

POOR HELPLESS WORKFORCE: PROBLEMS AND REASONS OF STREET VENDORS IN VIRUDHUNAGAR TOWN

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Abstract

Self employment has become a progressively more popular subject of study, not just in economics, but also in Social Work, Sociology and Anthropology. There are many self-employee works in our country working for their own livelihood. The most frequently and regularly they have to work to earn their daily cash. After the implementation of Liberalisation, Privatization and Globalization there are several changes in the system and particularly with respect to the self-employment belonging to Street Vendors. With this background, the present study intended to study in poor helpless workforce: problem and reason of street vendors in Virudhunagar Town. There many Street Vendors in the heart of Virudhunagar town, hence the researchers used convenient sampling method to select 100 respondents for the present study and the study is descriptive in nature. The findings of the study are elaborated in the full paper. The government and non-governmental organization has to play a crucial role for the development of Street Vendors. Further few suggestions were also given to enhance their street vendors.

Keywords: *Self employment, Anthropology, Liberalisation, Street Vendors, Globalization, National Policy*

Introduction

Self-employment is the most important part of the workforce in India and other developing countries works. It has become a progressively more popular subject of study, not just in economics, but also in Social Work, Sociology and Anthropology. There are many self-employee works in our country working for their own livelihood. The most frequently and regularly they have to work to earn their daily bread. After the implementation of Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization there are several changes in the system and particularly with respect to the self-employment belonging to Street Vendors.

According to National Policy on “A Street Vendor is broadly defined as a person who offers goods or services for sale to the public without having a permanent built up structure but with a temporary static structure or mobile stall (head load)”. Street Vendors may be stationary by occupying space on the pavements or other public/private areas, or may be mobile in the sense that they move from place to place carrying their wares on push carts or in cycles or baskets on their heads, or may sell their wares in moving bus etc.

As a street vendors are identified as self-employed workers in the informal sector. According to the level of income, NCEUS (2007) has also categorized workers in the unorganized sector. Interestingly, NCEUS has found around 75 percent self-employed workers belong to poor and vulnerable group in the unorganized sector in India and only around 25 percent belong to high income group. On the other hand, NCEUS has also categorized different types of workers within self-employed workers based on income. Hence, according to NCEUS, street vendors are located in the low income self-employed group of workers those who are poor and vulnerable.

The term informal sector is originally used by W. Arthur Lewis. This term is basically applied for referring to the employment generation in the developing countries. The term Informal sector has been used to describe the working culture of a particular section of the people who are marginalized from the mainstream trading business as a result of modern industrial sector. The term is also useful in describing and accounting for forms of shelter or living arrangements that are similarly unlawful, unregulated, or not afforded protection of the state. 'Informal economy' is increasingly replacing 'informal sector' as the preferred descriptor for this activity.

Street vendors play very important role in India by providing employment and income and other aspects. They sell different kinds of goods such as clothes and hosiery, lather, molded plastic goods and different kinds of household necessary goods, which are manufactured in small scale or home based industries where large numbers of workers are employed. The manufacturers could have hardly marketed for their products. Apart from non-agricultural product, street vendors also sell vegetable and fruits also. Thus, urban poor, namely street vendors are providing the market for home-based manufacturing product and as well as agricultural products. In this way, street vendors help sustain employment in these home -based and small-scale industries and traditional sector. Therefore, it can be said that several sectors and labour are linked with street vendors in terms of products they sold.

Vendors exhibit remarkable entrepreneurial skills. Purchasing of commodities is no easy task with constant market fluctuations. Besides, middlemen have a major say in the wholesale markets. Commodities have to be in sync with both consumer tastes and paying capacity. As most vendors deal in perishables, the goods have to be sold at the right time.

It is believed that the largest concentration of vendors is in the age group 16-45 years. It indicates that vending involves enormous physical labour. A vendor starts early in the morning with the day's purchase. The marketing place is invariably far from by residence. Bringing large sacks of vegetables and fruits and loading them in a rickshaw cart is a tedious job.

The vendors provide a wide array of goods and commodities to the urban populace at reasonable prices and convenient locations. The type of goods they sell makes an

interesting study - from daily needs like vegetables, fruits, fish, meat and snacks to occasional needs like flowers and readymade garments. A survey conducted by the Indian Institute of Health and Hygiene in 1997 counted 300 types of eatables sold by the hawkers of Calcutta. It would be hard to find an urban Indian who doesn't purchase something from a vendor. The middle and lower class consumer specifically prefers to purchase from them, though even well-off citizens purchase many commodities given reasonable prices.

Statement of the Problem

The present study embodies "Poor Helpless Workforce: Problem and Reason of Street Vendors in Virudhunagar Town." By witnessing the characteristics of the vending workforce in unorganised sector their living conditions are poor and they spend their life in open air here there is a hot sun or rain. The highest Indian Constitutional Document provides equality to all human beings with dignity, but it is not seen in the case of these workforces. This is very painful to those who love the humanity and its values. Apart from their hard working they are harassed by police, local rowdies and politicians and they pay them from their low income. They face a threat from the giant Indian and Multinational Companies in the name of globalization. Many retail outlets are coming to compete with this poor helpless workforce. So studying socio economic status and suggesting measures to improve their status is so significant and the researcher sees this as the most significant researchable problem and make a study with the following objectives i) to study the socio-economic characteristics of Street Vendors ii) to identified the factors which influence the street vendors to do the work,, iii) to find the problems of street vendors.

Methodology

The present study is based on both primary and secondary data. The primary data collected through structured interview schedule. Secondary data related to this study were collected from the journals and websites. The researchers used convenient sampling method to select 100 respondents for the present study. The collected data were analyzed with the help of simple average, ranking technique and Multi Dimensional Scaling Technique.

Findings

Based on the analysis the major findings were presented in the following points.

- Out of the total sample respondents' majority (43 per cent) of them are in the age group of 40 to 49 years.
- Majority (39 per cent) are belongs to Scheduled Caste and Schedule Tribe community.
- Among the street vendors majority (35 per cent) of them are Illiterate.

- Majority of them (61 per cent) are live in urban place.
- 32 per cent of them total sample respondents family members' earned monthly income between Rs.4001 to Rs.6000.
- Majority (77 per cent) of them are spent below Rs.5000.
- In the study area 69 per cent of the sample respondents are having the habit of savings.
- Majority of the sample respondents (34 per cent) save monthly Rs.2001 to Rs.3000 per month.
- In the study area 78 per cent of the total sample respondents are having debt burden and only 22 per cent of them are not have any debt.
- Majority of them (25 per cent) borrow money for their children educational purposes.
- Majority (34 per cent) of them are involving the flower selling business. It is followed that (33 per cent) are involving the in fruit selling and remaining (33 per cent) of them are vegetable selling.
- Among the street vendors 37 per cent of the sample respondents are having 11-15 Years Experiences.
- Majority (35 per cent) of the respondents are received between Rs.301 to Rs.350 as their daily income.
- Majority (33 per cent) of street vendors' purchase goods from whole sellers.
- The street vendors worked for above eight hours per day.
- 53 per cent street vendors are travel from their residence to work place daily for below 2km.
- Majority (32 per cent) of the sample respondents are to travel by bus to reach their working place.
- Among the street vendors majority (75 per cent) of them are preferred to sell their goods in cash.
- 71 per cent of the sample respondents are purchase the goods in cash.
- Majority (60 per cent) of the respondents expressed that problem from the consumers are high.
- It inferred that (50 per cent) of them expressed that problem from the public are high.
- It interesting to note that 66 per cent of the street vendor expressed that problem from the police is very high.
- Majority (44 per cent) of the sample respondents' opinion is that it was moderate.
- It opinioned that 51 per cent of the sample respondents' opinion is that it was moderate.

- Majority (71 per cent) of the sample respondents' opinion is that it was low.
- Out of total respondents 78 per cent of the street vendors expressed that problem from the commission agent are low.
- On observation of the two dimensional graph it could be inferred that the variable like From Consumer (F1), and From Municipality (F4) are makes influencing factor for problem street vendors as a primary determinant in investing in securities.
- The factors like From Public (F2) and From Police (F3) were also more influencing secondary determinants. The other factors were known Transporting (F6), Family Members (F5) and Commission Agent (F7) to be less influencing problem of street vendors for investing securities.

Conclusion

The present study provides information about street vending is a profitable business and contributes to the economy in a huge way besides being a form of self-employment which brings down the numbers of unemployed in the country. In addition to complementing formal markets and supermarkets, street vending allows for entrepreneurship, economic and agency freedom; and it is what puts a faced on cultural and social life. Street vendors perform an important role in providing services to the urban and rural population, especially the poor. Finally, policy makers should also keep in mind the need for the consideration of policies to enhance vendors' other capabilities and freedoms, besides economic freedom, including education, health and social security.

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