



Research Paper

Socio Economic Condition of Street Food Vendors – An Empirical Study in Salem City, Tamil Nadu

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ABSTRACT

The informal sector plays major role in the development of developing countries. The contribution of informal sector to the labour market of India is incredible. Street food sector, which is a part of informal sector plays vital role in urban food supply. Most of the Indian urban population consumes their food from the street vendors and peddlers. Street vending was made legal in the year by the passage of “The street vendors (Protection of livelihood and regulation of street vending) Act, 2014. This law enables the street vendors to register their business and get support from government and few authorized banks/financial institutions. Street food sector provides employment opportunities to many and plays a major role in reducing the cost of living in cities. The food and safety standard authority of India (FSSAI) supports the street food vendors by providing guidelines to start street food business. This research is aimed at analyzing the socio economic condition of the street food vendors in Salem city. This study would be useful to the prospective micro entrepreneurs who are interested in doing street food business.

It is a descriptive type of research. The sample size was 75. Both questionnaire and interview schedule was prepared for measuring the socio economic condition of the street food vendors. Data was analyzed by using Weighted Average, Pearson Correlation Analysis, Regression Analysis and Chi-Square Test.

KEYWORDS

Informal sector, street food, socio economic, vendors, urban, government

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I. INTRODUCTION

According to official statistics, informal sector contributes to more than half of the gross value added in the economy. Street food is an important part of the urban socio-cultural infrastructure. It not only provides cheap and inexpensive food to people from different class, it also represents cultural assimilation and larger social acceptance of different kinds of food. The latter is highlighted by the fact that most of the street food vendors happen to be migrant, who often are involved in producing and selling food belonging to their own region. Most of the street vendors are the sole earning members of their households. The street food vendors are the essence of India’s food industry. The increasing urban population has compelled many to consume food from street vendors. Though a part of urban population does not buy food from street food vendors fearing food hygiene and health safety, many of them are dependent for food on the street food vendors. The street food vendors make employment for them and also provide lot of employment opportunities to many. This research analyses and evaluates the economic condition of the street food vendors and suggests means to develop their business by creating awareness about the policies and the support system available to the street vendors, business development.

OBJECTIVES

1. To analyse the awareness of government policies and the support systems available to the street vendors
2. To ascertain the social condition of the street food vendors
3. To evaluate the economic condition of the street food vendors
4. To suggest to the street food vendors the means for developing their business

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In the present study, extensive use of both primary and secondary data was made systematically. For collecting primary data, field survey technique was used in the study area i.e in Salem city. First-hand information pertaining to the respondents' socio-economic background, general details related to the job, factors contributing to the running of street food vending. The primary data was collected from the street food vendors, using stratified random sampling method. The survey was conducted with 75 respondents from Salem city.

SOURCES OF DATA COLLECTION

Primary Data: The primary data was collected with the help of a structured questionnaire and interview schedule. The questionnaire and the interview schedule was pre-pared after pre-testing with a pilot survey through preliminary interviews with about 20 respondents, and was further critically analyzed. The finally redrafted questionnaire and the interview schedule were administered among the street food vendors.

Secondary Data: The secondary data was collected from various published and unpublished research reports, text books, magazines, journals and dailies, internet web resources, other published and unpublished sources of information.

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

The data collected were organized as simple tables and further analyzed with the help of appropriate statistical tools such as – Percentage Analysis, Weighted Average Method, Correlation & Regression Analysis, Chi-square Test, etc., for logical interpretation of the data collected.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. Since the research was based only on the Salem city, the same results may not be generalized over the whole universe.
2. As the topic is very vast and so does its constraints that make the report tough one to cover all area.
3. Due to time constraints and busy schedules of the street vendors it was difficult to interact with them completely. Collection of data from the respondents could be done only when they are at work.
4. Many respondents do not like to give information relating to their investment and profit.

III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Street vendors are one of the integral parts of the informal sectors. They play major role in contributing to the economic development of nation and in providing goods and services to the middle and low income households. Street food vending is an important business in the informal sector.

Jacob Olang'o Onyango, Prof. Olima W.L.A, Dr. Leah Onyango, (2012) The study concludes that street vendors identify the locations where they vend on their own without any guideline. The sites taken at random by vendors make the pattern of street vending look haphazard within the urban built environment. This make Local Authorities view street vending as disorganized activity giving bad image to the town.

R.Karthikeyan and Dr. R.Mangaleswaran, (2013), in their research work on "A Study on Working Patterns of Unorganized Sector with Particular Reference to Street Vendors in Tiruchirppalli, Tamil Nadu" concluded that, street vendors are integral part of human society. These people are to be looked after by the individuals, groups and communities. Even though they have this type of occupation, their life on this earth is threatening. Government should take active roles to implement the policies effectively which they have made. Hence, the government should look in to the problems of the street vendor's each and every corner of life. As professional social workers, it is our duty and obligation to work for the well being of the Street Vendors.

M J Saurel-Cubizolles, J Zeitlin, N Lelong, E Papiernik, G C DiRenzo, and G Bre´art, (2003), in their research report on "Employment, working conditions, and preterm birth: results from the Europe case-control survey" concluded that, these findings show that specific working conditions affect the risk of preterm birth. They also suggest employment related risks could be mediated by the social and legislative context.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

TABLE 1: FREQUENCY AND % REGARDING THE DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS OF RESPONDENTS

Demographic variables		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	34	45.33
	Female	41	54.67
Age	Upto 25 Years	17	12.75
	26 – 35 years	30	22.5
	36 – 45 years	18	13.5
	46 – 55 years	7	5.25
	Above 55years	3	2.25
Educational Qualification	Uneducated	29	21.75
	Up to SSLC	22	16.5
	Up to HSC	18	13.52
	UG	4	3
	PG	2	1.5
Marital Status	Single	26	19.5
	Married	43	32.25
	Divorced	1	.75
	Seperated	5	3.75
Investment	Up to Rs.5000	27	20.25
	Rs.5001 – Rs.10000	31	23.25
	Rs.10001-Rs.20000	12	9
	Rs.20001 – Rs.30000	4	3
	Rs. 30,001 – Rs. 40,000	1	.75
Income /Month	UptoRs. 10,000	30	22.5
	Rs. 10,001 – Rs. 20,000	32	24
	Rs. 20,001 – Rs. 30,000	11	8.25
	Rs. 30,001 – Rs. 40,000	2	1.5
	Above Rs. 40,000	0	0
Years of Experience in the business	0-5 years	27	20.25
	6-10 years	26	19.5
	11-15 years	12	9
	Above 15 years	10	7.5
Total		75	100

Source: Primary data

Inference: The above table shows that the majority of the respondents from Salem city are female i.e. 54.67 % and male constitutes to 45.33%. Majority of the respondents are in the age group of 26-35 years. Majority of the respondents educational qualification is less than HSC among them 21.75% of the respondents are uneducated. 32.25% of the respondents are married. Majority of the respondents' investment is less than Rs.10000. Only 9.7% of the respondents' monthly income is above Rs.20000. Only 7.5% of the respondents have more than 15 years of experience in street food vending.

TABLE 2: LEVEL OF SATISFACTION TOWARDS VARIOUS WORKING CONDITIONS

Attributes	Weight	Rank
Availability of public Utilities	3.73	I
Attitude of the customers	3.44	V
Safety and security(Physical and Property)	3.20	VI
Convenience of Timing	3.71	II
Spending long hours	3.48	III
Attitude of police and Municipal authorities	3.46	IV

Source: Primary Data

Inference: The table:2 shows that the respondents are given 1st rank for Availability of public Utilities, 2nd rank for Convenience of Timing, 3rd rank for Spending long hours, 4th rank for Attitude of police and Municipal authorities, 5th rank for Attitude of the customers and 6th rank for Safety and security(Physical and Property).

TABLE 3: LEVEL OF AGREEMENT WITH THE COMFORT IN THE VARIOUS SOURCES OF BORROWING

S. No	Factors	Weighted Average
1	Non-Bank Institutions	28.58
2	Selling asset	31.67
3	Money Lenders	32.01
4	Friends and Relatives	30.98
5	Own Savings	29.67

Source: Primary data

Inference: From Table 3, it is inferred that among the level of comfort in the sources of borrowing money for their business, respondents' comfort in borrowing from money lenders gains greater weighted average (WA = 32.01).

TABLE: 4 THE RESPONDENTS LEVEL OF AGREEMENT RELATED TO THE REASON TO SELECT STREET FOOD VENDING AS A CAREER

Factors	Weight	Rank
Lack of employment opportunities	3.90	I
No other choice	3.59	III
Interest in street food vending	3.73	II

Source: Primary Data

Inference: The table shows that the respondents' level of agreement related to the reason to select street vending as a career. 'Lack of employment opportunities' ranked first, 'Interest in street food vending' ranked second and 'No other choice' ranked third.

TABLE 5: PEARSON CORRELATION BETWEEN THE INCOME AND THE ATTITUDE OF NOT HESITATING TO INVEST FOR BUSINESS EXPANSION

Factor	Pearson Correlation Value	Remarks
Income/ Does not hesitate to invest for business expansion	-0.0142	Inverse Relationship

Inference: Hence the calculated Pearson Correlation is Negative (-0.0142) there is no evidence that when the income of the respondents increase the attitude of investing for business expansion increases.

Chi – Square Test:

Testing the dependency of the Working Hours and the Income

H₀: There is no significant relationship between the Working Hours and the Income

H_a: There is significant relationship between the Working Hours and Income

TABLE 6: WORKING HOURS AND THE INCOME

Factor	Calculated Chi-square value	DF	p' Value	Remarks
Working Hours	12.4	2	< 0.01	Highly Significant

Inference: It is noted from the above table that the ‘p’ value is less than 0.01 and hence the result is significant at 1 %. Hence the hypothesis ‘Working Hours of the respondents and the Income are not associated’ does not hold well. From the analysis it is concluded that highly significant association was found between the Working Hours of the respondents and the Income.

V. FINDINGS

- 54.67 % respondents are female and male constitutes to 45.33%.
- Majority of the respondents are in the age group of 26-35 years.
- Majority of the respondents educational qualification is less than HSC among them 21.75% of the respondents are uneducated.
- 32.25% of the respondents are married.
- Majority of the respondents’ investment is less than Rs.10000.
- Only 9.7% of the respondents’ monthly income is above Rs.20000.
- Only 7.5% of the respondents have more than 15 years of experience in street food vending.
- Considering the level of satisfaction towards various working conditions ‘availability of public utilities’ ranked first
- The level of comfort in the sources of borrowing money for their business, respondents’ comfort in borrowing from money lenders gains greater weighted average (WA = 32.01)
- The level of agreement related to the reason to select street vending as a career, ‘Lack of employment opportunities’ ranked first
- There is no evidence that when the income of the respondents increase the attitude of investing for business expansion increases.
- Highly significant association was found between the Working Hours of the respondents and the Income.

VI. SUGGESTIONS

From the secondary data analysis and from the research findings, it is found that most of the street food vendors are not aware of the policies and the support system provided by government and most of the street food vending is not registered as per the Street vendors (Protection of livelihood and regulation of street vending) act, 2014. It is suggested that the street food vendors should learn about the available facilities related to borrowing of money and the supporting systems to develop their socio-economic condition.

VII. CONCLUSION

The street food vendors are the essence of Indian food industry and therefore the government and the NGOs should take initiative to give awareness to them regarding the Street vending act, 2014. The larger objective of the Act is to provide the street vendors identity and regularized urban space, in order to reduce the contestation of the vendors over space. Apart from right to space, the Act gives them the permission to cook food on the street, which currently is restricted to only assembling pre-cooked food on street. However, the Act does not have any provision for including the migrant street vendors within its purview. Also the street food vendors should follow the regulations provided by the act for the long running of the business and to develop their socio-economic condition.

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