

The Nature of Unorganised Street Vendors in the City of Madurai – A Study

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Abstract— This research paper explores the nature of unorganised street vendors in the city of Madurai. The findings of the study shows that 24.2 per cent of the street vendors had business experience of 15 years to 20 years so, it may be inferred that street vendors in Madurai city have been carrying out their vending business for many years, 38 per cent of the sample street vendors carried out their trade for the whole day, a vast majority of the respondents (71.6 per cent) were vending at the undesignated market place, majority of sample respondents (61.2 per cent) accessed their vending place without paying, 36.8 per cent of the street vendors transported their goods for trade by means of shared automobile, majority of the respondents (68.8 per cent) takes back home the leftover goods after the completion street vending activities in Madurai city.

Keywords— Unorganised sector, Nature of Street Vendors, Timing of Street Vending, Reasons to Choose Street Vending, Madurai city.

I. INTRODUCTION

The street 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. Urbanization is the most significant all India phenomena of our times. Today the city has become an engine of growth, the main job provider. Twenty-nine per cent of the people of the country generate 60% of the GDP. However, our cities remain ill-prepared to address the problems of poverty. Planning and governance continue to be the preserve of the politician-mafia-bureaucrat nexus. Whatever policy that does exist is poorly implemented. There is unabated official and social hostility towards the unorganized sector, even though the formal sector has ceased to grow, having reached saturation point. As the cost of creating jobs in the unorganized sector is very low, it needs to be integrated into the context of the overall macro-economy. Every social system must cater to the needs of its members to enable them to survive; it must have effective means of allocating and distributing resources.

The vendors provide a wide array of goods and commodities to the urban populace at reasonable prices and convenient locations.¹

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The broad objective of the present work was to study the nature of sample street vendors in Madurai city and the specific objectives were to study the street vendor's years of business, timing of vending, daily time spend on vending, daily time spend on vending activities (hours spend for cleaning & preparation/day), reasons to choose street vending, vending place of street vendors, paid an amount for the vending place, mode of transport of goods for trade, storage of their left over products in Madurai city.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Study Area

The present work confined with ten streets in Madurai city, namely, Anna Nagar, East Masi Street, Goripalayam, Nethaji Road, North Veli Street, South Veli Street, Thalavai Agraharam Street, Town Hall Road, West Chitrai Street and West Masi Street.

B. Methodology adapted

An explorative method has been adopted to study the street vendor's years of business, timing of vending, daily time spend on vending, daily time spend on vending activities (hours spend for cleaning & preparation/day), reasons to choose street vending, vending place of street vendors, paid an amount for the vending place, mode of transport of goods for trade, storage of their left over products by employing simple random sampling technique. The present study also employed tools like percentage, mean, standard deviation and ranking for primary data exploration.

IV. MAJOR FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

A. Street Vendor's Years of Business

Table I represents the distribution of street vendors by their years of business experience.

The study found that 24.2 per cent of the street vendors had business experience of 15 years to 20 years, 16.6 per cent of the respondents had business experience of 30 years to 35 years, 16 per cent of the street vendors were experienced for 2 years to 20 years, 14.4 per cent of the street vendors have been doing their street vending business for a period of 10 years to 15 years, 11.2 per cent of the respondents had the present business for about 20 years to 25 years, 7 per cent of the street vendors had business experience of 5 years to 10 years, 4.8 per cent of the respondent were experienced in the present profession for about 25 years to 30 years, 3.6 per cent of the street vendors had their vending business experience less than 2 years, 1.4 per cent of the street vendors had business experienced of above 40 years and 0.8 per cent of the respondents have been engaged their present profession a period of 35 years to 40 years among the street vendors in the city of Madurai.

The calculated mean score of years of street vending business experience among the sample street vendors was 17.664 years and the calculated standard deviation was 10.6708 years. Hence, it may be inferred that street vendors in Madurai city have been carrying out their vending business for many years.

Table I
Distribution Of The Respondents By Their Years Of Business

Sl. No.	Years of business	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Less than 2	18	03.6
2.	2 – 5	80	16.0
3.	5 – 10	35	07.0
4.	10 – 15	72	14.4
5.	15 – 20	121	24.2
6.	20 – 25	56	11.2
7.	25 – 30	24	04.8
8.	30 – 35	83	16.6
9.	35 – 40	04	00.8
10.	40 – and above	07	01.4
Total		500	100
Mean Score		17.664	
Standard Deviation		10.6708	

Source: Primary data

B. Timing of Vending

The distribution of respondents by the timing of vending operation in Madurai city is presented in table II. The study reveals that 38 per cent of the sample street vendors carried out their trade for the whole day, 22.4 per cent of the respondents' business timing were during office timing and in the evening, 14.4 per of the street vendors vended during evening time only, 13 per cent of the sample street vendors carried out their business during the office timing only, 8 per cent of the sample respondents carried out their business during morning and evening only and 4.2 per cent of the street vendors carried out their business in the morning and office timing.

Table II
Distribution Of Respondents By The Timing Of Vending In Madurai City

Sl. No.	Timing of vending	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Office time only	65	13.0
2.	Evening only	72	14.4
3.	Morning & Office time	21	04.2
4.	Morning & Evening	40	08.0
5.	Office time & Evening	112	22.4
6.	Whole day	190	38.0
Total		500	100

Source: Primary data

C. Daily Time Spend on Vending

Table III presenting the daily time spend on vending by the sample street vendors in Madurai city revealed 34 per cent of the respondents spent around 10 hours and above hours daily, 23.2 per cent of the respondents spent 9 hours to 10 hours daily, 14.2 per cent of the street vendors spent 7 hours to 8 hours daily, 13.6 per cent of the respondents spent 5 hours to 6 hours daily, 8.6 per cent of respondents spent 8 hours to 9 hours daily and 6.4 per cent street vendors spent 6 hour to 7 hours daily in the study area and the calculated mean score of daily time spent on street vending business was 9.807 hours and the standard deviation of same was 2.7288 hours.

Table III
Distribution Of Respondents By Daily Time Spend On Street Vending (In Hours) In Madurai City

Sl. No.	Daily time spend on vending (in hours)	Frequency	Percentage
1.	5 – 6	68	13.6
2.	6 – 7	32	06.4
3.	7 – 8	71	14.2
4.	8 – 9	43	08.6
5.	9 – 10	116	23.2
6.	10 and above	170	34.0
Total		500	100
Mean Score		09.807	
Standard Deviation		02.7288	

Source: Primary data

D. Daily Time Spend on Cleaning and Preparation/Day

Table IV presents the distribution of respondents by daily time spends on cleaning & preparation per day to carry out the trading. The study found that a majority of the respondents (65.6 per cent) spent 1 hour to 2 hours for cleaning and preparation per day, 28.4 per cent of the street vendors spent 2 hours to 3 hours to prepare for the day, 3.8 per cent spent less than one hour, 2.2 per cent spent 3 hours to 4 hours, and none of the respondent had spent more than 4 hours of the day to get started with the business in Madurai city. The calculated mean score of daily time spend on cleaning and preparation per day by street vendors in Madurai city was 1.787 hours and the standard deviation of same was 0.7965 hours.

Table IV
Distribution Of Respondents By Daily Time Spend On Vending Activities In Madurai City

Sl. No.	Daily time spend on vending activities (hours spend in cleaning & preparation/day)	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Less than 1	19	03.8
2.	1 – 2	328	65.6
3.	2 – 3	142	28.4
4.	3 – 4	11	02.2
Total		500	100
Mean Score		01.787	
Standard Deviation		0.7965	

Source: Primary data

E. Level of Agreeing for Reasons to Choose Street Vending

The distribution of respondents by their reasons to choose a street vending in the city of Madurai is presented in table V. The absolute majority (68.4 per cent) of the street vendors strongly agreed that they have opted for street vending business as it requires less investment in initiating the business and they do not have enough skill to get another permanent job (51.4 per cent). The street vendors were also very much agreed that they took up vending business as no one in their family was earning (40.6 per cent) and the earning of their spouse was not sufficient in their family maintenance expenses (25.8 per cent). The respondents strongly disagree that there was flexibility in their vending business (33.4 per cent) which means that in their absence other members of their family members could not carry out their vending activities. Unavailability of job in the market was also one of the reasons for choosing street vending business (32.4 per cent) and they strongly disagree that the dismissal of their parents was the reason for choosing the present profession (64 per cent) but it was in their own interest (32.8 per cent) that they started street vending business.

The calculated mean score concentrated to 5 scores for the reasons to choose street vending, such as; street vending needs less investment for initiating the business and they do not have enough skill to get another permanent job. The calculated mean score was between 3.25 and 3.50 for the reasons, such as; unavailability of job in the market was also one of the reasons for choosing a street vending, they took up vending business as no one in their family was earning, it was their own interest that they started a street vending business and the earning of their spouse was not sufficient in their family maintenance expenses.

Among the 9 reasons that was considered for the present study for taking up street vending profession by the street vendors in the study area, street vending requires less investment in initiating the business was ranked 1st, 2nd rank was given for the reason to lack of skill to get regular job, absence of earning members in family, insufficient earned by their spouse to meet out the family expenses, interested in street vending business, unavailability of job in the market was ranked 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th respectively.

Hence, the sample street vendors in Madurai city took up street vending business with their own interest in the profession.

TABLE V
DISTRIBUTION OF THE RESPONDENTS BY THEIR REASONS TO CHOOSE STREET VENDING

Sl. No.	Reasons to Choose Street Vending	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Rank
		No.	No.	No.	No.	No.			
1.	Unavailability of job in the market	162 (32.4)	93 (18.6)	30 (06.0)	140 (28.0)	75 (15.0)	3.25	1.517	VI
2.	Absence of earning members in family	203 (40.6)	88 (17.6)	16 (03.2)	143 (28.6)	50 (10.0)	3.50	1.496	III
3.	Death of parents (Parental business)	62 (12.4)	38 (07.6)	24 (04.8)	56 (11.2)	320 (64.0)	1.93	1.452	IX
4.	Lack of skills to get another regular job	257 (51.4)	128 (25.6)	19 (03.8)	54 (10.8)	42 (08.4)	4.01	1.320	II
5.	Requires less investment in initiating the business	342 (68.4)	83 (16.6)	17 (03.4)	11 (02.2)	47 (09.4)	4.32	1.245	I
6.	Interested in vending business	164 (32.8)	117 (23.4)	23 (04.6)	126 (25.2)	70 (14.0)	3.36	1.495	V
7.	Insufficient earned by their spouse to meet the family expenses	129 (25.8)	154 (30.8)	52 (10.4)	117 (23.4)	48 (09.6)	3.40	1.343	IV
8.	Flexibility in working	83 (16.6)	107 (21.4)	19 (03.8)	124 (24.8)	167 (33.4)	2.63	1.526	VII
9.	Other reasons	45 (09.0)	13 (02.6)	89 (17.8)	154 (30.8)	199 (39.8)	2.10	1.218	VIII

Source: Computer from the sample survey, **No.:** Number of respondents, **Note:** Figures in parenthesis represent the percentage to their respective total sample respondent

F. Street Vending Place of Street Vendors

The distribution of respondents by vending place of sample street vendors in Madurai city is presented in table VI. The study found that a vast majority of the respondents (71.6 per cent) were vending at the undesignated market place, 17.2 per cent of the street vendors vended on footpath, 6.2 per cent of the respondents were carrying out vending activities in the designated market place and mobile street vendors constituted 5 per cent among the sample population.

Table VI
Distribution Of Respondents By Vending Place Of Street Vendors In Madurai City

Sl. No.	Vending place	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Designated market place	31	06.2
2.	Undesignated market place	358	71.6
3.	Footpath	86	17.2
4.	Mobile	25	05.0
Total		500	100

Source: Primary data

G. Paid an Amount for the Vending Place

The amount of money paid for the vending place of street vendors in the city of Madurai is presented in table VII. The majority of sample respondents (61.2 per cent) accessed their vending place without paying, 22.6 per cent of the street vendors accessed their vending place by paying to big shop owners and 16.2 per cent of the respondents were vending at area prohibited for street vending by Madurai Corporation authorities among the sample street vendors.

Table VII
Respondents By An Amount Paid For Vending Place

Sl. No.	Status of vending place	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Free access	306	61.2
2.	Access by paying fees	113	22.6
3.	Area prohibited for vending	81	16.2
Total		500	100

Source: Primary data

H. Mode of Transport of Goods for Trade

An analysis of mode of transport services availed by the street vendors to transport goods for trade is presented in table VIII. The study reveals that 36.8 per cent of the street vendors transported their goods for trade by means of shared automobile, 19.4 per cent of the respondents transported their goods by public and government buses, 18.4 per cent of the street vendors carried by themselves on walk, 14.2 per cent of the street vendors utilized cart to transport goods for trade, 6.8 per cent of the street vendors transported the tradable goods by their own automobile, and 4.4 per cent of the respondents transported the goods by their own bicycle or tricycle in Madurai city.

Table VIII
Distribution Of Respondents By Mode Of Transport Of Goods For Trade In Madurai City

Sl. No.	Mode of transport of goods for trade	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Own Automobile	34	06.8
2.	Own Cycle	22	04.4
3.	By Bus	97	19.4
4.	Shared Automobile	184	36.8
5.	Cart	71	14.2
6.	On Foot	92	18.4
Total		500	100

Source: Primary data

I. Storage of Products

Table IX presents the distribution of respondents by storage of left over products in Madurai city. The majority of the respondents (68.8 per cent) takes back home the leftover goods after the completion of daily vending activities, 17.4 per cent of the street vendors stored their products in the vending place itself and 13.8 per cent of the street vendors stored their products at renting place.

Table IX
Distribution Of Respondents By Storage Of Products In Madurai City

Sl. No.	Storage of products	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Takes back to Home	344	68.8
2.	Vending Place	87	17.4
3.	With Rent	69	13.8
Total		500	100

Source: Primary data

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