

STREET BUSINESS KEEPS THE POVERTY ASIDE:
A SOCIOLOGICAL OBSERVATION FROM SALEM CITY
OF TAMIL NADU

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ABSTRACT

Poverty is one of the social problems across the world to keep the people doldrums. Poverty is in a position to create lot of hindrances in the human life. Several programs have implemented in the post- independent period to crimate the poverty in all sectors. However, skill is a menace both for the government and the human society in spite of several scientific parameters developed to curb the poverty. There are many types of poverty have been classified by the researches as primary, secondary, absolute, subjective, relative, urban and rural poverties to analyze the structure and functions of poverty. In this context, the street vendors who do their businesses is are of the upcoming districts in Tamil Nadu, Salem keeps the poverty aside and involve themselves in the income-earning processes. The so-called illiteracy, low-education, less investment capacities are near bother them the earnings. They have mentally prepared to do the business as a seasonal are. Starting from snacks, leather goods, tender coconuts, cloths etc., are the one features of their street business. They are highly motivated, encourage themselves and enthusiastically do the street business successfully.

Key words: Highly motivated, Human life, Functions of poverty, Scientific parameters, Post independents period, Structure of poverty, Street business, Illiteracy, Low- Education, Investment capacity.

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Introduction

Street business is a worldwide activity across the cultures and the most obvious representation of the informal sector. Like other informal sector, their business is characterized by low level of income, easy of entry, self-employment and attractive place for many people from all walks of life irrespective of educational back grounds. In cities and towns, thought the world millions of people, earn their living by selling innumerable goods and service on the street. In spite of a strong belief that street business will move away as economies develop and income rise, it is actually on increase in many places. The persons involve in street business are very important part of the informal sector in any country. Apart from men, the women also find a place in the streets to sell their convenient products on the seasonal base. In this connection, the women form a big part of street business in almost every city. Street business is not only a source of self-employment to the poor in cities and towns but also a means to provide reasonably priced as well as suitable services to a majority of the urban population. Street business people are often those who are unable to get regular jobs in the remunerative formal sector on account of their low level of education and skills. They try to solve their livelihoods problems through their own meager financial resource. They are the main delivery feed for a large variety of products of daily expenditure like fruits, vegetables, readymade garments, shoes, household gadgets, toys, stationery, newspapers, magazines etc., They help the needy in urban areas in all possible ways to sustain the urban markets, vegetable farmers as well as small scale industries which cannot give to retail their products through expensive delivery networks in the formal sector. The importance of this sector cannot be underestimated, especially considering that the formal sector does not have the capacity to provide jobs to the millions of people who seek employment in India. Even the corporate sector is able to absorb only a miniscule proportion of our expanding work force. Overall employment in the formal sector is also actually declining, which means most people in our country have to fend for themselves.

People in the informal sector ought to be encouraged to grow and prosper if the governments want to reduce unemployment and poverty in our country. They give important role in local economic growth and development of the urban economies. Public authorities considered street vendors as a irritation and as encroachers of sidewalks and pavements and do not appreciate the valuable services that street vendors provide to the common people of the world. Street vendors

provide valuable services to the urban masses while making out a living through their own activity, limited resources and precious labour. Street vendors have been demanding protection from civic agencies and the state government so they can earn their livelihood without fear.

Who is a street business person?

Though many definition are being given by the experts concerned this paper is very much convinced to tell hat a street business person is who has to comprise any individual engaged in selling of articles, goods, food etc., or contributing services to the common society in a street lanes, side- walk, footpath, pavement, public parks or any other public or private areas.

Challenges of Street business person

- The individuals who do the street business face many problems as they are vulnerable population.
- They always suffer competition with other street vendors because of variation in market prices, insecure and irregular employment.
- Their incomes are often lowest and their sales fluctuate.
- Another reason for decrease in income of street business person is that they are forced to pay or products of their daily income.
- Street merchants are usually associated with encroachment of public spaces, causes traffic congestion, inadequate hygiene and poor waste disposal, since the safety of food has been increasingly become a concern in regard to street business person.
- Negative impact of online shopping on retailers and street business person.
- Online shopping is a form of electronic commerce whereby consumers directly buy goods or services from a seller over the internet without an intermediary service.
- Online shopping has become the trend and the new mode of purchasing. There are around innumerable online marketing enterprises are selling the cosmetics, clothes, shoes, accessories, vitamin supplements, etc. literally the entire range of consumer items.
- The trend is very clear; retail shop demand will fall and even shrunk. Online shopping is indeed having an adverse impact on the retail sector.
- Street merchants constitute a significant part of India's population, who are in need of a safe and secure livelihood.

- At present, rights of these people are being violated by the very state institutions which are supposed to protect them.
- In 2014, Government has come up with an Act to protect rights of street business people but as this report shows, proper compliance by states has not taken place yet.
- Even courts have showed unsatisfactory response in a desired implementation of this Act.

Review of Literature

There are some of the researchers throw their lights on various aspects of street business persons, vendors, merchants etc.,

Fadia Gamiendien and Lana van Niekerk (2017)¹ analyze the problem face by street vendors in South Africa. The street vendors face a number of difficulties outside of their control. This includes conflict with police, customers and fellow traders, poor integration into urban planning, competition for similar goods, negative public attitudes and daily physical obstructions. **John Walsh(2010)**² says that Vung Tau, Vietnam street vendors were quite sanguine about the freedom they felt in their lives and the fact that they did not pay any taxes or meet any other requirements. According to him, ff the authorities wish to make policies to improve the situation of the street vendors and enable them to move further from the threat of poverty. **Nasibu Rajabu Mramba (2015)**³ investigates through the research in Tanzania street vendors despite being potential for the employment, income generation and distribution of relative priced good street vending businesses do not contribute significantly to economic growth and poverty reduction due to many constraints impending it. **Shaiara Husain et.al (2015)**⁴ scrutinizes the Bangladesh Dhaka City street vendors, the owners of the small businesses are often also might be discourage to borrow since they know their future stream of income might be lower than their assets. These businesses also suffer from inefficient managerial skill, lacking risk assurance and transportation problem.

Mohamed Abusali Sheik.M.N and Sareswathy.M (2016)⁵ explores the various problem faced by street vendors in Palayamkottai street vendors are far away from accessing proper banking services. They face a lot of problems while going to avail any banking services. **Ray. C.N and Assem Mishra (2011)**⁶ evaluates from Suratin India that about one third vendors are travelling

by private vehicle to the market while many are going by foot and only one fifth are using public transport. A large number of vendors engaged in this occupation because it's their family occupation. Few vendors are involved in street vending due to less investment, need of money and past experience of this kind of business. According to **Nitika Diwakar et.al (2014)**⁷ the challenges face by Allahabad women street vendor is being a women they become the victim of the crimes like eve teasing, sexual harassment, rape, human trafficking. **Sindhu. A.R et.al (2015)**⁸ explain that in Tirunelveli and Nagercoil street vendors faced severe constraints in securing funds for starting as well as operating their micro level business. The vendors also lacked social capital which is crucial entrepreneurial element for success.

Sharit K. Bhowmik and Debdulal Saha (2011)⁹ analyze the various problems in Indian city Capital is needed for initiating the business and later for running and expanding the business. As is commonly known a rise in income is directly related to an increase in the standard of life. The informal sources of credit, the wholesalers, money lenders, friends or even relatives play a very important role in their lives.

The reviews show that the people involved in street business face countless challenges from various quarters which include the formal markets. The sexual problems are also obvious for the women vendors are concerned since there is not protection for them in the streets. In spite of these issues, some what the businesses are taking place in the world.

METHODOLOGY

Statement of problem

Street vendors issue is an important area to do research from Sociological perspective. The street vendors do the business by investing minimum amount and have to do the income generation activities in and around the Salem city. They sell eatable items, vegetables, fruits, flowers etc., where there are possibilities for corruption and threaten from anti-social elements by demanding money from the street vendors. Since most of the street vendors are happened to be vulnerable groups and they do not have required money to invest in business and helpless to get the similar support from any one. Within the available resources they mobilize the money and keep it in the business somehow to prolong the business. They are well aware of the

constraints existing in them because hiring the shop in the market or business areas is certainly a difficult for them since the owners may demand exorbitant money as advance and monthly paying the rent too beyond their payable capacity. So, they chose the street is the business areas for them and identify the suitable areas for the business activities. If any think from the society's perspective the street vendors are service providers as they bring materials from the large markets which are located at far-away places and sell the same with the minimum profits to provide the service. The street vendors are really helpful to the home makers, elderly, differently able and other needy to get the products from the street vendors. From another dimension, the street vendors have the labour intensive concept it mind which talks about the street vendors are the owners for their own business and they no need to render their services to any employer. They themselves are the owner-cum-service provider and it can be treated as business strategy. In this context, the present study focuses its primary attention on *the street business keeps the poverty aside: a sociological observation from Salem city of Tamil Nadu*, to understand the various issues of them.

Objectives

1. To study the socio-economic characteristics of street vendors who do the business in selected areas in Salem district of Tamil Nadu
2. To analyze the challenges face by street vendors while involving in business activities
3. To understand the supports extend by the family members to the street vendors in the study area
4. To suggest the suitable measures to overcome the challenges

Area profile

Salem District is bounded on the North by Dharmapuri district, on the South by Namakkal and Erode districts, the Western Ghats in the West and on the East by Villupuram District.

- This city is being known as Geologists' paradise. There are famous educational institutions are rendering their services for the aspirants like Periyar University, Vinayaka Missions University, Sona College of Engineering, Saradha College of Arts and Sciences and Education and several other institutions.

- Modern theatres have produced several movies earlier. This city still has attraction towards cinemas.
- Well connectivity in between important places like Namakkal, Hogenakkal falls, Bangalore and Chennai are notable here.
- There are several businesses are being done in this city like silver ankles works, cloth yarns, power looms, poultry farms, automobiles shops.
- Sevvapet is one of the leading variety business centers in the state and located here. Lee Bazaar is the best grocery market centre in Salem to supply its materials all over the state and beyond.
- One can find the several small business centers at Gugai, Kondalampatti, Nethimedu, Cherry Road etc., to mobilize the money for the people who are depending upon the businesses.

Type of research

The present research follows the ideas of basic research since the objectives of it tries adding the findings to strengthen the scientific body of knowledge of street vendors.

Research Design

The descriptive research design is being followed in the research because the researcher analyzes the data by describing the variables systematically.

Selection of the sample

Since there is no authentic information about the number of street vendors available in Salem city, the researcher has used snow ball sampling technique. There are four important places for more number of street vendors in Salem. They are: Nearby uzhar sandhais, new bus stands area, in and around old bus stand and Hasthampatti locality.

Period of data collection

The researcher has collected the data from the respondents during the month of 15th January to 15th April 2017.

Methods and tools used for data collection

The researcher has used observation as a method and interview schedule as a tool of data collection. The interview schedule consists of five sections including socio-economic profile of the respondents.

Pilot Study and Pre-Test

The researcher has visited five to six times to identify the suitability of the area for the present study. This process has helped her to conduct the research in-and-around old bus stand. For the pre-test, she has interviewed five street vendors in the study area. She could understand that a few questions were not in a sequence and few were repeated. With the help of the pre-test she has deleted five questions and added the same number as new to finalize the interview schedule which has been given in the appendix of the dissertation.

Statistical test used

The researcher has used percentage analyses to interpret the collected data and the data has been tabled as single variable and bi-variable tables as per the framed objectives. This process has helped her to conduct the research in-and-around old bus stand.

DISCUSSION

Age and street business

Street business is the key for many individuals because which done not require any specific skill, training, education etc., the study which has been conducted in Salem city of Tamil Nadu portrays the result that most of the street vendors belong to the age group of 31-40. They have crossed the age limits to apply for any formal jobs and decide to do the street business. They all are seasonal sector business people and sell the time-demanding products which include eatable items, consumers products, household materials, toys etc.,

Females and street business

The study found that more than half proportions of the respondents are females. They support their respective families by doing the street business through a small proportion of income which keeps the poverty aside. They extend their co-operation to the family by selling the products.

Community and street business

Most of the street business people hail from the Most Backward Communities. Since they are like their business because do not want to depend on others.

Education and street business

Education and literacy are not the constraints for the business people. Through the study we covered understand there a majority of the respondents are illiterates. They learn the philosophy of business by doing in the streets. They never learn the business factices from the formal educational systems or any kinds of books and periodicals. The self- leaving, commitment to earn the money to keep the poverty of the family is the bay. They express, business is a kind of motivation which builds the sincerity, time-management, financial security, and domestic maintenance. They are the mentionable role- models for many youngsters who search the job for same time and unemployable for rest of their life. The movable building by a street business person through the day-to-day business process, despite the street can create a many businesses to sell the products.

Types of family and street business

The small and nuclear families create the street business person more in number than the joint families because the earning members quiet naturally less than compared to joint and large families. The family's enragement, continuous support and the demand for additionally income are the contributory fact us for street business.

Conclusion

Poverty keeps the people to maintain low profile, lack of motivation, and more encourage them to develop the skills and knowledge in several. But the street in many parts Salem city, which is being called as mango city and Geologists paradise to provide plenty of business chances. Since the city has the traditional grocery market named as Leigh Bazar to accommodate plenty of household items to attract people all are Tamil Nadu and even from neighbours states.

The interview respondents have utilized the possible aspects of Salem to do business without investing much with the minimum and affordable amount. Though there low level of education and illiteracy were keeps them below the poverty.

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