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GENDERED INSECURITY IN URBAN MARKETPLACES: AN IN-DEPTH STUDY OF
CHALLENGES FACED BY WOMEN TRADERS IN MADINA, LA NKWANTANANG
MUNICIPAL ASSEMBLY.

BY

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DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation, except for references made in main text which have been identified and acknowledged, is entirely my own original work and has not been submitted for another degree in the university or elsewhere.

Sahad Saeed Musah

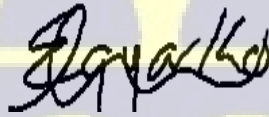


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ABSTRACT

Gender-based violence and insecurity are critical issues with profound impacts on women's social, economic, and psychological well-being. In Ghana, markets are largely managed by women traders organized into groups based on commodities. However, insecurity in various forms remains a pervasive challenge, impeding women's active participation in economic activities and affecting their overall welfare. This study employed a qualitative research design to investigate insecurity in urban marketplaces, specifically focusing on the experiences of women traders in the Madina market within the La Nkwantanang Municipal Assembly of Accra. Through purposive and snowball sampling techniques, 20 participants were selected, including market women, police officers, market leaders, assemblymen, and traditional leaders, and were interviewed in their respective settings. The findings revealed diverse perspectives among traders regarding the vulnerability of certain categories of traders to robbery. While some participants believed that female shops were frequently targeted, others argued that all gender distributions in the market were potential targets, highlighting that robbery and theft do not discriminate based on gender. This nuanced analysis underscores the importance of considering not only gender but also the physical environment in which traders operate when addressing vulnerabilities. The study recommends the need for targeted interventions and policies aimed at enhancing security and reducing risks for all traders, particularly those in vulnerable setups such as stalls. In conclusion, addressing gender-based violence and insecurity in market spaces requires a multifaceted approach that acknowledges the complex interplay of gender norms, power dynamics, and physical environments. By understanding these dynamics and implementing targeted measures, policymakers and stakeholders can create safer and more inclusive market environments for women traders and contribute to their overall well-being.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my beloved children, Shayanne, Shanaya, and Craig, as well as to the cherished memory of my late mother, Muniratu Karim.



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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

In the last few decades, crime has surged in most cities within the developing world, paralleling the trend of rapid urbanization (Owusu et al., 2016; Afolabi, 2022). This phenomenon raises critical concerns about personal security and safety, particularly in urban public spaces like markets, which are often overcrowded and lack adequate security infrastructure. Such environments present opportunities for criminal activities, endangering not only general residents but also vulnerable groups such as women, children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities (Asante & Helbrecht, 2018; Owusu et al., 2021). The interplay between urban expansion, economic structures, and social vulnerabilities highlights the urgency of understanding the security dynamics within market spaces.

Market traders, especially women, are disproportionately affected by market insecurity due to their role in handling substantial sums of money and valuable goods, which make them prime targets for criminal activities (Wrigley-Asante, 2019). Beyond the direct threats of theft and robbery, gender emerges as a crucial predictor of fear of crime. Studies suggest that women's heightened perception of insecurity is not solely based on actual victimization but is deeply rooted in socialization patterns that reinforce their vulnerability in public spaces (Boateng, 2018). The social construct of gendered spaces dictates that women are more likely to modify their behaviour due to fear, thereby limiting their economic and social engagements. This intersection between crime and gender calls for a more nuanced exploration of how insecurity shapes women's access to economic opportunities in urban markets.

Marketplaces are indispensable to urban economies, serving as hubs for trade and livelihoods (Abdallah & Adomako, 2020). Women traders constitute a substantial portion of market participants, engaging in a range of businesses from food vending to artisanal crafts. The economic independence gained through market trade allows women to uplift their socio-economic status and contribute to

household well-being (Agyemang et al., 2021). Furthermore, markets generate significant revenue for local governments through the collection of tolls and rental fees (Kusakari & Asamoah, 2017). However, despite these economic benefits, markets remain spaces of insecurity, where female traders must constantly navigate risks associated with theft, harassment, and unequal access to security resources (Asiedu & Arku, 2019). This paradox underscores the need to examine how the benefits of market participation are often undermined by persistent gendered insecurities.

While prior studies have extensively documented the economic contributions of women traders and the structural challenges they face—such as limited access to credit, inadequate business skills, and poor market infrastructure (Abdallah & Adomako, 2020; Owusu et al., 2021)—there is a notable gap in research focusing on their lived experiences regarding crime and safety in market spaces. The Madina market, a critical commercial hub, presents an opportunity to bridge this gap by investigating the specific insecurities encountered by women traders. Given the vital role of markets in urban economies, addressing the safety concerns of women traders is imperative for sustainable economic development and social equity.

The rising incidence of crime in Ghanaian cities has prompted increased scholarly attention on urban security and its implications for different demographic groups (Wrigley-Asante, 2019; Owusu et al., 2021). Afolabi (2022) and Asante & Helbrecht (2018) have examined crime from a socio-spatial perspective, emphasizing how urban design and governance influence criminal behaviour and security vulnerabilities. Their findings suggest that inadequate urban planning and weak institutional responses exacerbate crime risks in public spaces, disproportionately affecting women, children, and other vulnerable populations. Additionally, Boateng (2018) argues that women's fear of crime is shaped by patriarchal structures that not only expose them to direct victimization but also restrict their mobility and participation in economic activities. This aligns with global findings that indicate a strong correlation between gendered power dynamics and public safety concerns (Abdallah & Adomako, 2020). Importantly, while statistical data suggest that men are at a higher risk of

experiencing violent crime in markets, women consistently report greater fear due to the broader implications of gender-based violence and harassment (Owusu et al., 2021).

The Madina market, one of Accra's busiest trading centres, serves as a microcosm of the security challenges faced by women traders. While these women contribute significantly to local economic growth and community sustenance, their market participation comes with exposure to threats such as robbery and physical assault (Wrigley-Asante, 2019). The socio-cultural context further complicates their vulnerability, as market security measures are often inadequate or male-dominated, leaving women with limited agency in decision-making regarding crime prevention strategies. This study, therefore, seeks to explore the intersection between gender, crime, and market security, shedding light on the everyday strategies women traders employ to safeguard themselves and their businesses.

Despite the prevalence of security concerns in Ghanaian markets, there remains a dearth of empirical research on women's involvement in robbery incidents and their participation in security-related decision-making processes. Media reports and public discourse frequently highlight incidents of market insecurity, yet scholarly literature has not adequately captured how women traders engage in discussions on market safety and policy interventions. Studies on urban crime management tend to focus on broad crime trends rather than the nuanced experiences of female traders (Owusu et al., 2021; Asante & Helbrecht, 2018). By addressing this research gap, this study aims to contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of gendered security issues in Ghanaian markets. Insights from this research can inform policy frameworks that prioritize market safety, ensuring that women traders operate in environments that support their economic and social well-being.

1.2 Problem Statement

Markets in Ghana are largely managed by women traders organized into groups according to commodity, with leadership roles often assumed by Market Queens (Amoah & Debrah, 2020). Insecurity in various forms remains a pervasive challenge in societies, hindering women's

participation in economic activities and impacting their overall well-being (Asante & Helbrecht, 2018). Market spaces, as central hubs for businesses and livelihoods, frequently expose women traders to security vulnerabilities that are deeply rooted in complex gender norms and power dynamics (Wrigley-Asante, 2019). According to Wrigley-Asante, these gender norms and power dynamics shape women's perceptions of crimes and insecurities in market spaces.

Recent studies suggest that while both men and women experience crime in urban markets, women are disproportionately affected due to their roles and social expectations (Owusu et al., 2021; Agyemang et al., 2021). Wrigley-Asante et al. (2021) argue that women are the most adversely affected social group when it comes to crime and insecurity; however, they are often excluded from discussions on how to address these issues. This exclusion further perpetuates their vulnerability and limits their ability to advocate for policies that directly affect their safety and economic well-being.

Despite extensive media coverage on insecurity in Ghanaian markets, research and public discourse have yet to critically examine the extent of women's involvement in robbery incidents and their participation in decision-making processes regarding market security (Abdallah & Adomako, 2020). While previous studies have focused on gender-based threats and economic marginalization, there remains a significant gap in understanding how gendered insecurities manifest within specific market environments such as the Madina market. This research aims to address this gap by conducting a comprehensive analysis of gendered insecurity among women traders, emphasizing the prevalence of robbery incidents and the multifaceted factors contributing to their insecurity. By doing so, the study seeks to inform policies that enhance the safety and economic resilience of women traders in Ghanaian markets.

1.3 Objective of the Study

The general objective of the study is to examine insecurity in urban marketplaces, focusing on the experiences and challenges faced by women traders in the Madina market within the La Nkwantanang Municipal Assembly of Accra.

The specific objectives of this study are as follows, to:

1. Identify and document the specific security challenges, including robbery, harassment, and discrimination, faced by women traders in the Madina market.
2. Assess how socio-cultural norms and beliefs affect how women traders perceive and cope with insecurity in Madina.
3. Examine how insecurity affects the economic activities, including business operations, profitability, income stability, and overall well-being of women traders in the Madina market.
4. Explore the effectiveness of existing security measures in the Madina market and provide recommendations for potential improvements.

1.4 Research Questions

The research seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What are the security challenges that women traders in the Madina market face?
2. How does socio-cultural norms and beliefs affect how women traders perceive and cope with insecurity in Madina?
3. How has insecurity affected the economic activities and overall well-being of women traders in the Madina market?
4. How effective are the existing security measures in the Madina market from the perspectives of women traders?

1.5 Significance and Justification of the Study

The term gendered insecurity highlights the fact that security concerns can affect different genders in distinct ways (Scheiterle & Birner, 2020; Owusu & Lund, 2004; King & Oppong, 2000). Women often face unique challenges related to security due to their gender (Freedman, 2012). This study examines how women's challenges and experiences of

insecurity, particularly robbery, harassment, and discrimination, in the context of market spaces. The focus on robbery among women traders is significant as it pertains to their economic well-being and safety. Markets are often bustling hubs of economic activity and incidents of robbery can significantly impact the livelihoods of traders. Women are often vulnerable to diverse forms of insecurity due to factors such as limited mobility, societal norms, and lack of access to resources (Stevens et al., 2020). Understanding these specific security concerns faced by women in the markets can provide valuable insights into effective strategies to improve their safety and well-being.

Focusing on a specific location like Madina provides a contextually rich understanding of the issue. Madina has unique socio-cultural, economic, and geographical factors that influence the insecurity that women traders face (Afolabi, 2022; Wrigley-Asante, 2013). Despite the growing recognition of gender-related security concerns, there are limited studies that address the experiences of women traders in market spaces, especially within the context of Madina. This study would contribute to the knowledge of the unique challenges faced by women in retail markets by situating discussions within the broader context of gender, security, and trade. By understanding the nature and extent of insecurity faced by women traders, policymakers can develop interventions to address their unique needs.

From a development studies perspective, this study is necessary because market security plays a crucial role in the economic empowerment and social inclusion of women. Insecure environments in markets not only disrupt trade and economic activities but also exacerbate existing inequalities, hindering women's potential to contribute to local economies. This research directly links to development issues by addressing how insecurity impacts women's economic participation and their ability to thrive in market-based economies. The results of this study will contribute to the broader development discourse by identifying key barriers to women's economic security and proposing development interventions aimed at creating safer

and more inclusive economic spaces.

Additionally, the study's relevance to urban studies and gender studies is apparent, as it highlights the intersections between gender, space, and security within the context of urban marketplaces. By exploring gendered insecurity in the urban setting of Madina, the research provides insights into how urbanization and gender dynamics influence women's safety and economic opportunities. In gender studies, this research enriches discussions on the social constructions of safety and vulnerability, contributing to the academic understanding of how urban spaces can be made more gender-responsive in terms of security policy and practice. This study, therefore, bridges the gap between theoretical frameworks on gendered insecurity and the practical need for effective interventions to enhance women's safety in urban markets.

1.6 Scope of the Study

Contextually, the study is focused on gendered insecurity, taking into consideration the issues of insecurity including robbery, harassment, and discrimination, faced by women traders in the Madina market. That notwithstanding, respondents who are engaged in all forms of business, both formal and informal trading, in the market were selected to participate in the study. This is to account for dynamics in the different insecurities that women traders face in the open market spaces. The measures and strategies adopted by the women traders to protect themselves was also explored.

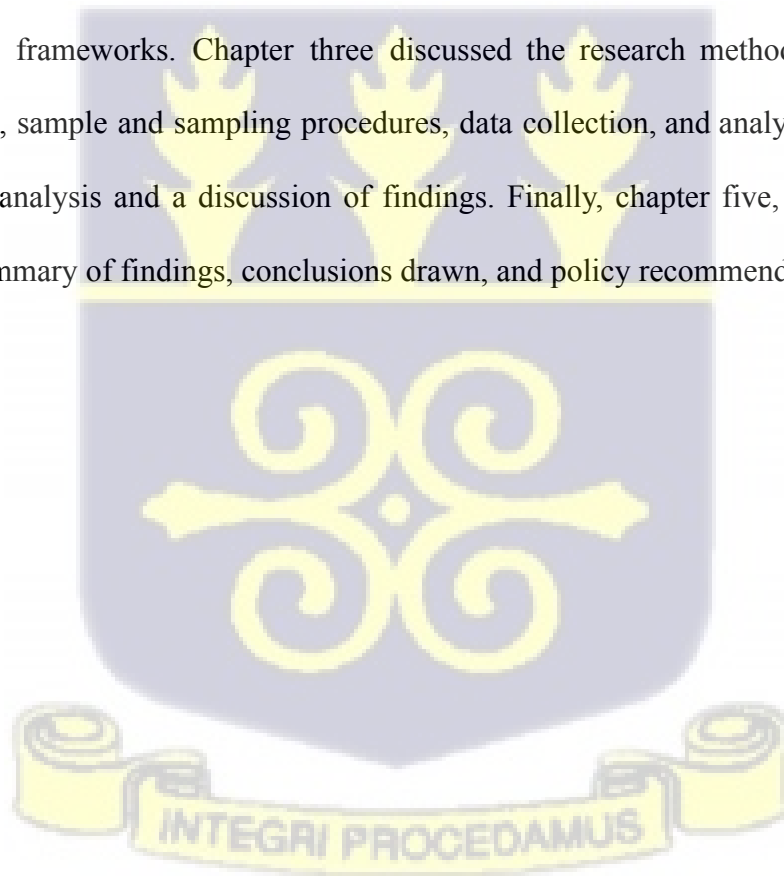
1.7 Limitation of the study

The limitation of a research study are the obstacles that obscure extensive and effective conduct of the study and require the researcher to compromise certain aspects of the study. The limitations of this study were the duration and financial resources required to undertake an extensive study. This influenced the researcher to adopt a more qualitative approach for conducting this study, posing a great challenge in generalising the findings. The study also

relied mainly on interviews for data collection, which to a larger extent may limit the scope of data collected, as interviews typically focus on participants' perspectives and experiences, potentially overlooking other relevant sources of information such as market data, security reports, or observations of daily market activities. This narrow focus might constrain the ability to triangulate findings from multiple sources and provide a more comprehensive understanding of gendered insecurity in the Madina market.

1.8 Organization of the Study

The study consisted of five chapters. The chapter one included the background of the study, the problem statement, the research objectives and questions, scope of the study, limitations encountered, and study organization. Chapter two reviewed literature, considering theoretical and conceptual frameworks. Chapter three discussed the research methodology, covering research design, sample and sampling procedures, data collection, and analysis. Chapter four presented data analysis and a discussion of findings. Finally, chapter five, the last chapter, outlined the summary of findings, conclusions drawn, and policy recommendations.



CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Over the past decades, academic discourses on security have begun to turn to the concerns of women and studies increasingly test for gender differences in reactions to insecurities. Yet all too often the incorporation of gender into the analysis of security is detached from its original theoretical context, feminist theory. This chapter reviews literature on insecurity in market spaces, focusing on the experiences of women traders in the Madina market. It explains how socio-cultural norms and beliefs affect how women traders perceive insecurity. Some theories that underpin the study are discussed and other empirical studies on gender and insecurity.

2.2 Definition of Concept

2.2.1 Gender

Gender is a system of symbolic meaning that creates social hierarchies based on perceived associations with masculine and feminine characteristics (Meer, 2007). Gender describes the way in which masculine and/or feminine are assigned in organized dichotomies, where masculinity tends to be associated with a higher value (Sjoberg, 2010). Momsen (2010) defines gender as the socially acquired notions of masculinity and femininity by which women and men are identified. Adopting a gendered perspective means considering the social differences between men and women and analyzing their experiences in relation to insecurities, places, and their environments. Defining gender as a societal construct recognizes that the diversity of social practices, beliefs, cultural behaviors, historical contexts, and political structures change the meaning of gender from one society to another and over time (McDowell, 1999). While it is important to address both gender issues – men and women, the focus often leans heavily

towards women and their status, roles, and power. This happens because, as Momsen (2010) explains, many societies have gender imbalances that put women at a disadvantage.

Gender studies have continuously stressed that men and women face different constraints in their daily lives and the predominance of patriarchy typically leads to the subordination of women, even though power relations can be experienced and expressed in different ways (Koester, 2015). Giving attention to gender issues involves focusing on the (in)equalities between men and women, along with the factors that cause them, in terms of their positions, needs and roles, specifically the household tasks and types of employment socially assigned to women and men (Meer, 2007). Nevertheless, it is important to understand that a gendered perspective is not just concerned with women as an oppressed homogenous group but gives equal consideration to differences between men and women, and between women (or men) themselves in terms of their status, roles, problems and needs and according to their social, cultural, or geographical contexts (Carr & Thompson, 2014). Gender in this study is defined as a set of discourses that represent, construct, change, and enforce social meaning due to the structural features of social and political life, particularly the activities undertaken by market women. Gender is not a variable divided in male/female but as a cultural construction.

2.2.2 Insecurity: Robbery, Harassment, and Discrimination

Violence and insecurity exist in continuum and moving the understanding of insecurity from being an object to a “process” broadens and enriches the concept of security (Sheehan, 2005). Galtung (1990) in his book, ‘Triangle of Violence’, indicated that insecurities are connected to three concepts of violence, namely – direct violence, structural violence, and cultural violence. According to him, direct violence is concerned with physical violence and is usually visible, though it can take form as threats and psychological traumas. The structural violence is a result of social stratification processes and is concerned with basic human needs,

survival, identity,



freedom. The cultural violence can be understood as symbolic violence which can be expressed in religion, ideology, language, and is used as a legitimization of direct and structural violence. In this study, the direct violence would be critically assess to understand insecurity issues at the Madina market.

Halperin & Heath (2012) elaborated that insecurity is a state of lack of protection from danger in which one is not at ease with oneself – thus, a situation that involves fear, anxiety, worry, and apprehension. In other words, insecurity is the state of being open to danger or risk and the feeling of being unsafe (The NROC Project, 2021). Insecurity is a familiar concept to human societies that have existed even in the primitive societies of the world (Sheehan, 2005). Whereas some scholars perceived insecurity as the absence of safety, others perceive it from the dimension of socioeconomic perspectives such as issues of poverty, income inequality, unemployment, discrimination, and unequal treatment within society. Adamu & Rasheed (2016) underscored that insecurity is the state of fear and anxiety breeding from real or assumed absence of safety.

According to Aning et al. (2016), insecurity refers to the lack of safety and protection, leading to threats to life and property. Similarly, McDonald (2018) views insecurity as a multidimensional concept, affecting the political, economic, and social spheres, with implications for both individuals and states. McDonald's definition of insecurity captures its impact on various aspects of human activities, highlighting its role as a major barrier to human progress and well-being. Therefore, this study adopts McDonald's definition of insecurity, as it encompasses the major elements of insecurity across different human endeavors.

Robbery is defined as the unlawful taking of property from an individual through the use of force, intimidation, or threats of violence. This criminal act distinguishes itself from other

forms of theft by its inherently violent nature, which not only aims to deprive the victim of their possessions but also to induce fear and compliance (Brown, 2016; Smith & Jones, 2018). Essential elements of robbery include the direct taking of property from a person or in their immediate presence, combined with the application or threat of force (Johnson, 2019). This crime is typically classified as a felony due to the significant risk it poses to the physical and psychological well-being of the victim (Williams, 2020).

Robberies in marketplaces, particularly in developing regions such as Ghana, are a prevalent issue that affects both vendors and shoppers. Marketplaces, often bustling with activity and crowded with people, present an opportune environment for robbers to strike. Studies have shown that the lack of adequate security measures in these areas contributes significantly to the high incidence of robbery (Akintoye, 2017; Ndlovu, 2020). Vendors frequently handle cash transactions, making them prime targets for thieves looking to make quick and substantial gains (Mensah, 2018). The resulting financial losses can be devastating for small business owners, impacting their livelihoods and contributing to a broader sense of insecurity within these communities (Banda, 2019).

Women traders, in particular, face unique vulnerabilities when it comes to robberies in marketplaces. Cultural and social norms often exacerbate these vulnerabilities, as women are frequently perceived as less likely to resist or retaliate against aggressors (Kwame, 2016). This perception, combined with the physical differences, makes women more susceptible to being targeted by robbers (Adams & Boateng, 2017). Additionally, the psychological impact of such traumatic experiences can lead to long-term effects, including anxiety and reduced participation in economic activities (Osei, 2019). Addressing the issue of robberies against women traders requires a multifaceted approach, involving enhanced security measures, community awareness programs, and supportive policies aimed at protecting vulnerable populations in marketplace environments (Amoako, 2021).

Harassment is defined as a range of behaviors of an offensive nature that are intended to disturb or upset. It is characteristically repetitive and unwanted, involving threats, intimidation, and other forms of coercion (Smith & Jones, 2018). This conduct can manifest physically, verbally, or emotionally, with the intent to demean, humiliate, or control the victim (Williams, 2019). Legal frameworks worldwide increasingly recognize harassment as a serious issue, emphasizing the need for protective measures and remedies for victims (Brown, 2016). In workplaces, schools, and public spaces, harassment undermines the sense of safety and well-being, leading to significant psychological and emotional harm (Johnson, 2020).

In Ghana, marketplaces are also hotspots for various forms of harassment, particularly against women. Studies indicate that female traders and customers frequently face verbal abuse, inappropriate touching, and intimidation from both fellow traders and customers (Mensah & Agyemang, 2017). This persistent harassment affects their mental health and sense of security, often forcing women to develop coping mechanisms or avoid certain areas altogether (Owusu et al., 2019). The lack of stringent enforcement of anti-harassment policies and inadequate security measures in these bustling environments exacerbates the issue, leaving many women vulnerable and unsupported (Boadi, 2018).

Efforts to address harassment in Ghanaian marketplaces have included advocacy from women's groups and non-governmental organizations, aiming to raise awareness and push for stronger legal protections (Appiah & Boakye, 2020). Despite these initiatives, cultural norms and societal attitudes that trivialize harassment or blame victims continue to hinder progress (Asante, 2018). Comprehensive approaches involving education, stricter law enforcement, and community engagement are essential to create safer marketplaces. Programs that empower women, such as self-defence workshops and support networks, also play a crucial role in combating the pervasive issue of harassment in these public spaces (Amoako, 2021).

Market discrimination, especially in places like Ghana, takes on different forms and negatively affects the livelihoods and well-being of traders, particularly those from underprivileged communities. Gender-based discrimination is a common form of inequality, in which women traders experience unfair treatment in comparison to males (Baffoe, 2013). Studies suggest that women frequently encounter obstacles when trying to get market resources, including loans, land, and knowledge, which are crucial for their commercial endeavours. This systematic discrimination restricts their economic prospects and reinforces gender disparities within the market setting.

Marketplaces in multi-ethnic cultures such as Ghana sometimes exhibit a significant presence of discrimination based on ethnicity or nationality (Wrigley-Asante et al., 2021). Research has emphasized the discrimination or marginalization that traders belonging to specific ethnic or regional groups may encounter in terms of access to market networks and opportunities. This type of prejudice not only impacts individual traders but also contributes to social tensions and conflicts within marketplaces.

Age-based discrimination is a prominent problem in markets, where younger or older traders are frequently disadvantaged or disregarded (Marach, 2017). Young traders may experience suspicion or distrust from elder market participants, and senior traders may suffer difficulties in adapting to technical advancements or changing market dynamics. Age-related biases can impede the transfer of information between generations and restrict the inclusiveness of markets as dynamic economic environments. Traders who have impairments also experience discrimination, as they have obstacles both in terms of physical access to market infrastructure and services, as well as negative attitudes towards them.

Intersectionality, a concept examined by researchers such as Crenshaw (1989), highlights the

interrelatedness of social classifications such as gender, race, and class. Examining market experiences via an intersectional perspective uncovers the heightened vulnerability of persons who belong to numerous marginalized groups, such as women of color or low-income individuals. These individuals are at a greater risk of experiencing multiple forms of harm, including robbery, harassment, and discrimination, when they engage in market activities.

2.2.3 Gender Insecurity

The concept of gender insecurity is not formally defined. Sharek (2009) explains that gender insecurity reflects the emotional and psychological impact of gender-related discrimination and prejudice on an individual's sense identity and wellbeing. For Gaunt & Orly (2007), gender insecurity is the feelings of uncertainty, vulnerability, and lack of safety or confidence that individuals may experience in relation to their identity, expression, or roles within society. This indicates that these insecurities can manifest in various ways and may be associated with social, cultural, or personal factors. According to Gaunt (2006), gender insecurity often arises from societal norms and expectations regarding gender, discrimination, stigmatization, and the lack of acceptance and support for individuals who do not conform to traditional gender norms. This insecurity can lead to emotional distress, reduced self-esteem, and hindered wellbeing for those who experience it (Yemisi, 2022). In this study, gender insecurity is used to mean all forms of security threats experienced by women traders in the Madina market.

2.3 Empirical Review

2.3.1 Women in urban marketplaces

Urban marketplaces have historically been male-dominated spaces (Láncer Salas & Saint Hilaire Jong, 2023; Remus, 2019; Underhill-Sem et al., 2014). However, global trends are reshaping these dynamics, with women increasingly becoming prominent figures in urban

markets (Remus, 2019). The World Bank's research on gender and economic development highlights the crucial role of women entrepreneurs in fostering sustainable economic growth (Bentouir et al., 2023; Bradshaw et al., 2017). In cities like Tokyo, initiatives promoting women-led businesses have not only contributed to the local economy but have also led to societal shifts, challenging traditional gender norms (Soejima & Frangoudes, 2019). The participation of women in urban marketplaces is a testament to their resilience and entrepreneurial spirit in Africa. Reports from UN Women underscore the economic potential of women in Africa, emphasizing their role as key contributors to poverty reduction and community development (Beegle & Christiaensen, 2019). In Ghana, organizations like the Ghana Association of Women Entrepreneurs are empowering women traders, providing them with training, resources, and networking opportunities (Feth, 2009). These initiatives are instrumental in amplifying the voices of women in urban marketplaces.

However, challenges persist. Globally, women face barriers such as unequal access to resources, limited financial support, and societal expectations (Ahmad et al., 2020; Malach Pines et al., 2010; Smith & Sinkford, 2022; Zhang & Posso, 2017). The World Economic Forum's Gender Gap Report highlights these disparities, indicating the need for targeted policies to bridge the gender gap (World Economic Forum, 2023). In Africa, including Ghana, cultural norms and traditional gender roles often pose hurdles for women in business. Research by the African Development Bank emphasizes the importance of dismantling these barriers to unlock the full potential of women entrepreneurs in urban markets (African Development Bank, 2020). In response to these challenges, international collaborations have emerged as catalysts for change. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Goal 5) advocate for gender equality and the economic empowerment of women, indicating that gender equality must be an important focus of national policies, budgets and institutions

(United Nations, 2023). Organizations like UN Women have partnered with African governments to implement programs fostering women's entrepreneurship.

In Ghana, the government's commitment to gender equality is evident through policies like the National Gender Policy, and Affirmative Action. These are interventions to help push for the protection of women's interests. Non-Governmental Organizations like the Women's Initiative for Self-Empowerment (WISE) are actively involved in promoting women's economic justice and rights in urban areas and closing gender gaps in the world of work. This is to give women the self-esteem and power to handle injustices including insecurities in urban settings. These efforts align with global movements promoting women's economic inclusion. The success stories of women entrepreneurs in countries like Rwanda, where women comprise the majority of market traders, serve as inspiration, demonstrating the transformative power of empowering women in urban marketplaces (Herring, 2016). However, insecurity and conflict within urban marketplaces, especially concerning women traders, have been persistent issues in many developing countries, Ghana being no exception (Wrigley-Asante et al., 2022). The unique challenges faced by women in these spaces have been the subject of limited but growing academic inquiry. Various forms of insecurity, such as robbery, harassment, and discrimination, plague the daily lives of women traders in urban marketplaces (Chileshe, 2020; McKay, 2004; Wrigley-Asante et al., 2022). The lack of proper infrastructure, weak law enforcement, and societal norms that perpetuate gender inequalities exacerbate these issues. While there is recognition of the problem, there is a dearth of comprehensive studies focusing on the experiences of women traders, particularly in markets like Madina.

In recent decades, the surge in crime rates in developing world cities, coinciding with rapid urbanization, has raised serious concerns about personal security in various public spaces,

including markets, stadiums, transport terminals, and public toilets (Muggah, 2012; Owusu et al., 2016; Wrigley-Asante et al., 2022). This issue is particularly significant for vulnerable groups such as women, children, older people, and individuals with disabilities, who are disproportionately affected by these insecurities (Bradshaw et al., 2017; Owusu et al., 2016; Wrigley-Asante et al., 2022). Notably, in Ghana, market women, due to the substantial amounts of money they handle, have become key targets for criminals (Wrigley-Asante et al., 2022). Market trade in Ghana, predominantly led by women, plays a vital role in the economy, ensuring food security and contributing significantly to the nation's development (Dzisi & Obeng, 2013; Wrigley-Asante et al., 2022). Despite their substantial contributions, women traders face numerous challenges. These include limited access to credit facilities, inadequate record-keeping due to lower education levels, space constraints, and insufficient infrastructure, including subpar toilet facilities (Dzisi & Obeng, 2013; Mitra et al., 2019). Moreover, these women are frequently victimized by criminals (Wrigley-Asante et al., 2022).

While studies have shed light on the contributions of market trade to the Ghanaian economy and the challenges faced by women traders (Dzisi & Obeng, 2013; Wrigley-Asante et al., 2022), in-depth examinations of women's experiences regarding crime and safety within these economic spaces have been lacking. The relationship between crime, space, and society, particularly concerning the impact of crime on various social groups, has been a focal point in geographical research (Chileshe, 2020; Láncer Salas & Saint Hilaire Jong, 2023). Specifically, studies such as Valentine's study of the geography of women's fear (1989) and Brownlow's work (2005) have delved into women's fear of crime and the related societal implications. Despite the existing body of literature, there remains a notable gap in geographical research, especially in low-income countries, concerning women, crime, and safety in urban public spaces. This gap is particularly significant given the vital role of urban

markets as hubs of the informal economy and substantial contributors to national economies (Seligmann, 2001; Udry et al., 2019; Wrigley-Asante et al., 2022). This study aims to fill this gap by investigating the experiences of Ghanaian market women concerning crime and safety, considering various categories of women traders within an urban female-dominated economic space.

2.3.2 Security Challenges and Threats

In the wake of global urbanization, cities around the world are grappling with escalating security challenges, particularly in crowded public spaces such as markets (Udry et al., 2019; Wrigley-Asante et al., 2022). Research indicates that women in various countries face immediate physical threats in public spaces due to their gender. A study by the United Nations highlighted that women worldwide experience alarming rates of violence, emphasizing the urgent need for comprehensive measures to address gender-based insecurities in urban areas (UN, 2023). Urban marketplaces (bustling hubs of economic activity) are often rife with challenges, particularly for women traders. In these public spaces, gendered insecurities manifest in various forms, including physical violence, harassment, discrimination, and economic exploitation. Physical violence, including sexual harassment, remains a pervasive issue for women traders (Reed et al., 2005; Wrigley-Asante et al., 2022). Studies reveal how women experience verbal abuse, groping, and assault in marketplaces, creating an environment of fear and vulnerability (Kacharo et al., 2022; Malach Pines et al., 2010; McKay, 2004).

Within Africa, the challenges faced by women traders echo this global pattern. The vibrant markets that form the economic backbone of many African nations, including Ghana, are paradoxically hotspots for crimes like robbery (Wrigley-Asante et al., 2022). Criminals often

target women traders due to the substantial sums of money they handle daily. The situation is exacerbated by weak security infrastructure and overcrowding in these urban marketplaces (Owusu et al., 2016; Wrigley-Asante et al., 2022). The vulnerability of women in these spaces reflects deeply ingrained societal norms and prejudices that permeate public spaces, making them particularly hazardous for women. The persistence of such gendered insecurities in African markets sheds light on broader socio-cultural norms prevailing on the continent. In many African countries, traditional gender roles and expectations significantly influence how women perceive and respond to security challenges. A report by the African Development Bank underscores that despite progress in women's rights, deeply rooted patriarchal attitudes continue to shape societal dynamics across the continent (African Development Bank, 2020). These attitudes exacerbated the challenges faced by women in public spaces, making them more susceptible to various forms of violence and discrimination.

Ghana, a beacon of stability in West Africa, is not immune to these issues. Despite its economic growth and progressive policies, Ghanaian women traders grapple with similar insecurities. A study by Wrigley-Asante et al (2022) reveals that women in Ghanaian markets, including the bustling Madina market, are frequently subjected to robbery, harassment, and discrimination. The experiences of these women reflect a broader pattern, mirroring the global struggles faced by their counterparts in other parts of the world. Efforts to address these challenges require a multi-faceted approach, one that combines legal reforms, robust law enforcement, and comprehensive societal change. Initiatives like advocate for women's empowerment, education, and economic inclusion which are promoted by international organizations, such as UN Women, and the Ghana Trade Union Congress (GTUC) play a pivotal role in challenging deeply ingrained gender norms by fostering an

environment where women can navigate public spaces without the constant threat of violence (UN Women, 2019). In Ghana, local initiatives such as the Madina Market Security Task Force, Market Surveillance Cameras, and Trader's Safety programmes among others, in collaboration with global partners, strive to create safer marketplaces. These initiatives range from enhanced security measures to educational programs that challenge stereotypes and promote gender equality.

2.3.3 The Impact of Cultural Norms on the Perceptions of Women Traders

In the complex tapestry of global gender dynamics, socio-cultural norms and beliefs wield significant influence, shaping the experiences of women traders in public spaces. This influence manifests in various forms, impacting attitudes, perceptions, and coping strategies regarding insecurity. Across the world, cultural norms often restrict the mobility and agency of women, limiting their participation in public life (Seligmann, 2001). A study by the World Bank highlights that deeply ingrained patriarchal societies curtail women's freedom, perpetuating a cycle of gender-based insecurities (Maruo et al., 2023). These global patterns reverberate in African nations, where cultural norms intersect with economic activities, affecting the lives of women traders.

The impact of cultural norms on women traders is particularly pronounced in Africa (Akhalwaya, 2012; Letshufi, 2020). In countries like Ghana, where traditional values hold significant sway, women often find their mobility restricted, especially in public spaces like markets (Wrigley-Asante et al., 2022). Attitudes toward women's participation in economic activities are influenced by deeply entrenched beliefs, with societal expectations often reinforcing gendered roles. Research by Owusu et al. (2016) emphasizes the need to

challenge these norms, advocating for education and awareness campaigns to dismantle harmful stereotypes that perpetuate gender inequalities in public spaces. The perceptions of women traders towards insecurity are intricately linked with cultural expectations. In many African societies, women are often blamed or stigmatized if they experience harassment or violence, creating a culture of silence (Akhawaya, 2012; Owusu et al., 2016). This phenomenon is not unique to only Africa; globally, victim-blaming attitudes persist. Studies by international organizations like Amnesty International underline the prevalence of victim-blaming narratives, hindering women from reporting incidents and perpetuating insecurity (Amnesty International, 2019). These cultural attitudes shape the coping strategies adopted by women traders, often leading to self-imposed restrictions on their movements and interactions, further limiting their economic opportunities.

In Ghana, women traders in bustling markets like Madina navigate a delicate balance between economic pursuits and cultural expectations. Despite the challenges posed by cultural norms, these women exhibit resilience and creativity in devising coping strategies. Collaborative initiatives by local NGOs and international organizations play a crucial role in challenging these norms. By providing platforms for women to share their experiences and fostering community support networks, these initiatives empower women traders to challenge societal expectations actively. Moreover, educational programs that promote gender equality and challenge harmful cultural beliefs are instrumental in reshaping attitudes and perceptions.

2.3.4 Economic and Psychological Challenges faced by Women Traders

Apart from physical threats, women traders face economic insecurities. Unequal pay, limited access to credit, and discriminatory pricing affect their financial stability (Baffoe, 2013; Yogendrarajah & Semasinghe, 2013). Discriminatory practices in terms of pricing and access to market resources further compound their economic vulnerabilities (Chandra et al., 2017;

Ferdous & Mallick, 2019). This gendered insecurity, specifically targeting women in public spaces, wreaks havoc not just on individual lives but also on economies worldwide. Globally, women entrepreneurs face a multitude of challenges, including disruptions in business operations due to insecurity. Research by Akhalwaya (2012) reveals that women-owned businesses are disproportionately affected by insecurity, leading to closures, loss of income, and unemployment. These disruptions ripple through the economy, contributing to economic instability. In Africa, the economic impacts of gendered insecurity are starkly evident. In countries like Ghana, where women play a significant role in the informal economy, disruptions in business operations have severe consequences. Wrigley-Asante et al. (2022) reports that women-owned businesses, particularly in markets like Madina, face closures and reduced customer traffic due to security concerns. This not only leads to financial losses but also creates a cycle of income instability, making it challenging for women traders to plan for the future or invest in their businesses.

The emotional and psychological stress resulting from insecurity further exacerbates the economic impacts (Ceccato & Loukaitou-Sideris, 2020). Studies conducted by mental health organizations globally highlight the toll that constant fear and anxiety take on individuals. Constant exposure to harassment and violence induces stress and anxiety, impacting their overall quality of life (Ceccato & Loukaitou-Sideris, 2020). Insecure environments create chronic stress, impairing decision-making abilities and hindering the overall well-being of women traders (Ceccato & Loukaitou-Sideris, 2020; Wrigley-Asante et al., 2022). In Ghana, the mental health implications of gendered insecurity are compounded by limited access to mental health resources (Wrigley-Asante et al., 2022). The Ghana Health Service reports a significant gap in mental health services, leaving women traders grappling with stress and anxiety without adequate support (Ghana Health Service, 2020). Addressing these economic

impacts necessitates a multi-faceted approach. Globally, initiatives such as the UN Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs) advocate for safe and secure environments for women in the workplace, emphasizing the economic imperative of gender equality (UN Women, 2019). These principles provide a framework for businesses worldwide to assess and address gendered insecurity, fostering safer working environments. In Africa, regional organizations like the African Development Bank (AfDB) are investing in projects that enhance women's economic opportunities while addressing security concerns (Nyadera et al., 2022). These projects, spanning various sectors, aim to empower women economically, thereby mitigating the financial losses incurred due to insecurity.

2.3.5 Evaluation of Security Measures

Security measures in public spaces, especially those frequented by women, are under constant scrutiny globally due to the rising concerns about safety (Kacharo et al., 2022). Evaluating the effectiveness of these measures is essential for creating secure environments. Globally, cities like Tokyo and London are employing advanced technologies such as facial recognition and predictive policing to enhance public safety (Nyadera et al., 2022; Soejima & Frangoudes, 2019). These initiatives, as highlighted in studies by the Center for Strategic and International Studies, provide valuable insights into the potential of technology-driven security solutions, transforming public spaces into safer environments (CSIS, 2020). In Africa evaluating security measures becomes imperative in the context of busy markets like Madina in Ghana. The African Union's Agenda 2063 emphasizes the need for secure environments to foster economic growth and social stability. However, assessing the effectiveness of current security measures in African markets reveals a disparity between urban and rural areas (Wrigley-Asante et al., 2022). While urban centers may have some security infrastructure, rural markets often lack adequate protection, leaving women traders

vulnerable to various security threats (Owusu et al., 2016).

The strengths and weaknesses of existing security infrastructure in Ghana's markets reflect the broader challenges faced by African nations. Reports by the Ghana Police Service illustrate the gaps in security coverage, particularly in crowded marketplaces. The lack of adequate lighting, surveillance cameras, and police presence hampers the effectiveness of current measures. Additionally, the Ghanaian government's focus on community policing, as evidenced in reports by the Ministry of Interior, emphasizes the importance of community engagement in enhancing security (Gyamfi, 2022). However, these initiatives lack resources, hindering their impact.

2.4 Theoretical Underpinning of the Study

2.4. Feminist Theory

Feminist theory is a comprehensive and diverse field of thought that seeks to understand and address the various ways in which gender inequality and patriarchy manifest in society. Rooted in the advocacy for women's rights and gender equality, feminist theory examines the social, political, and economic disparities between genders, aiming to deconstruct the systemic structures that uphold gender biases (Tong & Botts, 2018). The theory critiques traditional power dynamics and highlights the experiences of women and other marginalized genders, emphasizing the importance of intersectionality—a concept introduced by Kimberlé Crenshaw—to address overlapping systems of oppression, such as race, class, and sexuality (Crenshaw, 1989; hooks, 2000). Feminist theory encompasses various waves and schools of thought, including liberal feminism, which advocates for equality through legal reforms and policy changes, and radical feminism, which seeks to dismantle patriarchal systems altogether (Bryson, 1999).

Prominent proponents of feminist theory include Simone de Beauvoir, whose seminal work "The Second Sex" (1949) laid the groundwork for existential feminist thought by exploring the construction of womanhood as the "Other" (de Beauvoir, 1949). Betty Friedan's "The Feminine Mystique" (1963) is another cornerstone text, which sparked the second wave of feminism by challenging the notion that women's fulfillment could only be found in domestic roles (Friedan, 1963). Contemporary feminist scholars like bell hooks and Judith Butler have further expanded the discourse; hooks, through her exploration of the intersections of race, gender, and class, and Butler, with her groundbreaking work on gender performativity, which argues that gender is a set of repeated behaviors rather than an innate quality (hooks, 2000; Butler, 1990). These scholars and their contributions have significantly shaped feminist theory, making it an ever-evolving field that continues to address and challenge the complexities of gendered experiences in society.

Feminist theory is highly appropriate for studying the insecurity of female traders in marketplaces because it specifically addresses the power imbalances and gender inequalities that contribute to such insecurity. Feminist theory emphasizes the concept of patriarchy, which can explain how systemic male dominance affects women's safety and economic opportunities in public spaces (Tong & Botts, 2018). By examining how societal norms and structures perpetuate gender-based violence and discrimination, feminist theory provides a framework to understand the unique challenges faced by female traders, such as harassment, unequal access to resources, and restrictive mobility (Butler, 1990; hooks, 2000). This theoretical perspective highlights the need to address these systemic issues to create safer and more equitable marketplaces.

Moreover, feminist theory's focus on intersectionality, introduced by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989), is crucial for understanding how different identities and experiences intersect to affect

the security of female traders. Intersectionality helps analyse how factors like race, class, and socioeconomic status compound the vulnerabilities of women in marketplaces. For instance, women from marginalized communities may face heightened insecurity due to both gender and racial biases. By using feminist theory, researchers can develop more comprehensive strategies that address the root causes of insecurity and advocate for structural changes to support female traders effectively (Crenshaw, 1989; hooks, 2000). This approach ensures that interventions are not only focused on individual behaviors but also on transforming the broader social and economic conditions that contribute to insecurity.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study elucidates the relationships between various factors contributing to security challenges and their effects on women traders. It encompasses six main components: security challenges, their impact on women traders, coping mechanisms, effectiveness of security measures, socio-cultural norms and beliefs, and policy implications and recommendations. This framework is grounded in relevant literature on gendered insecurity and urban market spaces (Owusu et al., 2021; Asante & Helbrecht, 2018).

The framework begins with identifying the primary security challenges faced by women traders in the Madina market. These include theft, inadequate lighting, insufficient security personnel, and unauthorized trading spaces. Studies have shown that poor lighting and lack of security personnel significantly increase crime rates in urban markets, making traders more vulnerable to theft and other criminal activities (Boateng, 2018). Additionally, trading in unauthorized areas exposes women to increased risks of robbery and harassment, as these spaces are often poorly regulated and lack proper security infrastructure (Agyemang et al., 2021).

These security challenges have significant negative impacts on women traders. Financial losses are a direct consequence, as stolen goods represent not only a loss of merchandise but also a loss of potential income. Studies indicate that such financial strain is compounded by additional costs, such as hiring porters and paying for storage, diverting funds that could have been reinvested into their businesses (Owusu et al., 2021). The psychological impact of insecurity is equally severe, as constant threats of theft contribute to stress, anxiety, and fear, which in turn affect traders' overall well-being and economic stability (Asiedu & Arku, 2019). In severe cases, repeated theft and financial strain can lead to business collapse, pushing traders into debt and exacerbating their economic vulnerabilities (Abdallah & Adomako, 2020).

In response to these challenges, women traders employ various coping mechanisms. Traditional practices, such as invoking curses and performing rituals, are common and reflect the socio-cultural context of the market. These practices, while not formally recognized as security measures, serve as psychological deterrents to crime (Wrigley-Asante, 2019). Traders also hire porters to transport goods to safer storage locations and, in some cases, personally transport their goods to and from the market to minimize theft risks. While these coping mechanisms provide some level of protection, they contribute to increased operational costs and stress, reinforcing the need for more structured security interventions (Asante & Helbrecht, 2018).

The framework evaluates the effectiveness of existing security measures in the market. Despite the presence of formal security measures such as security personnel and padlocks, these are often inadequate due to their limited scope. Research indicates that the lack of proper coordination between market authorities and law enforcement reduces the effectiveness of security interventions (Kusakari & Asamoah, 2017). Traders often supplement formal security measures with traditional practices, such as communal surveillance and spiritual deterrents, which sometimes deter theft but are not universally effective (Owusu et al., 2021). This dual approach underscores the need for

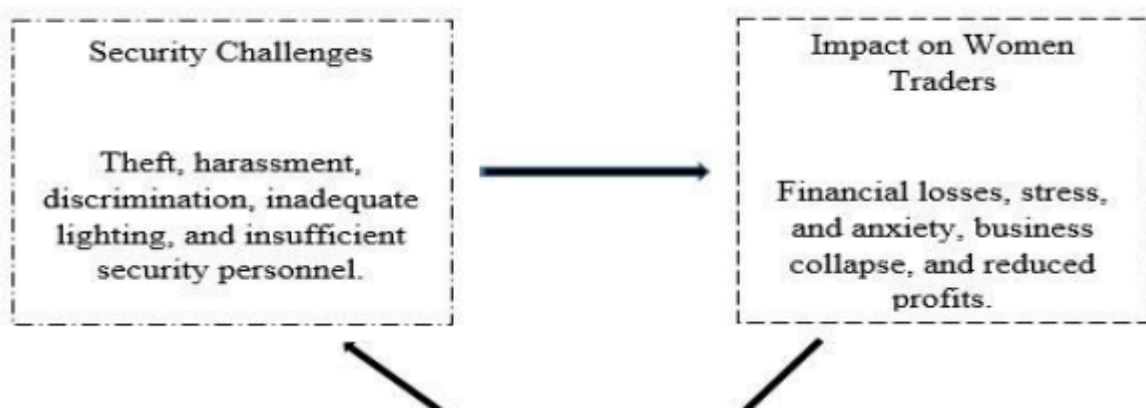
comprehensive and integrated security strategies that combine both formal and informal measures.

Socio-cultural norms and beliefs play a critical role in shaping how traders perceive and cope with insecurity. The fear of curses and supernatural retribution acts as a deterrent to theft, reflecting the deep-rooted cultural values within the community. Studies have shown that these beliefs influence traders' security practices and their reliance on traditional methods alongside formal measures (Wrigley-Asante, 2019). This component underscores the importance of considering cultural context in developing effective security solutions.

The final component of the framework involves deriving policy implications and recommendations. Addressing the security challenges in the Madina market requires enhancing formal security measures, such as increasing the number of security personnel and improving lighting infrastructure. Additionally, recognizing and integrating traditional practices into security planning can create more culturally appropriate and effective strategies (Asiedu & Arku, 2019). Providing financial support and mental health resources to traders can also help mitigate the negative impacts of insecurity.

The interrelationships among these components show that effectively addressing security challenges in the Madina market requires a holistic approach that considers both formal and informal security measures, socio-cultural contexts, and the specific needs of women traders. By enhancing security infrastructure and supporting traders through culturally sensitive practices, the market can become a safer and more stable environment, ultimately leading to improved economic prosperity and well-being for women traders.

Figure 1: The Conceptual Model



Source: Author's Construct (2023)



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter gives an overview of the various methods used in this study. As a very essential chapter of the study, it covers different sections such as the study area, research design, methods of data collection and analysis, and ethical considerations. It began with an overview of the Madina market and justification for the selection of this area by defining its characteristics to ascertain the feasibility of achieving the study's objectives. The third section throws light on the research method that will be adopted for the study by explaining the research approach and justification for undertaking a qualitative study and, more importantly, for using ethnographic techniques for data collection. The section further describes the study population and sampling techniques. The instruments for data collection and data analysis are also explained.

3.2 Study Area

3.2. Overview of the Madina Market

The Madina market, nestled in the heart of the Greater Accra Metropolitan Area (GAMA), pulsates with the energy of commerce and activity (Ghana News Agency, 2020). Spanning along Chief Alhaji Seidu Street, colloquially known as Old Road, its vibrant ambiance stretches from the Madina Zongo crossroads to the Madina Polyclinic in Kekele (Ghana News Agency, 2020). This bustling marketplace is renowned for its diverse array of goods and services, attracting a myriad of vendors and shoppers alike.

Within the market's labyrinthine layout, distinct sections cater to specific types of merchandise, fostering a sense of specialization and variety. One can wander through stalls dedicated to textiles and fabrics, where traditional Kente cloth intertwines with modern printed fabrics, or

browse through sections boasting an eclectic selection of electronics, ranging from phones to household appliances (Ghana Web, 2019). Moreover, the market boasts sections teeming with fresh produce, where vibrant fruits and vegetables vie for attention alongside stalls offering a plethora of meats and fish (Ghana News Agency, 2020).

*Figure SEQ Figure * ARABIC 2: View of the Madina Market (A)*



Source: Field data (2023)

Figure SEQ Figure * ARABIC 3: View of the Madina Market (B)



Source: Field data (2023)

Figure SEQ Figure * ARABIC 4: View of the Madina Market (C)

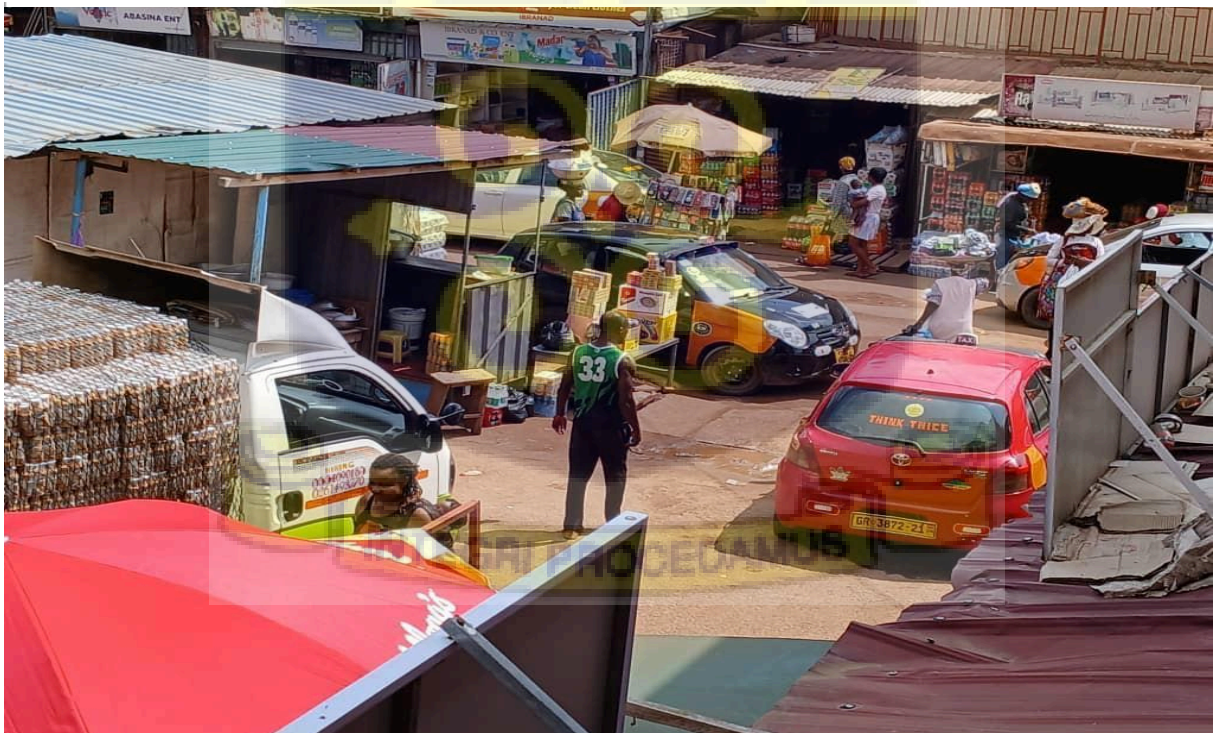


Figure SEQ Figure * ARABIC 5: View of the Madina Market (D)



Source: Field Data (2023)

Beyond the exchange of goods, the Madina market pulsates with a dynamic blend of services provided by skilled artisans and tradespeople. Seamstresses and tailors diligently ply their craft, fashioning garments and executing repairs on the spot, while nearby, hairdressers and barbers deftly transform the appearances of eager patrons (Ghana Web, 2019).

Notably, the Madina market transcends its role as a local trading post, emerging as a veritable nexus of activity for both residents and visitors alike. Drawn by its allure, individuals from surrounding areas converge upon its bustling aisles, contributing to the vibrant tapestry of commerce and culture (Ghana News Agency, 2020). Tourists, too, are captivated by the market's allure, drawn not only by its diverse offerings but also by the opportunity to immerse themselves in the sights and sounds of Ghana's vibrant marketplace culture (Ghana Web, 2019).

Despite its frenetic pace, the Madina market maintains a commitment to safety and convenience. Security personnel vigilantly patrol its precincts, ensuring the well-being of patrons, while the presence of tax officers further bolsters its reputation as a secure shopping destination (Ghana News Agency, 2020). Moreover, the market's amenities, including clean restrooms, bustling food courts, and ample parking spaces, enhance the overall shopping experience, affirming its status as an indispensable destination within Accra (Ghana Web, 2019).

In conclusion, the Madina market stands as a testament to the vitality and resilience of Accra's commercial landscape. Its bustling thoroughfares, brimming with an eclectic array of goods and services, beckon both locals and tourists alike, offering an immersive glimpse into the heartbeat of Ghanaian commerce and culture (Ghana News Agency, 2020).

3.3 Research Design

According to Bryman (2016), research design is a set of procedures that guide the researcher in the process of verifying a particular hypothesis and ruling out other possible explanations. The two designs are quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative research design primarily uses numerical assessment in its approach to investigate a phenomenon. However, qualitative methods are focused on the descriptive and explanatory assessment of a situation (Creswell, 2018). The qualitative design emphasizes meanings, beliefs, and discourses, as opposed to laws and rules, correlations between social categories, or deductive models (Rhodes, 2017). It helps to understand the underlying opinions and motivations of the problem and provide insight for potential quantitative research. Merriam (2020) stresses that qualitative research design is an umbrella term covering a range of interpretive techniques which seek to describe and translate not the frequency of certain naturally occurring phenomena in the social world but are interested in understanding the meaning that people have constructed about the world.

This research design falls within the interpretive ontological paradigm and holds the view that reality does not exist without knowing it – thus, reality is best understood by how people interpret their experience of social life in the world (Creswell, 2018).

This study employed qualitative research design to examine insecurity in urban marketplaces, focusing on the experiences of women traders in the Madina market. Qualitative research allows the group understudied to express themselves freely (Saunders et al., 2012). Following this, the qualitative design is chosen to allow the researcher to interrogate the traders' experiences of insecurity in the market.

Kumekpor (2002) further explains that the purpose of qualitative research is not to only explore a range of opinions but also the different representations of the issue to maximize the opportunity to understand the different positions taken by various actors in a particular context. So, for this study, the researcher sought not to only take the views on security issues that impact women traders but also to understand the range of measures taken by market leaders and local government in protecting traders in the market.

3.4 Population of Study

A research population involves all elements– individuals, objects, and events– that meet the sample criteria for inclusion in a study (Flick, 2018). For Creswell (2018), a population is the total number of the target of the research as defined by the research objectives. The population comes in two types– targeted and accessible. The targeted are the ones the researcher is interested in generalizing the conclusion to, and the accessible is the population the sample is drawn from (Creswell, 2018). In this study, the population includes all women traders in the Madina market. The population of the women traders at Madina market is estimated around 3500.

3.5 Sample Size and Sampling Technique

According to Javadi & Zarea (2016), sampling in qualitative research considers factors such as the study population and access to information. To gain a preliminary understanding of the market dynamics, observation and informal engagement with participants in the Madina market were conducted. These initial observations helped identify market days, establish contacts, and schedule participants for interviews. As Creswell (2018) explains, a qualitative study benefits from a population that is not too large to ensure feasibility within a specified period. Consequently, a total of twenty (20) participants were selected for this study. The sample includes one (1) police commander in Madina, two (2) Assemblymen, one (1) traditional ruler, three (3) market leaders (trade union leaders for both men and women), and thirteen (13) traders. The researcher determined this sample size based on the saturation effect, which is a point at which data collection no longer yields new or additional insights.

The study employed both purposive and snowball sampling techniques to select participants. Purposive sampling was used because it allowed the researcher to deliberately select individuals who had relevant knowledge or experiences regarding security issues in the Madina market. According to Palinkas et al. (2015), purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling method that enables researchers to focus on a specific phenomenon by selecting knowledgeable experts. In this study, key stakeholders such as market leaders, law enforcement, and local government representatives were included to provide well-informed perspectives on the insecurity challenges in the market. According to Etikan et al. (2016), purposive sampling ensures that individuals are chosen based on their ability to provide in-depth and relevant information, thereby improving the accuracy and richness of the data collected.

On the other hand, snowball sampling was used to reach additional participants, particularly traders who had experienced insecurity firsthand but might not have been easily accessible through direct recruitment. Given that insecurity is a sensitive issue and some affected traders might have been

hesitant to participate initially, using informal networks helped build trust and encouraged more participants to share their experiences. Snowball sampling also allowed for a more organic expansion of the sample by leveraging personal and professional connections. As Wendy et al. (2018) note, this method is useful for studying topics where respondents may be difficult to identify, such as crime victims or individuals reluctant to discuss their experiences publicly.

By combining purposive sampling (to ensure the inclusion of knowledgeable stakeholders) and snowball sampling (to reach hidden or reluctant participants), this study was able to capture a diverse range of perspectives on gendered insecurity in the Madina market. The dual approach strengthened the sampling process by ensuring both intentional selection of key informants and expansion of the participant pool through trusted networks, ultimately leading to more comprehensive and nuanced insights.

For data collection, semi-structured interviews were used, allowing flexibility in exploring participants' experiences while ensuring that key research questions were addressed. Semi-structured interviews were chosen because they enable the researcher to probe deeper into participants' responses and allow new topics or issues to emerge during the conversation (Silverman, 2020). An interview guide was developed containing a set of pre-determined questions, but the structure allowed for follow-up questions based on the direction of the conversation. This approach helped ensure that all essential areas of the study were covered while maintaining an organic flow in the interviews.

For the key informant interviews, participants such as the police commander, market leaders, and Assemblymen were asked questions that were more focused on policy, the market's structure, and security strategies. The interview guide for these participants included specific questions related to their roles and perspectives on addressing security concerns. The purpose was to gain expert insights into the existing security frameworks and to identify potential gaps in policy or enforcement.

Additionally, checklists were employed for the observations. These checklists ensured that relevant aspects of security issues—such as the presence of security personnel, the lighting conditions, and any informal security measures used by traders—were systematically noted. The checklist was designed based on the themes emerging from the literature review, providing a consistent framework for the observations across different market days.

The use of these instruments—semi-structured interviews, key informant interviews, and checklists for observation—provided rich, context-specific data, allowing the researcher to triangulate findings from different sources and methods. This methodological approach enhanced the validity and reliability of the study, offering a comprehensive understanding of the gendered insecurities faced by women traders in the Madina market.

3.6 Sources of Data

Primary data were used for the study. Primary data are data through surveys, interviews, observations, questionnaires, and experiments, especially collected to comprehend and address the current study issue (Hox & Boeije, 2005). These data were obtained from the field through interviews and personal observations.

3.7 Data Collection Methods and Procedure

The study employed two data collection techniques –In-depth interviews and Key- Informant interviews to collect primary data directly from the field.

3.7.1 In-depth Interviews

This study utilized in-depth interviews, a qualitative research method aimed at conducting comprehensive interviews with a limited number of participants. The interviews followed an interview guide (refer to Appendix I, page 69) comprising primarily open-ended questions centered on key themes such as incidents of robbery, harassment, discrimination, coping strategies, and perceptions of safety within the market. Each interview spanned between 25 to

35 minutes, enabling thorough exploration of participants' experiences and viewpoints. With participants' consent, the interviews were audio-recorded and later transcribed for analysis purposes. The goal of employing in-depth interviewing was to gather detailed insights into individual traders' perspectives, experiences, and sentiments regarding security issues in the Madina market. In-depth interviewing is widely recognized as a crucial qualitative technique in social sciences for gaining nuanced understanding of topics requiring deeper investigation.

3.7.2 Key- Informant Interviews

The Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) entail speaking with a small group of people who often have the knowledge, suggestions, and insights needed on a certain subject (Bornstein et al., 2017). The study used an interview guide (see Appendix II, page 70). In this interview, the informants are chosen because the researcher believes they can provide the appropriate information for the purpose of the study. Interview guides are used to conduct them, and they include a list of the topic areas and concerns that are to be discussed. In the process of interviews, the interviewer constructs the real questions. These interviews are conducted in an informal setting that feels like a conversation between friends. To obtain more information, the interviewer gently probes the informants while taking detailed notes that are later developed. The interviewer returns to the main informant if all pertinent topics are not covered in one session. The interviews' unstructured form gives them specific meaning and relevance in the current discussion (Kumar 1989). This key-informant interview was used to collect data from the market leaders, police, and local government authorities.

The interviews, both the individual and key-informant, therefore, allowed the researcher to get the experiences of the market women, police, market women association leaders (often called Market Queens), and Assemblymen through a dialogue. Each interview session was tape- recorded and supplemented with notes taken regarding the context of the interview.

Bryman (2016) suggests that interviews ought to be tape-recorded so the interviewer can be

focused, follow important points, and ask probing questions where necessary. These procedures enabled the researcher to triangulate the response and ensure high accuracy.

3.8 Data Management and Analysis Technique

The data which was gathered through the interviews are analysed qualitatively using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is one of the most used but often poorly defined approaches in the qualitative research community (Lochmiller, 2021). This method is principally concerned with the identification of patterns which are then reported as researcher-generated themes (Cresswell, 2017). The data from the interviews are organised and categorised according to patterns and structures that connect to the objectives of the study. The reason for doing this is to allow the researcher to obtain a full and clearer picture of the subject matter under discussion. Some of the themes and concepts that are derived from the research questions include the forms and frequency of insecurities, security measures in the market, and the strategies adopted to mitigate insecurity. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), thematic analysis is flexible and provides a holistic account of participants' experiences. The study, therefore, analysed the interviews, which were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim, and presented them in the form of speech marks/quotations.

With data management, the transcripts were checked against original recordings for accuracy and analysed using a general inductive approach. As recommended by Bornstein et al. (2017), the first stages involve preparation of the raw data and familiarisation with the data through close readings and re-reading of the transcripts. The first phase is familiarisation with the data. Therefore, at this stage, the data was transcribed, read, and re-read. In the second phase, initial codes were generated. According to Creswell (2018), this phase is the systematic coding of interesting features of the data. In the third phase, codes were collated into themes (Javadi and Zarea, 2016; Saunders et al., 2012). In analysing the data, in line with the descriptions, after transcribing the interviews, the researcher read through the transcripts

to understand the data. Next, the codes were generated to enable the categorization of the themes and sub-themes. All the themes were in line with the study's objectives. Snippets of the interviews were also used to support the various themes identified in the study.

The interviews for this study were conducted in both Twi and Ga, as these are the common languages spoken by the respondents. I personally recorded and transcribed all the interviews. To ensure accuracy, I carefully listened to the recordings multiple times and cross-checked the transcriptions with the original audio to make sure every detail was captured correctly. Additionally, I made sure to review the transcriptions for clarity and consistency, especially when there were nuances or regional dialects, to accurately reflect the respondents' words and meanings.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

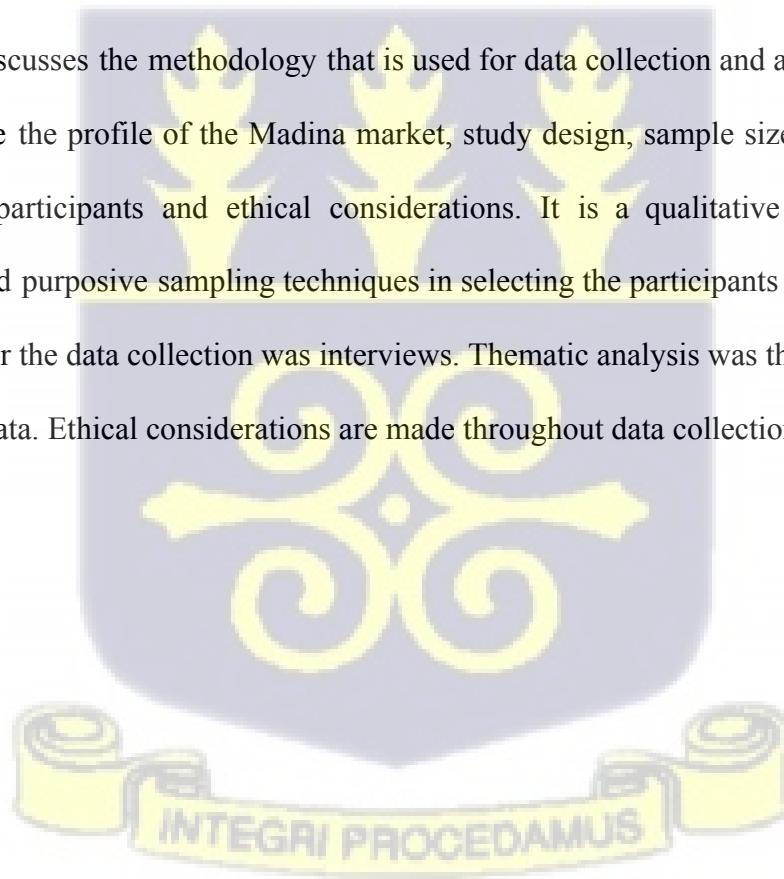
According to Creswell (2018), irrespective of the approach used in qualitative research inquiry, ethical issues surface during data collection, analysis, and dissemination of qualitative reports. Therefore, an introductory letter was obtained from ISSER and presented to the appropriate authorities in the community for permission to be granted before the data collection. Since the topic is a bit sensitive, written consent were obtained from each participant before the interview begun. In seeking both written and verbal consent, the participants were informed about the aim of the study and its potential risks before they participated in the interviews. In instances where the participant is non-literate, the consent form was read aloud in translated language to the participant in the presence of a literate witness who is not part of the researcher. Since the study is qualitative, during the consent process, participants were made aware that they were to be recorded and the recorder was only turned on when consent was obtained.

The study also assured the participants that their participation is voluntary. This enabled them to make judgments as to whether to participate in the study or withdraw. By this, the

researcher explained to the respondents that they are under no force to participate in the study and, that they were free to withdraw at any stage of the interview. These steps were taken to ensure the privacy and confidentiality of the data collected. The participants were assured that the data collected were to be kept strictly confidential and publications resulting from the research would ensure complete anonymity of participants. Emphasis was placed on the fact that pseudonyms were used to represent their responses so that no one could associate their names with statements from the interview. In this regard, the researcher made all efforts to establish rapport with the participants and followed up on participants via phone calls and WhatsApp messaging.

Chapter Conclusion

This chapter discusses the methodology that is used for data collection and analysis. Sections covered include the profile of the Madina market, study design, sample size, the procedures for accessing participants and ethical considerations. It is a qualitative study that uses snowballing and purposive sampling techniques in selecting the participants of the study. The method used for the data collection was interviews. Thematic analysis was then employed for analyzing the data. Ethical considerations are made throughout data collection and analysis.



CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter outlined the methodology and data collection procedures. This chapter presents the results and discussions of data gathered regarding insecurity among women traders in the Madina market. The results are presented using narratives, and statements from the respondents in the field. The analysis and discussion of these results revolve around themes derived from the study's objectives. These themes serve as focal points for exploring the nuanced dynamics of insecurity experienced by women traders in the market. This offers valuable insights into the challenges and coping mechanisms of women traders' experiences of insecurity strategies adopted to mitigate insecurity and the effectiveness of existing security measures in the market from the perspectives of women traders.

4.2 Demographics Characteristics of Participants

This research was conducted primarily among women traders in the Madina market, with a total of twenty participants. Of these, sixteen were market women, including two women who served as leaders of the market's trade union. The participants also included a police officer, 2 assembly leaders, and a traditional ruler. The demographic data gathered included age, level of education, marital status, years of operation in the market, and the economic activity engaged in.

4.2.1 Age Distribution of Participants

Table 4.1: Frequency Distribution of Age of Respondents

Age range	Frequency	Percentage of Respondents
30-35	2	10
36-40	4	20

41-45	5	25
46-50	3	15
51-55	4	20
56-60	1	5
60+	1	5

Source: Field Data (2023)

Regarding the age distribution of the twenty participants, two of the participants were in the 30- to 35-year-old age range, and four were in the 36- to 40-year-old age range. Five of the participants were in between the ages of 41 and 45. Three participants, meanwhile, ranged in age from 46 to 50. Four participants, who comprised another noteworthy subset of the study, were between the ages of 51 and 55. Moreover, one participant belonged to each of the age groups of 56 to 60 and 61 to 65, indicating that the research sample included more mature adults.

4.2.2 Educational Level of Participants

Table 4.2: Frequency distribution of educational level of respondents

Education Level	Number of Participants	Percentage of Respondents
Tertiary Education	3	15
Senior High School	9	45
Junior High School	2	10
Primary School	2	10
No Formal Education	4	20

Source: Field Data (2023)

In terms of educational attainment, nine of the twenty participants had completed Senior High School (SHS), showing that a sizable proportion of the study group had reached this level of schooling. Three participants held university education qualifications, indicating a

small but significant representation of higher education attainment in the sample. Two participants had



finished junior high school (JHS), accounting for a small proportion of the study group. Two participants also stated that they abandoned their academic pursuits at the primary level. Four participants had no formal education, demonstrating the educational variance among the women traders at the Madina market.

4.2.3 Marital Status of Participants

Table 4.3: Marital status of participants

Marital status	Number of Participants	Percentage of Respondents
Married	15	75
Single	2	10
Widow	1	5
Cohabiting	2	10

Source: Field Data (2023)

The information on the participants' marital status shows that the group of women traders in the Madina market is diversified. Fifteen of the twenty participants said they were married, two said they were single, one said she was a widow, and two said they cohabitated.

4.2.4 Years of Operation in the Market

Table 1: Years of operations of respondents in the market:

Years of operation in the market	Number of Participants	Percentage of Respondents
0-5	5	25
6-10	11	55
11-15	3	15
16-20	1	5

Field Data (2023)

The data regarding the number of years participants have operated in the market reflects a range of experiences and durations of involvement within the marketplace community. Out of

the total participants, five individuals reported operating in the market for a period ranging from 0 to 5 years. Eleven participants indicated that they have been operating in the market for 6 to 10 years, suggesting a substantial portion of the study group had established a moderate level of experience and familiarity with the market environment. Furthermore, three participants reported a tenure of 11 to 15 years. Finally, one participant had operated in the market for 16 to 20 years.

4.2.5 Economic Activities of Participants

Table 4.5: Economic activities of participants

Economic activities	Number of Participants	Percentage of Respondents
Selling Clothes and Accessories: fabrics, already-made wears and accessories.	4	20
Retailing food items: vegetables, fruits, and grains	7	35
Providing household goods: utensils, cleaning suppliers, and appliances	7	35
Law Enforcement	1	5
Not working	1	5

Source: Field Data (2023)

The data on economic activities among the participants in the marketplace reveals a diverse range of roles and occupations. Four participants are primarily engaged in selling clothes and accessories. Additionally, seven participants are involved in retailing food items, specializing in providing essential staples like vegetables, fruits, and grains. Also, seven participants are dedicated to providing household goods, offering a range of items including utensils, cleaning supplies, and appliances. Beyond traditional marketplace roles, one participant serves in law enforcement. Lastly, one participant is not engaged in any specific economic activity.

4.3 Security Challenges faced by Women Traders in Madina Market

The qualitative data collected from the interviews with traders and KII at Madina Market revealed significant security challenges that impact their daily business operations. These insights provide a comprehensive understanding of the nature and extent of security issues that women traders face in the market.

4.3.1 Prevalence of Theft

The majority of the traders reported frequent theft incidents, which have become a common occurrence in the market. One trader stated,

“There are a lot of theft cases in this market. Every Monday, you will hear that someone has had something stolen from them in the market. This is because we don't come to the market on Sundays. That's why I'm saying we are not safe.”

This sentiment highlights the regularity of thefts and suggests a pattern where thieves take advantage of the traders' absence on Sundays.

Another trader echoed this concern, describing a typical scenario where theft occurs:

“Sometimes you will sell to people and leave it here, and by the time the owner wants to pick it up, it has been stolen. So, it does happen a lot. Sometimes they will just gather here as if they want to buy something, but by the time you realize it, they have stolen.”

This statement illustrates the deceptive tactics used by thieves, who blend in as customers before committing the act.

The data also indicate that both insiders and outsiders are involved in these thefts. One trader pointed out that even trusted workers could not be completely relied upon:

“[Yes] Sometimes, it's our own workers, like the head porters [Kayaye], who steal from us. Also, those who come to the market to shop and the people from the ghetto

are the



real thieves. You don't have to trust them. Even if your shop is closed, they will force it open and steal because some of them sleep there at night."

This highlights a critical issue where individuals who are part of the market's daily operations are implicated in thefts, complicating trust and security measures.

The traders consistently indicated that foodstuffs are the most commonly stolen items in the market. One trader recounted a significant loss involving yams:

"...they took my yams which I bought for 2500 cedis. I didn't sell any of it but I had to pay for it."

This statement illustrates the financial impact on traders when their goods are stolen, as they not only lose potential sales but also have to bear the cost of the stolen items.

Another trader pointed out that sellers of cereals and grains are particularly vulnerable to theft:

"I think it's those that sell cereals and grains, who are mostly robbed."

This suggests that thieves target these types of goods, possibly due to their relatively high value and ease of transportation.

A significant factor that traders believe contributes to theft in the market is the poor lighting system. One trader explained,

"The lighting system in the market is really not the best. Most of the theft incidents we have recorded here in the market occurred at night. This is because, at night, the market becomes dark and quite difficult to see every activity. As a result, thieves take the opportunity of the darkness to steal our monies and items."

This statement highlights how the lack of proper illumination at night creates an environment conducive to criminal activities, as it becomes challenging to monitor and control the market area effectively.

Another critical factor identified by the traders is the insufficient number of security personnel in the market. One trader pointed out,

“...also, the whole market we have just 3 security men although the number is small that’s the best the Assembly says they can do for us so we can’t say much but the truth is we are not safe.”

The presence of only three security men for the entire market is clearly inadequate, given the size and scale of the market operations. This shortage of security staff leaves large areas of the market vulnerable to theft and other criminal activities.

Additionally, a key informant noted that theft is particularly prevalent among traders who sell in unauthorized and unapproved areas, such as the roadside. The informant stated,

“The areas where these traders often set up their trade are unauthorized and unapproved. This exposes their products to theft by hoodlums and evil-minded persons who come to the market to steal.”

The prevalence of theft as a significant security challenge in Madina Market aligns with empirical findings in existing literature. Studies have consistently identified inadequate security personnel as a contributing factor to theft in various market settings (Makinde, 2017). A shortage of security personnel limits the market's ability to effectively monitor and prevent theft incidents, leaving traders vulnerable to criminal activities (Adams, 2015). This finding resonates with the perspectives of traders and key informants in Madina Market, who attribute theft to the lack of sufficient security personnel provided by the authorities.

Moreover, poor lighting has been identified as a common environmental factor that facilitates theft in marketplaces (Gill et al., 2014). Inadequate lighting creates opportunities for thieves to operate under the cover of darkness, making it difficult for traders and security personnel to detect and deter criminal activities effectively. This aligns with the observations in Madina

Market, where traders lamented the subpar lighting system as a contributing factor to theft incidents. Improving lighting infrastructure in marketplaces has been recommended as a proactive measure to enhance security and reduce theft (Wang & Taylor, 2017).

Furthermore, trading in unauthorized spaces has been linked to increased security risks in market environments (Brennan et al., 2018). Unauthorized spaces may lack formal security measures and oversight, making them prime targets for criminal activities such as theft. In Madina Market, traders reported theft incidents occurring more frequently in areas where trading was unauthorized, underscoring the correlation between unauthorized trading spaces and heightened security risks. Addressing this issue may require regulatory interventions to ensure that all trading activities take place in designated and secure areas within the market.

4.3.2 Absence of harassment and discrimination

All the women traders interviewed reported that they do not face harassment or discrimination while conducting their business in the market. This positive feedback is significant in understanding the social dynamics within the market.

One trader affirmed,

“I have never been harassed or discriminated against here. We all work together and respect each other.”

This statement reflects a supportive and respectful working environment among the traders.

Another trader shared a similar sentiment, stating,

“In this market, we don't experience harassment or discrimination. Everyone is focused on their business and helping each other out.”

This reinforces the notion that the market community is cohesive and mutually supportive, providing a safe space for all traders to operate.

4.4 Socio-cultural norms and beliefs for coping or dealing with insecurity in the market

4.4.1 Invoking Curses

The qualitative data collected reveal that socio-cultural norms and beliefs play a significant role in shaping how women traders perceive and cope with insecurity in Madina Market. One trader mentioned the influence of traditional beliefs on theft deterrence:

“People are hesitant to steal from this side of the marketplace because the owners are believed to possess a curse that would afflict any would-be thief. Consequently, the fear of the owner's retribution deters potential thieves from attempting to steal.”

This statement highlights how the fear of supernatural consequences can serve as a powerful deterrent against theft, thereby influencing the security dynamics within the market.

One trader recounted an incident where a trader invoked curses on a thief publicly, resulting in a significant deterrent effect:

“One time here in the market, a thief stole a trader's products worth 700 cedis. This woman invoked curses on the thief publicly and during the day. For more than a month, we did not record any theft cases here in the market.”

This statement highlights how the fear of supernatural consequences, such as curses, can serve as a powerful deterrent against theft, leading to a period of heightened security within the market. Besides, the trader's account emphasizes the public and communal nature of invoking curses as a form of justice:

“This woman invoked curses on the thief publicly and during the day.”

The public nature of this act not only amplifies its deterrent effect but also reinforces the communal solidarity and shared responsibility for maintaining security within the market.

The

Traders' collective belief in the efficacy of such traditional practices contributes to a sense of accountability and mutual protection within the market community. Additionally, this incident illustrates the role of traditional beliefs in supplementing formal security measures:

“For more than a month, we did not record any theft cases here in the market.”

While formal security personnel may be limited, the traders' reliance on traditional deterrents effectively fills the gap, resulting in a tangible reduction in theft incidents. This highlights the adaptive nature of the market community in utilizing both formal and informal mechanisms to ensure security and protect their livelihoods.

4.4.2 Communal Respect and Traditional Values

In addition to this belief, another trader emphasized the communal respect and traditional values that contribute to a sense of security:

“In this market, we (traders) have a strong belief in respecting each other's property. Many people here believe that stealing from someone would bring shame and bad luck to themselves and their family, so they avoid it.”

This reinforces the idea that socio-cultural values around respect and the fear of negative consequences for one's family can significantly impact behavior and contribute to a safer market environment.

4.4.3 Ritual Performance and the Use of Ritualistic Materials

Moreover, the traders' reliance on traditional practices as a coping mechanism is evident. One trader shared,

“Often, most of us perform certain traditional rites or rituals to protect our stalls. These practices make us feel safer and deter potential thieves. For me, I have this anointed water that I mostly spray over my goods before I start of the day's business and at the

end of the day. This practice brings me good luck and protects me and my goods from evil things including attacks and theft.”

This indicates that traditional rites and rituals are not only perceived as protective measures but also provide psychological comfort to the traders, helping them cope with the insecurity in the market.

The above findings underscore the significant influence of socio-cultural norms and beliefs on the perception and coping strategies of women traders in Madina Market regarding insecurity. This aligns with existing research that highlights the role of cultural factors in shaping individuals' responses to security challenges. For example, a study by Smith and Clarke (2016) emphasizes the importance of considering cultural beliefs and practices in understanding crime prevention strategies. The fear of curses and supernatural retribution mentioned in the study reflects a cultural belief system that serves as a deterrent against criminal behaviour, a phenomenon also observed in other cultural contexts (Wilson & Kelling, 1982).

Also, the communal respect for property and reliance on traditional protective practices identified in the study resonate with the concept of informal social control, as discussed by Sampson et al. (1997). Informal social control mechanisms, such as community norms and values, play a crucial role in regulating behavior and maintaining order within neighborhoods and marketplaces. The communal solidarity observed among women traders in Madina Market reflects a collective effort to uphold these norms and protect their shared interests, echoing the findings of studies on social cohesion and crime prevention (Skogan, 1990).

Lastly, the sense of control and reassurance derived from these cultural beliefs and practices can be seen as adaptive responses to the perceived inadequacies of formal security measures. Research by Chiu et al. (2011) suggests that individuals may resort to cultural rituals and beliefs as coping mechanisms in environments where formal security measures are perceived

to be lacking or ineffective. Therefore, the unique security culture observed in Madina Market represents a form of resilience and adaptive behaviour shaped by socio-cultural norms and beliefs, highlighting the importance of considering cultural factors in addressing security challenges in diverse settings.

4.5 Effects of market insecurity on economic activities of women traders

4.5.1 Increased Operational Cost / Diversion of productive resources

Traders reported that the inadequate security system necessitates additional expenses, such as hiring porters to transport goods to storage places. One trader lamented,

“Because the security system is bad in the market, we always waste money to hire porters to carry our load to storage places. These storage places where we keep our stuffs are also not for free. We pay for them. All these monies we waste could have been invested into our business to expand it.”

This highlights the financial strain imposed on traders due to the need for alternative security measures, diverting resources that could otherwise be reinvested into business growth.

Additionally, the insecurity in the market compels traders to incur additional transportation costs to safeguard their goods. Another trader expressed concern, stating,

“For me, I think leaving my stuffs here is unsafe. As a result, I always load my goods to and fro the market. This costs me a lot in terms of transportation, which if the security here was okay, I could have invested into my business.”

4.5.2 Potential business collapse and increased financial burden

Moreover, the data reveal the devastating consequences of security challenges on traders' financial stability, with some businesses facing collapse due to stolen goods and resulting financial burdens. A trader shared a distressing account, stating,

“Sometimes, especially when we have to go in for goods, we go and borrow money from microfinance institutions. However, when our goods are stolen, we are unable to pay back the loans, and that has even caused a former trader here to stop coming as a way to escape from the pressure from the lenders.”

This showcases how theft incidents not only lead to immediate financial losses but also exacerbate existing economic vulnerabilities, pushing some traders into insurmountable debt and forcing them to abandon their businesses.

A key informant highlighted a clear truth, stating:

“Theft cuts into the profits of traders. When items are stolen, traders lose both the money they spent to get those goods and the potential income from selling them. This means less money in their pockets to cover expenses like rent and wages, and it makes it harder for them to grow their businesses or invest in new products.”

4.5.3 Weakens traders’ ability to support community initiatives and fulfil tax obligations

Without enough profit, traders might struggle to stay in business, which can hurt the whole market and the community it serves. Besides, reduced profits from theft don't just affect individual traders—they can also weaken the market's role in the community. The informant further explained,

“When businesses have less money to spare, they might not be able to support local initiatives or contribute to community development via tax payments.”

This could lead to less community involvement and a weaker sense of togetherness in the market area. So, tackling security challenges like theft isn't just about protecting traders' money, it's about keeping the market strong and supporting the whole community.

4.5.4 Affects Mental and Emotional Well-being

Furthermore, another trader expressed the toll of security challenges on mental well-being,

stating,

“Every time I leave my stall unattended, I worry about whether my goods will still be there when I return. It's a constant source of stress.”

This quote illustrates how the pervasive threat of theft creates a persistent sense of anxiety among traders, impacting their peace of mind and overall emotional health.

Another trader echoed similar sentiments, sharing,

“The insecurity in the market makes me feel constantly on edge. I'm always looking over my shoulder, afraid that someone might steal from me.”

This view highlights the heightened state of vigilance and apprehension that security challenges induce in traders, further exacerbating their stress levels and contributing to a sense of insecurity in their work environment.

The findings regarding the effects of security challenges on women traders in Madina Market resonate with existing research on the economic and psychological impact of crime on businesses. Studies have consistently shown that security challenges, such as theft, results in financial losses for businesses due to theft of inventory (Smith et al., 2017). This aligns with the finding that security challenges lead to a waste of money and diversion of productive resources among women traders in Madina Market. Additionally, reduced profits resulting from security challenges can hinder businesses' ability to contribute to community development through the payment of taxes and other financial obligations (Baker et al., 2019).

This underlines the broader socio-economic implications of security challenges on both individual businesses and the community as a whole.

Also, the findings highlight the significant mental health consequences of security challenges on women traders, including stress and anxiety. Research has shown that exposure to crime and insecurity can have detrimental effects on individuals' psychological well-being, leading

to increased stress levels and anxiety (Fitzpatrick et al., 2016). This aligns with the observation that security challenges in Madina Market contribute to heightened stress and anxiety among women traders. Furthermore, the potential collapse of businesses due to security challenges can exacerbate financial burdens, particularly for vulnerable traders who may lack the resources to recover from such setbacks (Clarke & Newman, 2017). This underscores the importance of addressing security challenges in marketplaces to protect the economic and mental well-being of traders, particularly those from marginalized or vulnerable backgrounds. In conclusion, the findings showcase the multifaceted and far-reaching impact of security challenges on women traders in Madina Market. From financial losses and reduced profits to heightened stress and anxiety, security challenges have significant implications for both the economic prosperity and mental health of traders. Addressing these challenges requires comprehensive strategies that prioritize both physical security measures and support for traders' mental well-being. By addressing security concerns and promoting a safe and secure environment, policymakers and market stakeholders can help mitigate the adverse effects of security challenges on women traders and support the sustainable development of Madina Market.

4.6 Effectiveness of security measures in the market

4.6.1 Supply and Adequacy of Security Personnel

This final objective evaluates the effectiveness of the security measures in the Madina market. Traders and key informants were queried about the existing measures that are in place to safeguard traders against security threats and the efficacy of these measures.

The leader of the traders' union noted that while three security personnel are provided by the assembly, this number falls short of effectively addressing the security challenges in Madina Market. The leader remarked,

“There are three security personnel that have been provided by the assembly.

However, the number is inadequate to deal with the security challenge in the market.”

This highlights a clear discrepancy between the existing security resources and the scope of security issues faced by traders, indicating a need for increased personnel or alternative security measures.

4.6.2 Usefulness of Physical Barriers such as Padlocks

Additionally, despite the market being closed at the end of each business day with security padlocks, this measure alone appears insufficient to deter theft effectively. The leader of the traders’ union emphasized this point, stating,

“The market is always closed at the end of the business day with security padlocks.

However, the measure seems not enough to stem the tides of stealing in the market.”

This suggests that while physical barriers such as padlocks may offer some level of security, they may not be enough to deter determined thieves or prevent unauthorized access to the market premises.

4.6.3 Traditional or Ritual Protective Measures

Furthermore, traders resort to invoking curses and performing rituals, sometimes using ritual materials, as additional security measures. While these measures have occasionally deterred thieves, they are not always effective in preventing theft. As one trader explained,

“We invoke curses and sometimes perform rituals and use ritual materials to deter criminals from stealing our products. While sometimes these measures deter thieves, in other circumstances, it does not.”

This underlines the complex nature of security challenges in Madina Market and the limitations of relying solely on traditional or ritualistic approaches to address them.

The findings regarding the effectiveness of security measures in Madina Market highlight the complex nature of addressing security challenges in market environments. While the

presence of three security personnel and the use of padlocks to close the market may represent formal security measures, their effectiveness may be limited by factors such as resource constraints and the dynamic nature of criminal activities (Eck & Clarke, 2003). Research suggests that traditional security measures, such as security personnel and physical barriers, may have limited effectiveness in preventing crime without adequate support from complementary strategies, such as community engagement and environmental design (Clarke, 2004). This aligns with the observation that despite the presence of security personnel and padlocks, security challenges persist in Madina Market, indicating the need for a more comprehensive and integrated approach to security management.

Moreover, the reliance on curses, rituals, and ritualistic objects as security measures reflects the intersection of cultural beliefs and practical responses to security challenges in Madina Market. While such traditional practices may offer psychological reassurance to traders, their effectiveness in deterring crime may be subjective and context-dependent (Gill et al., 2014). Research on the efficacy of traditional security measures suggests that while they may have symbolic value and serve as expressions of community solidarity, their tangible impact on crime prevention may vary depending on factors such as community cohesion and the presence of formal security infrastructure (Chiu et al., 2011). Therefore, while traders' invocation of curses and performance of rituals may contribute to a sense of security, their effectiveness in addressing security challenges in Madina Market warrants further examination and consideration within the broader security management framework.

In conclusion, the findings suggest that the existing security measures in Madina Market, including security personnel, padlocks, and traditional protective practices, may not be adequate to address the complex security challenges faced by traders. Addressing security challenges in market environments requires a holistic and multifaceted approach that integrates formal security measures with community engagement, environmental design, and

cultural considerations (Clarke & Newman, 2017). By adopting a comprehensive security management strategy that acknowledges the diverse needs and perspectives of market stakeholders, policymakers and market administrators can work towards creating a safer and more secure environment for traders and the community as a whole.



CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the findings, provides conclusions on the study, and policy recommendations that could improve security in the Madina market, and Ghana as a whole.

5.2 Summary of key Findings

5.2.1 Security challenges faced by women traders in the Madina market.

The study's findings reveal a significant and recurring issue of theft within the Madina Market, with theft incidents reported as a common occurrence among traders. The absence of traders on Sundays seems to provide an opportune moment for thieves, contributing to a regular pattern of thefts. Traders report that theft often occurs when goods are left unattended, with thieves posing as customers to steal items. This deceptive tactic complicates the ability to identify potential thieves and safeguard goods effectively. Both external and internal actors, including trusted workers like head porters, are implicated in these thefts, indicating a complex security issue that erodes trust within the market community.

The types of goods most frequently stolen are primarily foodstuffs, with traders suffering substantial financial losses. One trader highlighted a significant theft involving yams worth 2500 cedis, underlining the economic impact on traders who lose both their goods and the money spent on them. Sellers of cereals and grains are also particularly vulnerable, suggesting that these goods are targeted due to their value and portability. The economic strain on traders is further exacerbated by the need to recover from these losses, which can significantly impact their livelihoods and business sustainability.

Several factors contribute to the high prevalence of theft, including inadequate lighting and insufficient security personnel. Poor lighting conditions at night create an environment where criminal activities can go unnoticed, making it easier for thieves to operate. The market's reliance on only three security personnel is insufficient for ensuring comprehensive coverage and effective crime prevention. Furthermore, traders operating in unauthorized areas, such as the roadside, are particularly vulnerable to theft, highlighting the need for better-regulated trading spaces and enhanced security measures. The combined impact of these factors underscores the need for a multifaceted approach to improve security and protect the livelihoods of traders in Madina Market.

However, the study did not find harassment and discrimination to be major issues affecting the traders. This indicates that, despite the prevalent theft and related security concerns, the market environment does not seem to pose substantial threats of harassment or discrimination against women traders.

5.2 Effects of Socio-cultural norms and beliefs on traders and coping strategies in Madina

The study reveals that socio-cultural norms and beliefs play a significant role in shaping how women traders at Madina Market perceive and cope with insecurity. Traditional beliefs, such as the fear of curses and supernatural retribution, act as powerful deterrents against theft. Traders believe that these cultural practices can effectively protect their goods. For example, one trader mentioned that the fear of a curse deters potential thieves, while another recounted an incident where a publicly invoked curse resulted in a noticeable decline in theft for over a month. These examples illustrate how deeply ingrained cultural beliefs contribute to the market's security dynamics.

The influence of communal respect and traditional values further enhances the sense of security among the traders. The shared belief in respecting each other's property and the fear

of bringing shame and bad luck to oneself and one's family discourage stealing. One trader emphasized that many people in the market avoid theft because they believe it would have negative repercussions for themselves and their families. This collective adherence to socio-cultural values fosters a sense of accountability and mutual protection within the market community, reinforcing social cohesion and deterrence against criminal activities.

Traders also rely on traditional practices as coping mechanisms to deal with insecurity. Rituals and rites are commonly performed to protect their stalls and goods, providing both a sense of physical protection and psychological comfort. One trader shared her practice of spraying anointed water over her goods to ward off evil and theft, highlighting the blend of spiritual and practical measures employed by the traders. These traditional practices supplement the limited formal security measures and demonstrate the traders' adaptive strategies to maintain security and protect their livelihoods in the face of ongoing challenges.

5.2.2 Effects of the Security Challenges and how they Affect Women traders in Madina Market

The findings from the study highlight the profound effects of security challenges on women traders in the Madina market, particularly emphasizing the financial and emotional tolls. Traders reported that the inadequate security system forces them to incur additional expenses, such as hiring porters to transport their goods to secure storage areas and paying for these storage services. This financial strain diverts resources away from business reinvestment and growth. Furthermore, the need to transport goods back and forth to avoid theft incurs significant transportation costs, further depleting funds that could otherwise be used to expand their businesses.

The economic impact of theft is starkly evident, as some traders face severe financial instability and potential business collapse due to stolen goods. One trader shared that the

inability to repay loans after theft incidents forced a fellow trader to abandon the market altogether, highlighting the dire consequences of inadequate security. A key informant emphasized that theft directly reduces traders' profits, affecting their ability to cover essential expenses and invest in their businesses. This economic strain not only hampers individual traders but also undermines the market's overall vitality and its role in community development through tax contributions.

Additionally, the constant threat of theft has a significant impact on the mental well-being of the traders. The persistent anxiety and stress of potentially losing their goods create a pervasive sense of insecurity and emotional distress. Traders expressed that this continuous vigilance and fear of theft make their work environment tense and challenging, affecting their peace of mind and overall emotional health. These findings underscore the need for effective security measures to protect the financial stability and mental well-being of the women traders in the Madina market, ensuring a safer and more supportive business environment.

5.2.3 Effectiveness of existing security measures in the Madina market

The study revealed significant insights into the effectiveness of existing security measures in the Madina market, highlighting both their strengths and limitations from the perspectives of women traders. Firstly, the presence of three security personnel provided by the assembly was acknowledged, but it was widely deemed inadequate by the traders and key informants. The leader of the traders' union emphasized that this number is insufficient to effectively address the multitude of security challenges faced in the market, suggesting a need for either more security personnel or alternative measures to better safeguard the traders.

In addition to personnel, the practice of closing the market with security padlocks at the end of each business day was also evaluated. Despite this measure, traders reported that it is not enough to deter theft effectively. The leader of the traders' union pointed out that while the padlocks provide some

level of security, they are insufficient to prevent theft, particularly from determined thieves. This highlights a gap in the security strategy, indicating that physical barriers alone are not enough to ensure the safety of goods and property within the market.

Furthermore, traders have resorted to invoking curses and performing rituals as supplementary security measures. These traditional practices sometimes deter criminals, but their effectiveness is inconsistent. One trader explained that while invoking curses and using ritual materials can occasionally prevent theft, they are not always reliable. This underscores the limitations of relying on traditional methods alone to address modern security issues. Overall, the findings suggest that the existing security measures in the Madina market, including personnel, physical barriers, and traditional practices, are not fully effective, necessitating a more comprehensive and robust approach to security.

5.3 Conclusion

In conclusion, addressing the security challenges in the Madina market is imperative for the economic stability and mental well-being of women traders. This study highlights the necessity of adopting a multifaceted approach that integrates both formal security measures and traditional practices. By enhancing security personnel, improving infrastructure, and fostering community involvement, a safer trading environment can be achieved. Collaborative efforts between traders, market authorities, and local government are crucial to developing sustainable solutions that not only protect traders' livelihoods but also support the overall vitality of the market. Ensuring robust security will empower women traders, contributing to their economic growth and fostering a resilient marketplace.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the study, these policy recommendations are outlined to improve security situation and women wellbeing in the Madina market.

Development and Implementation of Gender-Sensitive Security Measures: The study

recommends the development and implementation of gender-sensitive security measures in marketplaces, specifically targeting the vulnerabilities faced by women traders in the Madina market. This could include an increased police presence, installation of modern surveillance systems, and lighting improvements in high-risk areas identified for robbery. The key stakeholders for this recommendation include the local police, the Accra Metropolitan Assembly (AMA), and the Madina Market management, who can work together to ensure enhanced security for women traders.

Targeted Interventions for Vulnerable Market Setups: The city authorities and market management should design targeted interventions and policies aimed at improving security and reducing risks for traders, especially those operating in vulnerable setups such as stalls. These interventions could include providing financial support for security infrastructure improvements, offering self-defense training, and establishing support networks for vulnerable traders. Stakeholders such as the AMA, local government representatives, and the market leadership should collaborate to implement these policies effectively.

Community Engagement and Collaboration: To improve security in the Madina market, fostering collaboration among market women, police officers, market leaders, assemblymen, and other stakeholders is crucial. This could involve joint patrols, information-sharing mechanisms, and community forums to raise awareness and improve response times to security threats. The key stakeholders in this initiative include the local police, market management, community leaders, and traders, working together to enhance collective security efforts.

Environmental Considerations in Security Policy Design: The physical environment in which traders operate should be carefully considered when designing security policies and interventions. This includes evaluating factors such as market layout, access points, visibility,

and infrastructure quality to identify areas of vulnerability. The AMA, the Department of Urban Development, and Madina Market management should take responsibility for assessing and improving the infrastructure, ensuring that the market environment is designed to enhance security and safety for all traders.

5.3.1 Suggested Areas for Future Research

The study could not explore all vital areas and wishes for future research in the context of gender-based violence and insecurity among women traders in marketplaces to be focused on:

1. Future research could explore in-depth the impact of socioeconomic factors, such as income level, educational attainment, and access to resources, on security vulnerabilities among women traders. Investigating how these factors intersect with gender dynamics to influence risk perception, coping strategies, and experiences of violence and insecurity in market spaces, could provide insights into the root causes of vulnerability and inform targeted interventions to address socioeconomic inequalities and enhance resilience among women traders.
2. Another area could be to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the effectiveness of gender-sensitive security interventions in reducing violence and insecurity for women traders. This could explore longitudinal studies and participatory evaluations to understand the dynamics of security interventions and identify best practices for promoting safety and well-being among women traders, perception of crime and safety, trust in law enforcement, and empowerment of women in marketplaces.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR MARKET TRADERS

University of Ghana

Data collected is strictly confidential and the names of respondents would be treated as such. This study is strictly for academic purpose and will be used exclusively for that purpose.

A. Security Challenges in the Madina market:

1. How long have you been trading in the Madina market?
2. How is the security situation in the market? (Compare previous years and now).
3. What are the different security threats that traders face in the market? (Probe the specifics you know).
4. Which traders fall prey to these security threats and attacks? (Probe the gender statistics of attacks in the market – the vulnerable groups).
5. What is the cause of the attacks in the markets, especially on women? (Probe the kinds of traders being attacked, how often these attacks happen, and casualties).

B. How Socio-cultural Norms and Beliefs affect How Women Traders Perceive and Cope with Insecurity in the Madina market:

(This section to be targeted at women, but men opinions can be sought)

6. How do you cope with insecurities in the market as a woman? (Probe issues of harassment, robberies, and discriminations, and how they live with others in the market).
7. Are there belief systems that prevent you from opening up anytime you are discriminated against, harassed, or robbed in the market? (Explore these beliefs and norms and how it affects their trade).
8. How do women speak against insecurities in the market? (Probe the different network groups and associations, and their rule of engagements in the market, whether ethnic-based, business-based, or gender-based, and how they operate).
9. How are you treated by other traders (males or female) in this market? (Explore how they protect one another).

10. What are your views on beliefs and norms that suppress women to speaking up on certain issues, especially issues of harassments in the market?

C. How Insecurity Affects Economic Activities in the Madina market:

11. Walk me through your experience with insecurity in the Madina market (Probe the different security threats in the market, whether (s)he has been attacked).
12. How have these insecurities affected economic activities in the market? (Probe the extent of effects, who are affected most, and what businesses are affected most).
13. How long does it take for the businesses to recover? (Probe who recovers fast, whether male or female traders, and why the case).
14. What are the effects that insecurities cause to traders in the market? (Probe the different ways traders are affected, and how the whole market is affected).

D. Measures to Ensure Security in the Madina market:

15. How often do you report attacks in the market to the authorities? (Probe for attacks that are not reported, and why they don't report them).
16. What is your experience anytime insecurities are reported to the authorities? (Probe the reaction of market authorities, police, and how swift they respond to these reports).
17. What measures have been put in place to protect traders in the market? (Probe for existing measures and the additional/new measures, if any).
18. How are these measures enforced? (Probe for their effectiveness in curbing insecurities in the Madina market).
19. What are the challenges in implementing the measures? (Probe for the specific challenges and the people making it difficult to enforce the measures).
20. How are these security measures formulated (Probe whether the traders were consulted and/or there is security education on some of these measures).
21. How satisfied are the traders (you) with these security measures in protecting you in the market?

E. Background Information of Respondent:

Informant Phone	Age	Sex	Position	Educational level	Marital status	Main occupation
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22. What about this market attracted you to trade here but not other markets in Accra?
(Compare markets in terms of security).
23. What will cause you to relocate from the Madina market, to say enough is enough?
24. What support or assistance do you get for trading in this market?
25. How much daily/monthly do you make being a trader in this market?

Thank you for your participation.



Appendix 2

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR OPINION LEADERS

University of Ghana

Data collected is strictly confidential and the names of respondents would be treated as such. This study is strictly for academic purpose and will be used exclusively for that purpose.

A. Security Challenges in the Madina market:

1. How long have you been living in the Madina community?
2. How is the security situation of Madina, especially in the market?
3. What are the different security threats that traders face in the Madina market? (Probe the specifics you know).
4. Which market traders fall prey to these security threats and attacks? (Probe the gender statistics of attacks in the market).
5. What is the cause of the attacks in the markets, especially on women? (Probe whether there are (un)planned attacks, kinds of traders attacked, how often the attacks happen).

B. How Insecurity Affects Economic Activities in the Madina market:

6. Walk me through your experience with insecurity in the market (Probe the different security threats in the market).
7. How have these insecurities affected economic activities in the market? (Probe the extent of effects, who are affected most, and what businesses are affected).
8. How long does it take for the businesses to recover? (Probe who recovers first, whether male or female traders, and why the case).
9. What are the effects that insecurities cause to traders in the market? (Probe the different ways traders are affected, and how the whole market is affected).

C. Measures to Ensure Security in the Madina market:

10. How often do you get reports about attacks in the Madina markets? (Probe for attacks that are also not report and their reactions to these reports)

11. What measures have been put in place to protect traders in the market? (Probe for existing measures and the additional/new measures, if any).
12. How are these measures enforced? (Probe for their effectiveness in curbing insecurities in the Madina market).
13. What are the challenges in implementing the measures? (Probe the specific challenges and the people making it difficult to enforce the measures).
14. How are these security measures formulated (Probe whether there are consultations with market traders).
15. How satisfied are the market traders with these security measures?

D. Background Information of Participant:

Informant Phone	Age	Sex	Position	Educational level	Marital status	Main occupation

