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RESEARCH ARTICLE

URBAN EXTENSION AND RECONVERSION OF URBAN MARKETS IN ANGREEXTENSION

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Abstract

The urban dynamics have been very important over the last two decades in the town of Abidjan. The front pioneers of these spatial extension phenomena are the peripheries which are expanding to meet the high demand for housing of the Abidjanese and which are often under-equipped with commercial infrastructures. Angré extension, a residential area located to the north of the municipality of Cocody, is part of this dynamic of demographic pressure and recomposition of urban markets to adapt to the consumption needs of resident populations. This research therefore focuses on the impact of the spatial expansion of the town of Abidjan through commercial activity in the quarter of Angré extension. To achieve this, the methodology was based on documentary research and a field survey involving observation and a questionnaire survey of 80 shopkeepers and 70 local customers who are heads of households in the study area. The results of our analysis revealed that under the effect of the urban expansion of the city of Abidjan, the urban markets in Angré extension are undergoing a reconfiguration whose dynamics are based on multiple attractive independent commercial centers. The promoters are private individuals of diverse cultural origins. Beyond the permanent supply of foodstuffs and other consumer goods, these urban markets strongly influence the structure of this residential neighborhood and considerably modify the lifestyle of its residents.

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Introduction:-

Côte d'Ivoire is subjected to a very accelerated urbanization process, the rate of which was 2,1% in 1921, rose to 32% in 1975 and then to 50,3% in 2014, this represents an increase of 29 points since the beginning of the urbanization process (DALOGEO, 2020). In the district of Abidjan, this urbanization, with a rate of 97, 5%, is supported by two phenomena: spatial expansion, the average annual rate of which remains high and has peaked at around 1, 8%/year since 2000 (DALOGEO, 2020), and sustained demographic growth, which has made the greater Abidjan area the hub of the urban system in Côte d'Ivoire, concentrating 4.395.243 inhabitants, this represent 38, 7% of the country's urban population. These very pronounced urban dynamics in the district have been accompanied by residential dynamics and the emergence of local commerce in urban areas located on the outskirts and under-equipped commercially. Angré, a residential quarter in the commune of Cocody, is not immune to this phenomenon, which is detrimental to its residents. Indeed, in this neighborhood, the urbanization of the economic capital has favored a spatial division with its corollary of scarcity in essential services of current consumption.

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Obviously, this deficit, which widens the gap between this district and the rest of the commune in terms of consumption needs, has led to a reconversion of commercial activity in this northern part of Cocody.

This urban reality experienced by the people of Angré extension poses the problem of the urban outskirts of Abidjan that are under-equipped commercially, especially in the municipality of Cocody. In connection with these observations and this problem, the main question that this study raises is how the urban extension of the town of Abidjan has induced a reconversion of urban markets in Angré extension in the municipality of Cocody? To answer this question, we have to show the organization and spatial distribution of urban markets in the Angré extension, identify the socio-demographic and economic profile of the actors, and analyze the impact of these urban markets in the Angré extension.

Data collection method and tools

Our study focuses on the urban space of the district of Cocody, more especially on Angré extension. Located to the east of Abidjan, the municipality of Cocody is an integral part of the district of Abidjan. Angré extension is located in the north of this commune (Fig. 1).

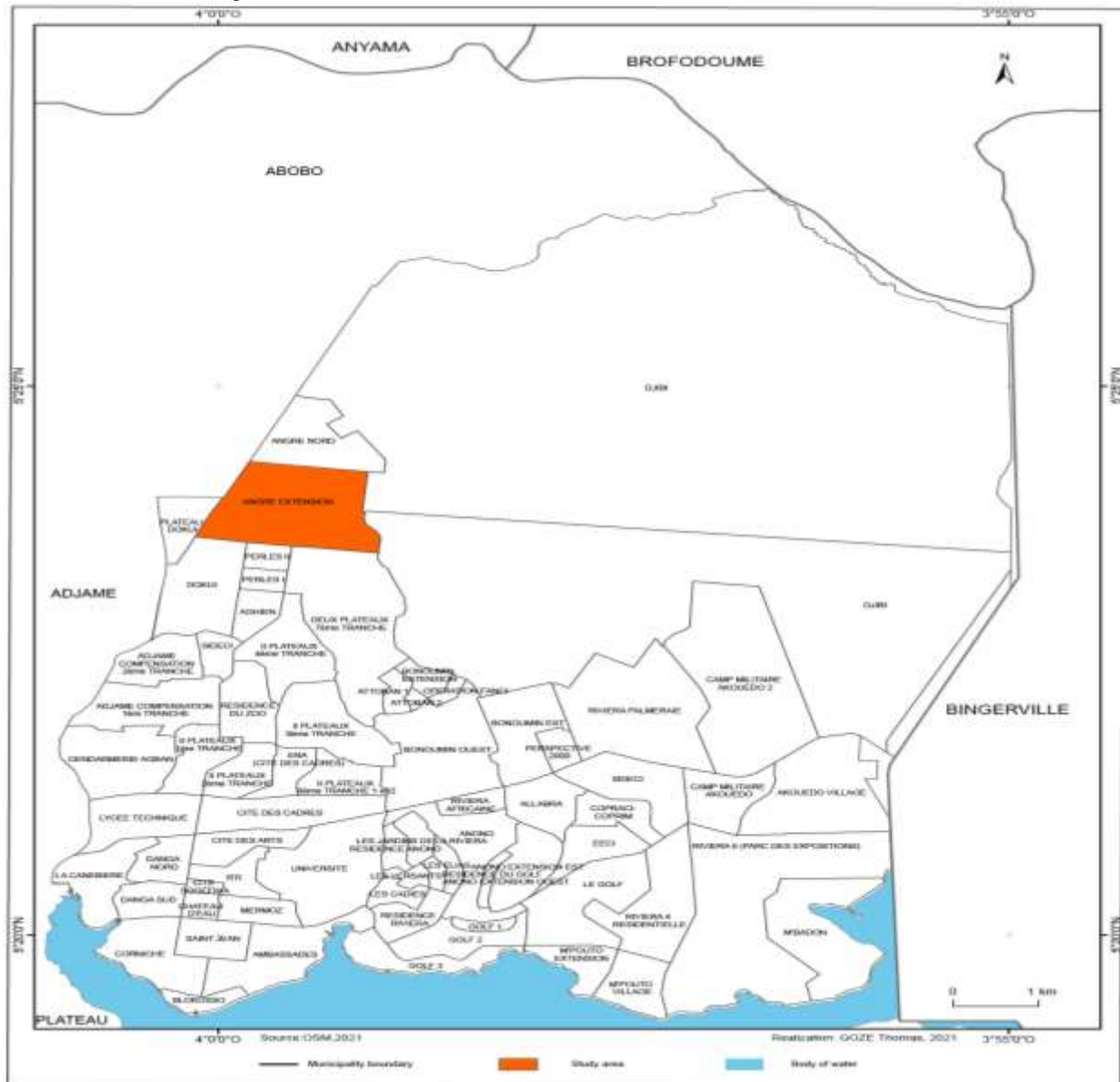


Figure1:- Location of the study area.

Cocody stretches out on the area of 132 km², that is to say that 6, 23% of the Abidjan area. It has 447. 055 inhabitants, that is to say that 10, 17% of the population of the town of Abidjan. (I.N.S, 2014). The choice of this study site is a response to the fact that Cocody is being stretched in the direction of its northern periphery by the creation of Angré, which is a residential area highly prized by buyers of building land. Angré extension is subject to the spatial dynamics of the town of Abidjan, which has caused it to move away from existing commercial centers such as the large Cocovico market located at Angré^{8^{ème}}. As a result, the supply of essential basic consumer services is no longer assured in this neighborhood, in order to obtain a better living environment. In this context, commercial activity has had to adapt to these negative externalities of urban dynamics through reconversion.

This article is based on a documentary research, an inventory and a field survey made of observation and questionnaire. The documentary research was carried out in the libraries of the Institute of Tropical Geography (IGT), the Institute of Research and Development (IRD), the Autonomous District of Abidjan and in the documentation services of the Cocody town hall. It consisted of collecting data on urban dynamics and their impacts on urban areas located on the periphery. In addition, the consultation of study reports, research papers and specialized scientific articles provided us with a great deal of information on the major transformations of traditional urban patterns of commercial activities. The factors of these transformations as well as the forms of social externalities that arise. This documentary research was completed by an inventory of all the new commercial centers converted in the quarter of Angré extension. Field observations carried out from September 2021 to December of the same year were used to identify the new forms of businesses that are developing as well as their impact on the structure of the neighborhood landscape. This phase of the research was completed by taking photographs. The interview guides that were developed were sent to a variety of managers of these commercial structures in order to find out how they operate and how they are organized. The questionnaire survey made it possible to send a survey form containing about forty closed questions to 80 shopkeepers in order to understand the socio-demographic and economic characteristics of these actors in the reconverted shops in the study area. Seventy local customers who were heads of households and randomly selected from the shopping center aisles or around the food stalls were also interviewed. Questions were asked about their geographic location in relation to the place of supply of foodstuffs, and their motivations for choosing these places of supply of frequented products. All the information collected through these investigative tools above allowed us to develop a plan articulated around:

- the functioning, organization and spatial distribution of urban markets in the Angré extension;
- the socio-demographic and economic profile of traders in Angré extension;
- the analysis of the impact of these urban markets in the Angré extension.

Results:-

Functioning, organization and spatial distribution of markets in Angré extension

To supply its residents who become more and more many because of the urbanization that Angré extension lives, we are witnessing in this peripheral part of the municipality of Cocody, the development of local trade facilities that play a vital role in supplying basic necessities to the people living there. Angré extension has commercial zones, stores, stalls, barracks, tables and stalls that spread out in a sprawling manner and are frequented by the neighborhood's population for their proximity and the diversity of products they offer to customers. Figure 2 illustrates the distribution of commercial spaces in Angré extension.

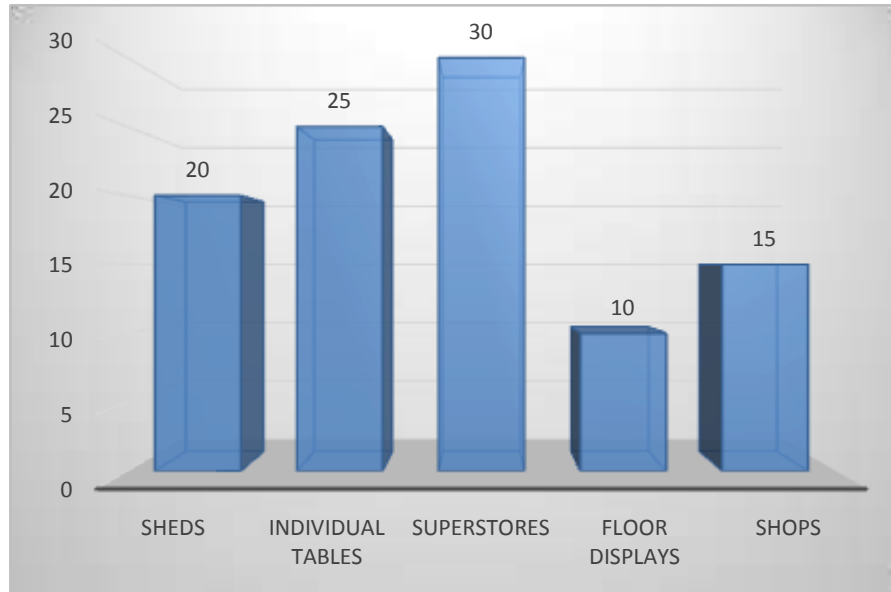


Figure 2:- Distribution of commercial facilities in Angré extension by type
 Source: our Surveys, 2021.

There is a preponderance of convenience stores, which account for 30% of all facilities in the neighborhood. These self-service food stores, which are protected by roofs and permanently closed, offer basic food products (milk, sugar, bread, etc.) and non-food products (toilet paper, perfume, baby linen, etc.). Customers frequent these types of shops because of the hygienic conditions and the prices of the products that are usually displayed. The mini-markets are followed by individual tables, which occupy 25% of the commercial facilities in the neighborhood. The inhabitants of Angré extension frequent these commercial spaces to buy food products (okra, tomatoes, eggplants, etc.) intended directly for daily household consumption. Stalls on the ground, where sales are made spontaneously in unhygienic conditions, come in last place with 10% of the occupation of the facilities. Figure 3 shows the proportion of sales areas used by the inhabitants of the neighborhood.

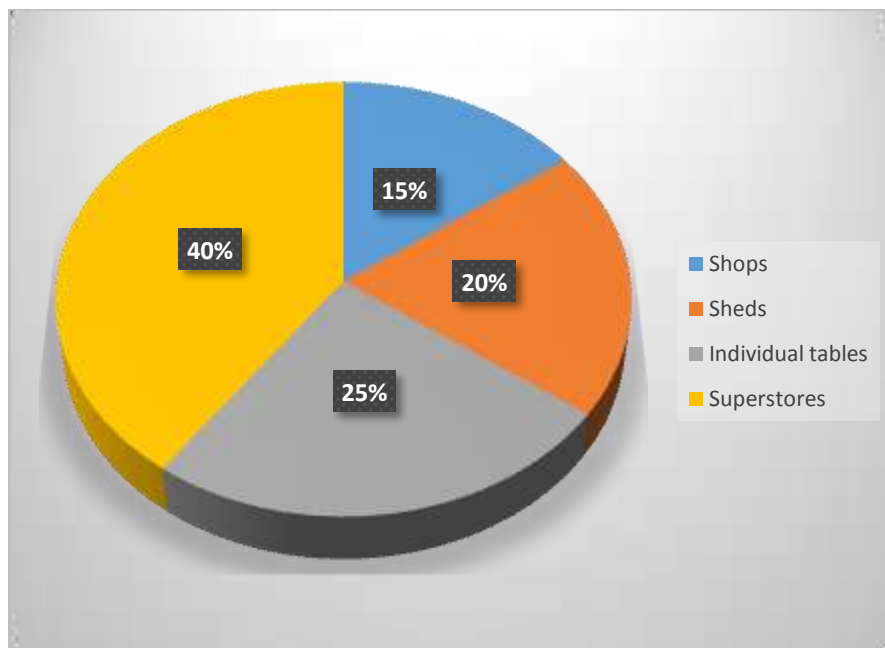


Figure 3:- Visits to sales areas in Angré extension
 Source: our surveys, 2021.

The trend of transforming stores into mini-markets, which has increased in recent years, contributes greatly to the preponderance of visits by the population, because unlike stores, these spaces are protected, well maintained, and benefit from a considerable level of equipment that is commensurate with the income of households in the neighborhood. These mini-markets have better access conditions and therefore attract the maximum number of customers. Sales tables set up individually by shopkeepers come in second place with 25% of the visits by the population. Given the remoteness of the central markets, it is the proximity of the housewives involved in the daily meal that constitutes the essential reason for frequenting this sales space. Throughout the extension, the commercial spaces are established in places where people pass through and are concentrated, such as crossroads, junctions of sub-neighborhoods, and along streets. These strategic points are distributed as shown in Figure 4.

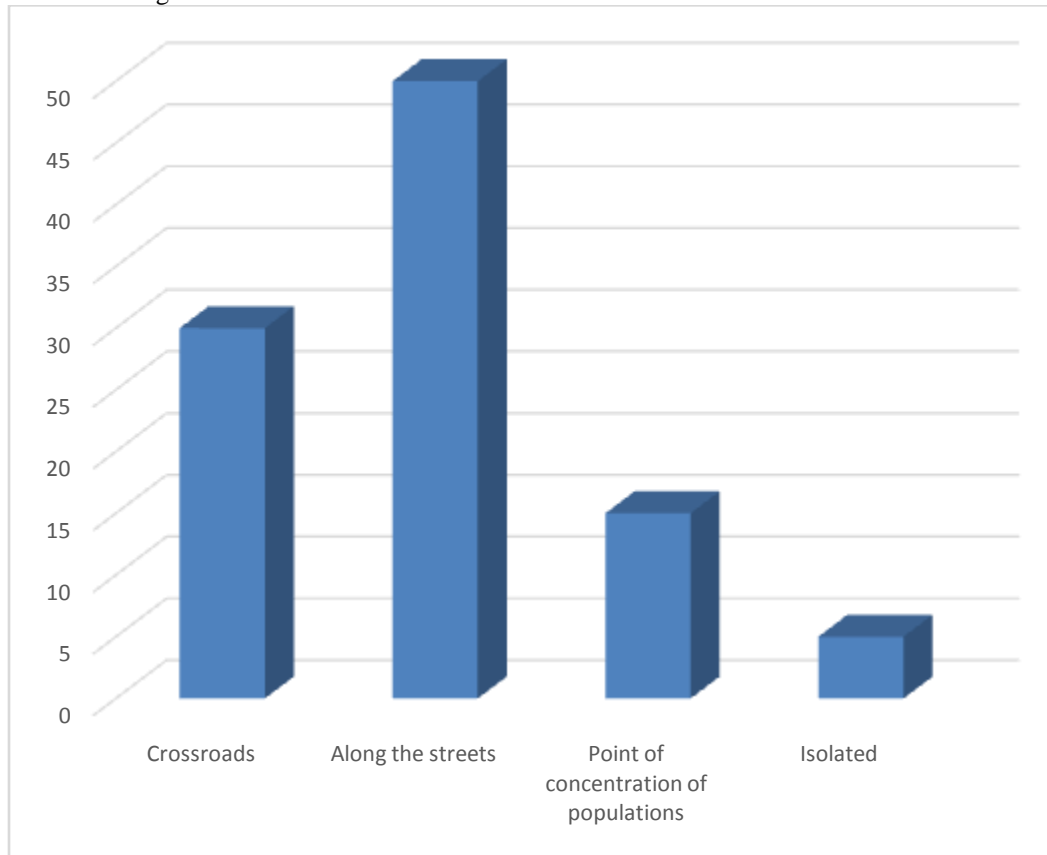


Figure 4:- Logic of the installation of commercial spaces in Angré extension
Source: our surveys, 2021.

The examination of the illustration reveals a preponderance of retail space installations along the streets with 50% of the total occupation in the district. They are followed by the crossroads, which are the main thoroughfares for the population and account for 30% of the total number of sales spaces in Angré Extension. The proliferation of these sales areas along the roads and crossroads is not accidental because these locations promote permanent contact with the population, thus bringing sellers, goods and consumers closer together, and this is something that the owners of commercial space in Angré extension know perfectly well. The main function of all these locations is to supply the neighborhood's low-mobility households with basic necessities. In the neighborhood as a whole, activity is dominated by retail trade (Figure 5), which takes place in closed facilities such as stores or sheds, and open-air facilities such as individual tables (Photo 1).

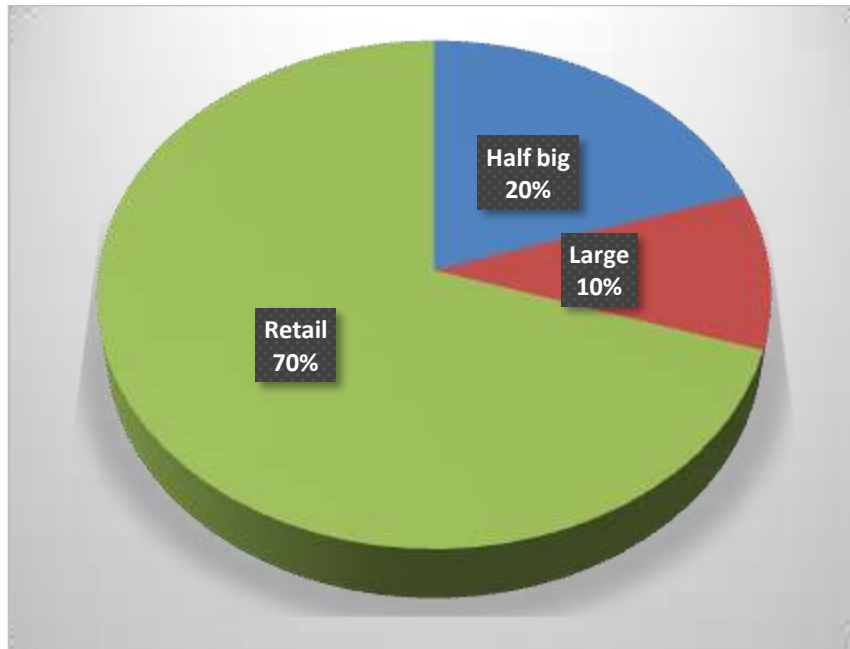


Figure 5:- Distribution of commercial activity in Angré extension by type
Source: oursurveys, 2021.



Photo1:-ClosedstoretypefacilityinAngréextension.
Source: GOZE Thomas, 2021.

The retail activity that most concerns food products for daily consumption is in the hands of women and is generally carried out in sheds and on individual tables (photo2).



Photo 2:- Marketing of food products on individual tables in Angré extension.
Source: ADOUGnangoranAlida, 2021.

This type of marketing represents 70% of the type of activity at Angré extension. This is followed by semi-wholesale activity in stalls. Wholesale activity is generally found in convenience stores. The distribution of products sold in Angré extension is illustrated in Figure 6.

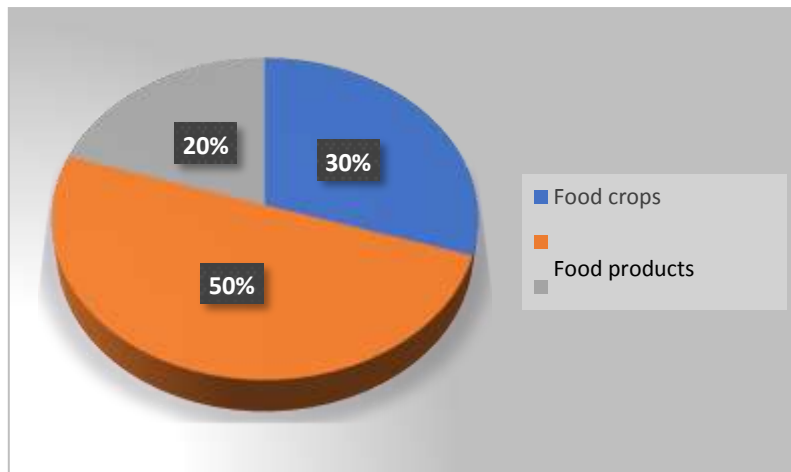


Figure 6:- Distribution of products in the sales area in Angré.
Source: our surveys, 2021.

Multiple actors with diverse socio-demographic characteristics are involved in the sale of various products in Angré extension.

Sociodemographic and economic profile of traders in Angré extension

In this quarter, local commerce is dominated by women, with 75% of the respondents being women, compared to 25% of the men. Among these 80 local trade actors, a total of 70, or 87.5% of the respondents, derive their income solely from commercial activity. The remaining 10, or 12.5%, have secondary income-generating activities in the public or private administration (night guards, surface technicians, laundry workers, etc.). A study of the socio-demographic profile of these actors reveals that 90% are nationals and 10% are non-nationals from countries bordering Côte d'Ivoire such as Burkina Faso, Mali and Guinea. The age of these different actors is shown in Table 1 below.

Table1:- Distribution of Angré extension traders by age.

AGE	WORKFORCE	FREQUENCY
20-29	25	31,25%
30-39	35	43,75%
40-49	13	16,25%
50 years and over	7	8,75%
TOTAL	80	100%

Source: our Surveys, September 2021.

We notice that people whose age varies between 20 and 39 years are most represented in commercial activity in this quarter. The low rate of those aged 50 and over could be explained by their old age. Given their advanced age and having acquired experience in this field of activity, they prefer to rest by entrusting their activities to their descendants or to some manager in order to limit health problems. Regarding their marital status, the surveys revealed that 79% of the women are in union (married or living with a man). The activity allows these women to provide for the needs of the family (food, schooling for children, help for the family, etc.), mainly when the husband or the spouse is in a situation of unemployment. By the men, this percentage of the union is of 69% and the reasons linked to the presence in this sector meet the same requirements as for women. Figure 7 shows the marital status of traders as a whole.

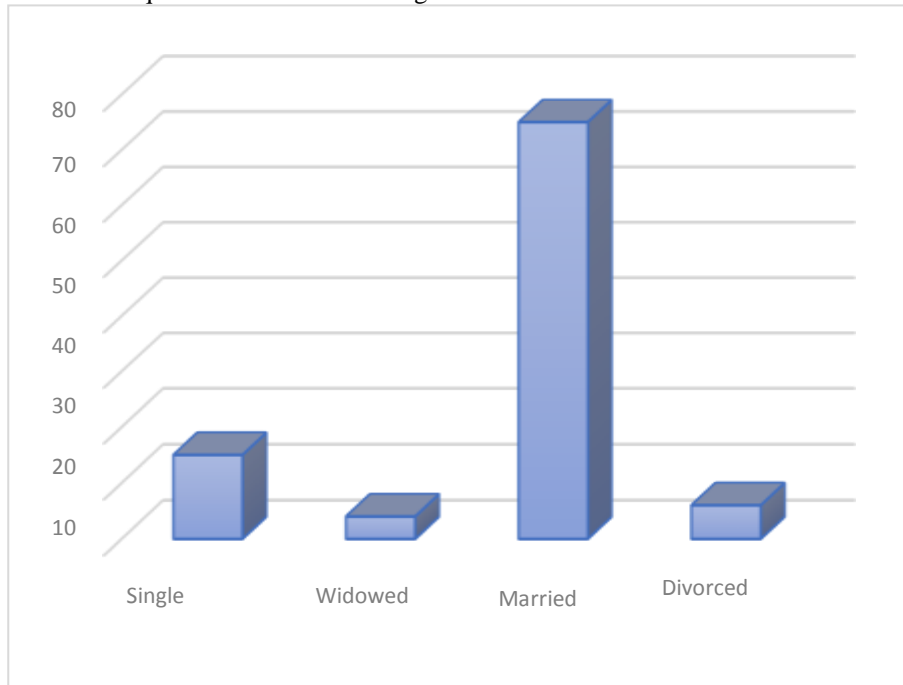


Figure 7:- Marital status of traders in Angré extension.

Source: our surveys, 2021.

In relation to the ethnic groups of these sectors, the Mandé of the North are the most represented (Figure 8).

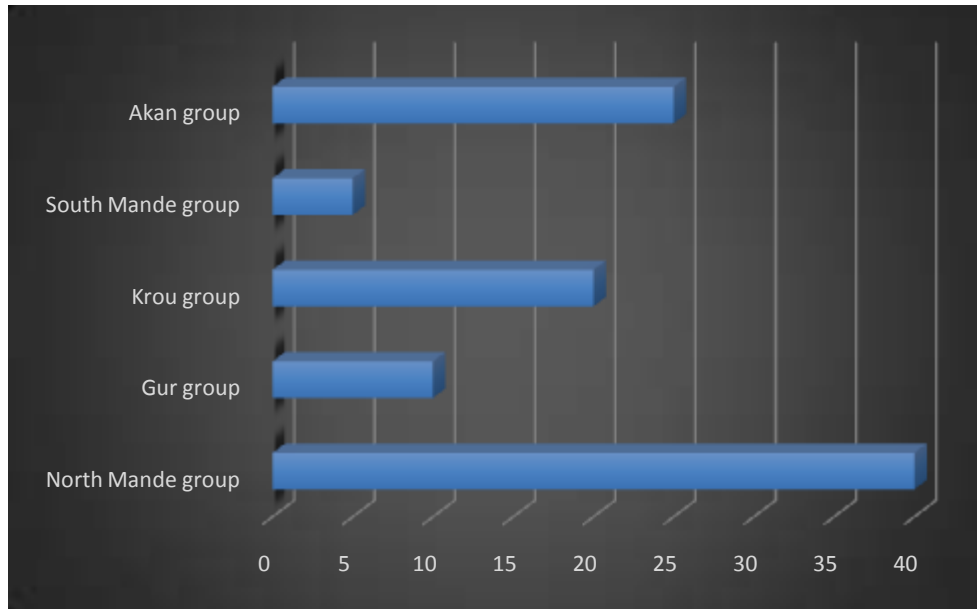


Figure 8:- Distribution of Angré extension traders by ethnic group.

Source: oursurveys, September 2021.

The Mandé of the North, traditionally adept at trade, are more present in the area. They are followed by the Akan. The actors practice various religious denominations (Figure 9).

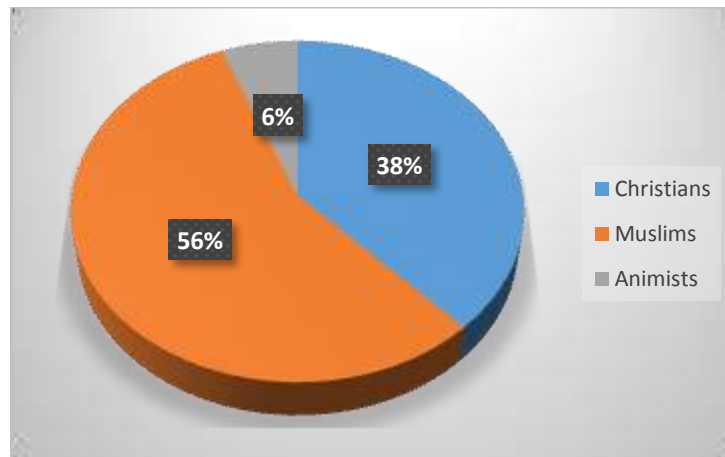


Figure 9:- Distribution of traders by religion.

Source: oursurveys, 2021.

Table 2 provides more details on the educational level of the traders.

Table 2:- Distribution of traders by education level.

Level of education	Male		Female		Set	
	Workforce	%	Workforce	%	Workforce	%
Illiterate	10	50	53	88,34	63	78,75
Primary	6	30	5	8,33	11	13,75
Secondary	3	15	2	3,33	5	6,25
University	1	5	0	0	1	1,25
Total	20	100	60	100	80	100

Source: oursurveys, 2021.

The table shows that the majority of traders are illiterate (78, 75%). This percentage is higher among women, who account for 88, 34% of those who have never attended school. 5% of these traders, only men, have attained a higher level of education. The sources of financing for the various activities mentioned by the traders are illustrated in figure 10.

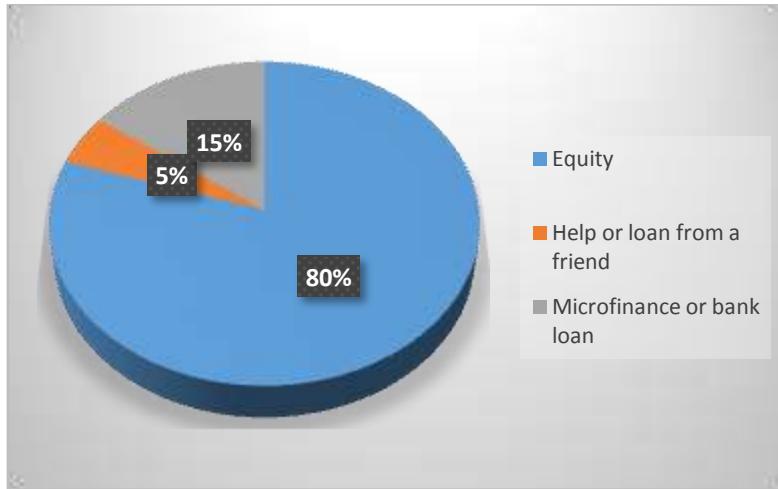


Figure 10:- Source of financing for traders in Angré extension.
Source: our surveys, 2021.

Self-financing is in first place with 80% of the sources of funds used by traders. Funds from microfinance or bank loans (15%) come in second place. According to the actors, the net profits, once the costs of carrying out the activity have been deducted, are between 25. 000 FCFA and 50,000 FCFA for manufactured products in closed facilities and between 8. 000 and 20. 000 FCFA for basic food products sold on tables or stalls. The activity has a considerable impact on the neighborhood.

III-Impact of urban markets in the extension of Angré.

The urban markets of Angré extension are essential for the households living in the area, given the role they play in supplying basic necessities and improving the incomes of the players. They also have a considerable impact on the living conditions of the local population and contribute to the attractiveness of the quarter. The first advantage by which its inhabitants benefit is the proximity of the new shopping centers converted in the extension, which allows them to obtain supplies within a fairly circumscribed area, thus reducing the ostentatious expenses associated with travel. Figure 11 illustrates the ways in which shoppers connect with their supply locations.

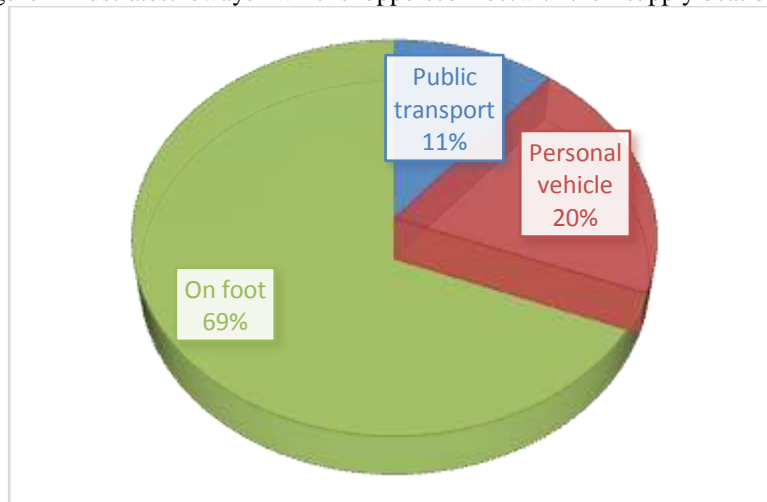


Figure 11:- Means of Customer Travel to Supply Locations.
Source: our surveys, 2021.

The proximity is a very important determinant for local customers, so that 69% among them go by foot. 20% used their private vehicles and only 11% move there by using public transport (taxi, bus, etc.). The motivations of house-holds in choosing a place to buy basic necessities are shown in Figure 12.

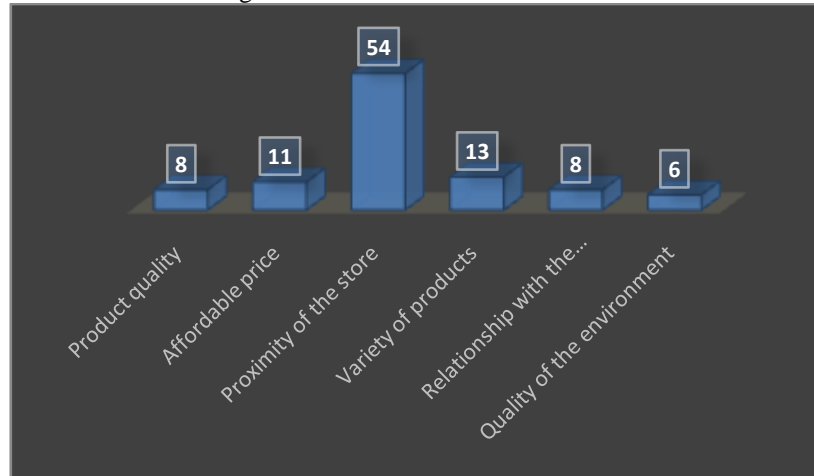


Figure 12:- Motivation of customers in the choice of supply location.

Source: our surveys, 2021.

The proximity of the place of supply of basic necessities is the main motivation of the customers surveyed. It alone accounts for 54% of the motivations. Then comes the variety of products offered with 13% of the motivations. In addition to improving the living conditions of the local population and those involved in the activities, the local markets of Angré extension contribute to the deterioration of the quality of life of the local residents. The reason for this is that the construction of stores and sheds has been left mostly to the free initiative of the traders. This has led to a proliferation of these installations in a precarious manner along the roads, which raises considerable problems of organization and maintenance of the space. Indeed, the limits of these local shops have never been precisely defined, they have spread in the district, most often on green spaces and corridors leading to the main roads, thus becoming cumbersome. In addition to this, packaging and other waste from the customers' purchases are dumped in the streets or end up in the drainage and rainwater evacuation works such as the gutters, which thus serve as a receptacle for the remains of the waste from this business (photos 3 and 4).

Photo 3 and 4:- Waste from commercial activity in Angré extension.



Source: ADOUGnangoran Alida, 2021.

These remnants of retail markets practiced on individual tables are uncontrolled and discarded in nature. They contribute greatly to the ugliness of the neighborhood's living environment. Figure 13 highlights the environmental problems caused by convenience stores in the study area.

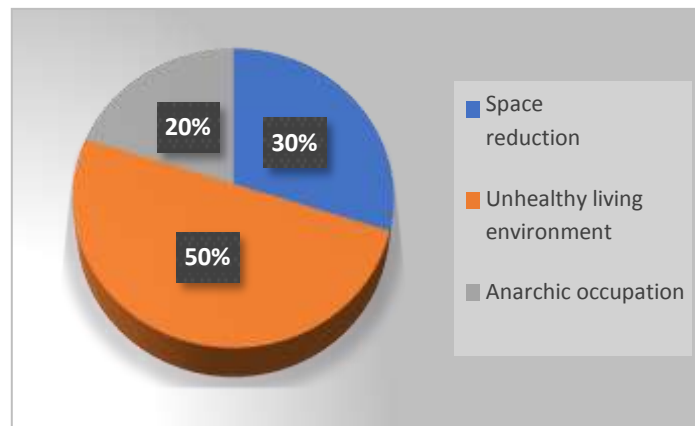


Figure 13:- Environmental problems caused by convenience shopping in Angré extension
 Source: our surveys, 2021.

The unhealthy living environment, which includes bad odors, the obstruction of storm water drainage structures, etc., occupies first place with 50% of the environmental nuisances in the neighborhood. It is followed by the reduction of living spaces for residents (30%) due to the installation of businesses between homes. Overall, the apprehension of households with regard to the impacts of these local businesses installed in Angré extension is given in figure 14.

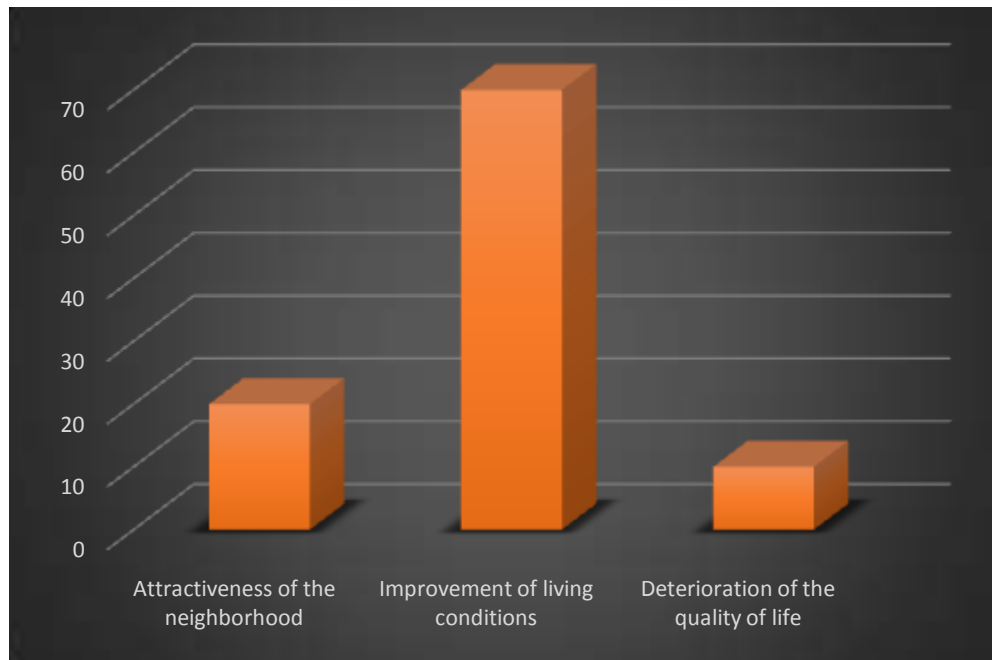


Figure 14:- Level of apprehension of the neighborhood by the residents.
 Source: our surveys, 2021.

Although local commerce sometimes generates nuisances, 70% of the households surveyed believe that the activity improves their living conditions by bringing them closer to the supply centers for basic goods and by changing the appearance of their neighborhood.

Discussion:-

The town of Abidjan is subjected to a population explosion which has as consequence an intensive urban development which is expressed through an important space development (Poyau, 2008 quoted by Frederick LANCON and Antoine BOYER, 2019, p.6). The municipality of Cocody in which the quarter Angré extension is located has 15 markets for a population of 447. 055 inhabitants, that is to say a number of inhabitants per market of 29. 804 (Frederick LANCON and Antoine BOYER, 2019, p.20). The establishment of the local markets of the quarter Angré extension is done in the logic of the readjustment of the commercial infrastructures in the town of Abidjan and bringing the population closer to consumer goods, is essential for this quarter, which is constantly suffering the consequences of the unbridled urbanization of the town of Abidjan. According to René de MAXIMY (1987; p. 319), markets are necessary, one might almost say natural, facilities of neighborhoods. For the author, these collective facilities of primary importance are the best known and the most practiced in urban areas. They play a role in supplying the population, in the revenue of the municipalities and also contribute to changing the appearance of the areas where they are located. Of the urban facilities, they are the only ones whose necessity is never really contested or postponed. No African city official, no city dweller questions the role of these markets, none is unaware that they are a spatial and functional element of the society in which they live (SILUE Tangolo and KOFFI Brou Emile, 2017). Whatever the causes of their creation or their appearance we observe that the market always plays a structuring role of primary importance. In the case of a directed urbanization, it is one of the fundamental facilities of the planned pole, center or sub-center (SILUE Tangolo and KOFFI Brou Emile, 2017). For Aurélie POYAU (2005; pp.111-126), these market spaces are small markets characterized by the banality of the products and services offered and by its area of influence limited to the neighborhood within which it occupies a central place. However, some commercial facilities proliferate under informal conditions and raise environmental and spatial organization problems. Many of these activities are set up without authorization, thus becoming informal. Referring to urban markets in Abidjan, Brigitte BERTONCELLO and Sylvie BREDELOUP (2002, pp.83-100) note that the density of occupation of these facilities makes their maintenance and management more difficult than in the past. Presenting the environmental profile of the food sector in the markets of Abobo, the authors (DAKOURI Guissa Desmos Francis and KOULAI Armand, 2016, pp.66-76) affirmed that the facilities are made with salvaged materials, giving the appearance of a spontaneous and informal market. These spaces are marked by a succession of tables and benches characterized by an almost non-existence of sanitation facilities. According to these authors, the waste from these food products is stored in collection points crowded with rodent insects.

Conclusion:-

The intensive urbanization of the town of Abidjan, characterized by a demographic explosion and by an excessive spatial development within its limits, has led to an imbalance between the most important facilities such as markets and the needs of the population for basic necessities. Attempts to rebalance the town of Abidjan through the conversion of market spaces have not left the quarter Angré extension in the municipality of Cocody untouched. The local markets that have emerged in this pocket of habitat are essential given the different functions they occupy and the manufactured and food products they offer in different spaces: Superstores, stores, sheds, individual tables. These spaces, which benefit from the proximity of local households, attract a maximum number of customers. The actors have diverse socio-demographic and economic characteristics. These converted market spaces play an essential role in supplying the population with basic necessities and in building the framework of the extension. However, the creation of these facilities, which was left to the free initiative of the merchants themselves, leads to problems of organization and maintenance of the space as well as the deterioration of the living environment of the quarter.

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