicating inequitable distribution of space. Allocation was male dominated at 83%. An Odds Ratio calculation indicated that men were 6.43% times more likely to occupy spaces allocated to them for longer durations than female traders; signifying inequity in allocation of resources. Further, men arrived in the market earlier than women-as early as 4.00 a.m. taking up the best positions and making better sales. Through cross tabulation the study found that management was male dominated (60.5% males and 39.5%); indicating gender inequality. The study concludes that access to resources is inequitable between male and female traders reducing efficiency in market operations. The study recommends; reorganization of the market through zoning, introduction of a new system of allocation, and better representation of both genders in management for the realization of equity and efficiency in resource allocation and utilization.