

Economic Aspects of Urban Informal Workers in Kanyakumari - A Study of Street Vendors in Agastheeswaram Taluk

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Abstract – The informal sector is a very important role in the economic development of developing countries like India. Existence since ancient times, especially in the street vendors in all civilization, ancient and medieval. One reads accounts of traveling merchants who not only sold their wares in the town by going from house to house but they also traded in neighboring countries. The term of “informal sector” was first coined by Keith Hart. There are many informal sectors in our country working for implantation of liberalization, privatization and Globalization there are several changes in the system and particularly with respect to informal sectors belonging to street vendors in Kanyakumari District, Nagercoil, Tamilnadu. There are many street vendors in the Kanyakumari district. The researchers use the sampling method to select 60 respondents for the present study. The findings of the study is briefly in full paper.

Index Terms – Informal sector, Street vendors, developing country.

INTRODUCTION

India is very ancient and developing country. Now a day's India's population is very high. India's population current position is world second. Most of the people are live in rural areas. Now most of the people are migrated from rural to urban. The urban areas have the entire specialty and more job opportunities. Some skilled people try to get a white-collar job in the urban area. In most Indian cities the urban poor survive by working in the informal sector. It is estimated that the total number of street vendors in the country is around 10 million they comprise around 2% of the total population in the metropolitan cities. This paper study about the street vendor as a person who offers goods for sale to the public at large without having a permanent built-up structure from which to sell. Street vendors may be stationary in the sense that they occupy space on the pavements or other public/private spaces, or mobile in the sense that they move from place to place by carrying their wares on push carts or on their heads.

INFORMAL/UNORGANIZED SECTORS IN INDIA

In 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.

CONCEPT OF STREET VENDORS

In Indian cities urban sector survive as a result of the work in informal cities. The poverty and lack of profitable employment in the rural area drive the people to move towards the urban center. These people to move the urban centers. These people are not educated or skilled so they cannot get into the highly paid job in the formal sector. They depend on the informal job mainly for their survival. This has resulted in the rapid growth of informal sector in the various cities. Unlike other formal sectors there is no need for much financial investment for undertaking a business in informal sector Sharit K. Bhowmik 1988.

ABOUT KANYAKUMARI

Kanyakumari District named after the goddess Kanyakumari. This is one of the world famous tourist places. This district lies at the southernmost tip of Peninsular India where Indian Ocean, Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal conflate. Kanyakumari is one among of the district as well as southern most district of Tamil Nadu. This district was formed out of the former princely state of Travancore, Cochin under the linguistic.

This district divided in to two revenue division, Padmanabapuram and Nagercoil having the headquarters at Thukalay and Nagercoil respectively. There are four Taluks and six blocks. Totally there are 56 town Panchayats and 99 village panchayats. The district covers an area of 1,684 km² as per 2011 census, total population is 1.87million people live in kanyakumari district. 17.67% population of Kanyakumari

districts lives in rural areas. The total Kanyakumari district population living in rural areas is 330,572 of which males and females are 164,938 and 165,634 respectively. This main land marks are Kanyakumari Beach, Nagaraja temple at Nagercoil, Padmanabapuram place, etc., The population of Street Vendor is expected to be around 6273. (This report is collected from the Labour office, Kanyakumari district.) The researcher has selected the most popular tourist place in Government of Tamil nadu.

A large number of street vendors are working in this district. The street vendors are selling their different types of goods in the platforms. Public are very interested to purchase the goods sold by them. Non Government Organizations are giving support to the Street Vendors.

DEFINITION OF STREET VENDORS

According to National Policy in Urban Street Vendors, Department of Urban Employment and poverty Alleviation. "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 buy 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. in this policy document, the term urban .

Researchers have used different definitions to identify vendors in a given city or country. McGee (1977) made an attempt to define vendors elaborately. He includes trade and service activities while categorizing on the basis of type and operation. He defines vendors from an economic, cultural and legal position. This is done with difficulty as vendors in different countries have different Characteristics. The different dimensions considered by McGee are the functional role the vendors play in the market distribution system, the scale of operation and the legal definitions prescribed in each city. He defines vendors as those people who offer goods or services for sale from public places, primarily streets and pavements. Thus, the bulk of migrant labour force is in urban informal sector, where the preponderance of self employed or casual workers earns their livelihood either independently or with aid of family labour.

According to the National policy, there are three categories of street vendors:

- Those Street Vendors who carry out vending on a regular basis with a specific location,
- Those Street Vendors who carry out vending not on a regular basis and without a specific location, for example, vendors who sell goods in weekly bazaars during holidays and festivals and so on,

- The mobile street vendors.

Street Vendors in Kanyakumari are shown below:



Working Pattern of the Street Vendors:

Kanyakumari District is one of the smallest district in Tamil Nadu. Most of the Street Vendors are selling the goods like Fruits and Vegetables, Foods, Nuts, Fish, Flowers and etc, They have a pattern of selling the goods so to say, in sitting position, bicycle, trolley, walking, sales setting of open places, road side, and door to door. They sell their goods take the time 12 to 14 hours per day (8AM-9PM). In this working time vendors are facing many problems from the public and some police personnel. Their working area is not protected from the harmful weather conditions like heat, rain dust and lack of

storage facilities. So their physical condition severely and causes many disease like body, skin allergic, dust allergic and various psychological problems.

Street vendors have poor social protection and their working conditions on the street expose them to a range of safety and health issues. The study on kanyakumari district found that most of the street vendors felled that the stress related diseases-migraine, varicose vein, hyper acidity, and high and low blood pressure. In general, there are more men vendors than women vendors in kanyakumari. Women vendors earn less, on average, than men vendors, their earnings range from maximum 100 rupees per day. The lack of toilets has an adverse effect on health and many suffer from urinary tract infections and kidney ailments. The mobile street vendors also face security issues.

Problem Faced by Street Vendors:

The street vendors keep facing problems from different directions. The street vendors were asked about the problems and difficulties they placed during vending. The street vendors always suffer competition with other street vendors because of fluctuation in market prices, insecure and irregular employment. There is hardly any facility at the vending place. Street vendors are usually associated with encroachment of public spaces, causes traffic congestion, inadequate hygiene. The government does not recognize the contribution of street hawkers towards economic and social well-being of urban population. They survive without government support. But lately government the past "Street Vendors Bill 2013" which protects the rights of street vendors. Negative force of online shopping on retailers and street vendors-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 mod of purchasing. There are around 1000s of online marketing enterprises selling 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.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Dehdual Sahs (2011) in his study "working life of street vendors in Mumbai" analysed the working life of vendors, their financial conditions, indebtedness, the amount of bribes they have to pay, working hours, the issues of public space utilization and the legal aspect of their activity. The basic problem faced by street vendors is that their occupation is illegal. The street vendors can play a very important role in the urban economy by generating employment and by supporting both the urban poor as well as the rich. The income levels of the vendors have not improved due to compulsion to pay regular bribes. They face harassment, eviction and the

collection of bribes. They depend on money lenders and wholesalers for access to credit for their business as well in for social security purpose. The study further reveals poor working conditions of the vendors of excessively long working hours in a day. In addition to unhealthy and unsafe conditions in the work place.¹

Rakesh Raman (2012) in his study "Agony and angst on the streets: women Fruits and vegetables vendors in Northern India" analysed women vendors, they come from the socially backward and economically deprived sections of the society are trapped in situation characterized by illiteracy, a low resource back, lack of opportunities for growth and exploitation. They are forced to work for 12-14 hours a day for earning meagre amounts. In this low amount which is not sufficient to make both ends meet, let alone ensure proper upbringing of their children and provide a decent life for them, the largely unorganized women vendors are totally unprotected. They face all kinds of exploitation from all possible agencies including harassment and beatings; their belongings are snatched, and they are often dislocated and forced to face uncertainty of business without any social security or support. Women vendors is complicated by the absence of basic civic amenities in the market.²

Sharit k. Bhowmik (2011) in his study "Legal Protection for Street Vendors" analysed the supreme Court has directed the government to pass the street vendors Bill, 2009 by 30 June 2011. The bill does not include significant clauses of the National Policy for Urban Street Vendors. If the government is serious about protecting the livelihoods of the urban working poor. Most of these small traders were local people there were also those who came from far off places. Most cities treat these "intruders" in public spaces as a nuisance. Urban poor, especially the working poor, view street vendors as a boon. These street traders provide cheap food, clothes and other items of daily use.

They conduct their business in convenient places by a large number of commuters. These people generally possess low skills too low a level of education for the better paid jobs in the organized sector. The urban poor, hawking is one of the means of earning a livelihood, as it requires minor financial input and the skills involved are low. The issues regarding the legality of street vending and the right to carry on their business have plagued vendors for long.

The judgment is significant several important aspects of street vending and use of public space. This judgment, municipal authorities continued to harass street vending and use of public space. This judgment, municipal authorities continued to harass street vendors. The new government accepted the need for a national policy for street vendors. Recent Supreme Court Judgment states that town vending committees to regulate street vending and ensure that they are allotted proper public space.

Policies or Bills in other states especially in the large metros like Mumbai, Kolkata and Delhi, the only penalty for illegal vending is forcible eviction and confiscation of goods. These cause unbearable losses to the vendors. Fruits and vegetable vendors lose everything because these commodities are perishable. Other vendors selling non-perishable goods find that half are missing.⁴

Sharit k. Bhowmik, in his study, “National Policy for Street Vendor”, reveals that Street vendors have been regarded as nuisance value. They provide goods and services useful to other sections of the urban poor. They form an important segment of the urban poor and informal economy. National policy on street vendors argues that vital for urban planning purposes. They are mainly unsuccessful or are unable to get regular jobs. For the urban poor, hawking or street vending is one of the means of earning a livelihood. Street vending requires minor financial input and the skills involved are low. Urban poor tries to solve their problems through their own meager resources but they do not demand that government create job for them. They try to live their life with dignity and self-respect through hard work. Women street vendors earned less amounts. Street vendors suffered from ailments related to stress-hyperacidity, migraine, hypertension, loss of sleep etc. the good sold by hawkers, such as clothes and hosiery, leather and molded plastic goods, household goods and some items of food, are manufactured in small-scale (or) home-based industries. In these industries engage a large number of workers, they could have hardly marketed their products on their own. In this way hawkers provide a valuable service by helping sustain employment in these industries. The poorer sections too are able to procure their basic necessities, through street vendors, as the goods sold are cheap. In this way one section of the urban poor, namely street vendors helps another section to survive.⁵

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The informal sector is a survival strategy of the urban poor in response to insufficient job creation. In addition to this, it is a very significant component of national economies for several reasons: it provides goods and services at a low price; it plays the role of a reservoir of the individual reserve army that holds down wages for the formal sector of the urban economy and finally, it provides opportunities for earning income to the indigenous city residents and migrants poor. Consequently, there is no simple relationship between working in the informal sector and being poor, nor between the presence of such a sector and the relative wealth or level of development of the country.

Street vending, the informal sector, is a source of employment, income and survival for a large number of population; especially the middle and low-income earners. At the same time it should be noted that street vending survives not merely because it is an important source of employment but also

because of the services it provides to the urban population. For the urban poor, street vendors provide goods, including food, at low prices. It means one section of the urban poor, namely, street vendors, subsidizes the existence of the other sections of the urban poor by providing them cheap goods and services. Middle-income groups to benefit from street vending because of the affordable prices offered.

Moreover, the increase of street vendors in present days is due to the increasing migration from rural areas. Many people have been rendered homeless and displaced by the conflict. Especially youths are moving to urban areas or abroad for means of livelihoods. Since, those migrants are less educated and unskilled do not get jobs in the formal sectors, and have to involve in the informal sectors (street vending), which is the way of livelihoods to those migrants people. Studies show that in almost all the Asian countries, street vendors have no legal status to conduct their business and they are constantly harassed by the authorities. Furthermore, the role of informal sector has not been well perceived. It is rather regarded to be a non-profit activity, as it does not contribute to the national economy in terms of tax. It is marginalized from the development agenda, and hence has been severely affected by the functioning of macro socio-economic policies. Particularly, improper or lack of policy support has made the sector to be unsecured, which adversely affects the livelihoods of the urban poor. Yet they provide the urban population with much needed services that neither the municipalities nor the larger retailing outlets can provide.

The important goal for the urban poor in the Eleventh five Year Plan in India are to provide them with affordable shelter and “decent living conditions and working conditions”; to make adequate provision for land for the poor; to help in developing: self-employment enterprises’ and creating jobs for wage earners; to protect the economic interests and safety of women and other vulnerable sections of our society. There is no accurate statistics available on the number of vendors and women’s proportion within the category. This is often an important source of employment for the vulnerable for different reasons. Firstly, the perceived skill required for entering into vending is not much as compared to other categories of retail trade. Secondly, the self-employed nature of the occupation makes the entry into it easier. The requirement of a very low capital investment further enables the entry of poor and vulnerable groups into the occupation. It is thus important to explore these street vendors in terms of their socio-demographic and economic characteristics, their health conditions and various other aspects related to street vending. Hence, the present study.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are:

- To study the socio-demographic and economic characteristics of the street vendors.
- To know the occupational health problems of the street vendors.
- To explore the processes and problems involved in street vending.

STUDY AREA

Kanyakumari District, Nagercoil is a district of Tamil Nadu state, India, and is the southernmost land area of mainland India. Kanyakumari district is placed on the tail of India. With an area of 1672 sq.km. it occupies 1.29% of the total extent of Tamil Nadu. The district has the best literacy rate in the state and is considered the best educated district in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu by the HRD Ministry.. As of 2011, the district had a population of 1,870,374 with a sex-ratio of 1,019 females for every 1,000 males. The district is the second most urbanized district in Tamil Nadu and is the second smallest of the 32 districts of Tamil Nadu. At the lower levels of administration, there are 99 village panchayats and a further 56 special category village panchayats.

THE MAJOR TOWNS OF THE DISTRICT INCLUDE

1. Agastheeswaram taluk contains Nagercoil, Kanyakumari, Agastheeswaram, Suchindram and Rajakkamangalam.
2. Thovalai taluk which contains Thovalai and Boothapandi.
3. Kalkulam taluk which contains Padmanabhapuram, Thuckalay, Colachel, Kalkulam, Thiruvithamcode, Kurunthancode, Thiruvattar and Kulasekaram, Thingal Nager.
4. Vilavancode Taluk contains Karungal, Kuzhithurai, Marthandam, Vilavancode, Killiyur, Munchirai, Manjalumoodu, Arumanai and Melpuram.

DATA COLLECTION METHODS

This study is based on primary data to look into the present situation of street vendors in Kanyakumari district. Three-stage sampling method, like multi-stage sampling which uses the combinations of various sampling techniques has been used to draw the sample. The units of analysis as well as primary stakeholder of the study are street vendors in kanyakumari district.

SAMPLING DESIGN

Kanyakumari district has been selected according to its geographical location and other certain characteristics such as employment status and street trading. The size of occupations for interview was determined by observation method following a pilot survey. Most of the respondents are of semi-mobile nature, some are fixed and some possess mobile activities. Since the present study is mainly primary data based, three stage (3-stage) sampling method has been designed to draw sample.

SAMPLE SIZE

It is proposed collect the data from the towns of four taluks of the district. As per the statistics obtained by the district collectors office there are 23 towns in kanyakumari district. By Adopting Simple Random sampling method, 20 street vendors from this 23 towns were selected and hence the sample size will be 460.

TABLE-1

Total Sample Chosen from each Study Area

Sl. No	Name of the Places	Total Samples Chosen
1	Nagercoil	20
2	Kanyakumari	20
3	Agastheeswaram	10
4	Suchindram	10
	Total	60

TOOLS USED FOR THE STUDY

Qualitative research believes in words, expression and contents analysis while it comes in the phase of analysis. Thus, data analysis in qualitative research provides ways of discerning, examining, comparing and contrasting, and interpreting meaningful patterns or themes. The method used for the data analysis is statistical techniques and percentages and Chi Square as well as conduct crosses tabulation. The percentage in the analysis chapter is presented in parentheses apart from this Correlation analysis Regression analysis ANOVA where used as and when necessary.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Study on the informal sector is emerging issues in the recent years. Since, the informal sector, to some extent it has been interpreted as an illegal sector; economists, researchers, policy makers and others take it as a less-productive sector in terms of government revenue, mainly because the informal sectors do not pay taxes. Although the informal sectors provide an income earning opportunities to make a living to the poor in the cities, it is marginalized from the development agenda. Therefore, it is important to account Street Vending, the informal sector, as employment provider to the poor people and cannot be ignored. The study thus, will provide insights into some hidden dimensions of this urban informal sector and how they are embedded in development. The study is also regarded as having an applied dimension in the sense that it can guide in making policies concerning informal sector and its direct and indirect contributions to the national economy through creating employment and providing a way of living to the poor.

Moreover, economists are increasingly interested in the role of the informal sector. However, this sector is not only connected to the economics and it has now been emerging in scope and gets increasing attention in development provider sector rather than an illegal on insignificant sector.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

While there is a lot of scope, limitations are also present. Inadvertently, errors might have slipped into the content analysis or even in the survey. All the limitations pertinent to personal interview method may be found in this study too though efforts have been made to eliminate the errors. The study is qualitative in nature and cannot be generalized on statistical basis.

Socio-economic background

The study of socio economic background of the street vendor's present study demonstrates that around 73.3% of the vendors are men while 26.7% vendors are women. Age wise distribution of vendors reveals that 43.1% of them were in the age group of 30-40 years, with 58.5 per cent in this age group being female and the remaining being male. 37.5% age group 15-29 years age group. 30.6% were found in the age groups 30 to 44 and 45. Only one male vendor was found to be more than 60 years. With respect to the educational qualification of the Street Vendors, less than half percent 25% of the respondents have completed primary level education and one third The study depicts that more than half percent 90% of the respondents are Hindus, less than half per cent 10% are Christians and No respondents where Muslim.

TABLE:2

Socio-economic background of the Respondents

Variables	Frequency (n=60)	Percentage
1.Age (in year)		
15-19	17	28.3
30-44	21	35
45-59	15	25
more than 60	7	11.7
2.Sex		
Male	44	73.3
Female	16	26.7
3.Education		
Illiterate	9	15.0
Primary	5	8.3
Middle	37	61.7
High School	9	15.0
4.Religion		
Hindu	54	90
Christian	6	10
Muslim	-	-
5.Social Group		

BC	45	75
MBC	6	10
SC/ST	9	15
6.Marital Status		
Married	38	63.3
Unmarried	14	23.4
Divorced	8	13.3
Widowed		
7.Type of family		
Joint	15	25
Nuclear	45	75
8.Type of Goods		
Fish	6	10
Fruits	6	10
Vegetables	6	10
Clothes and Fancy Items	13	21.7
Food Items	11	18.3
Leather Items	4	6.7
Non-perishable food	5	8.3
Flower	9	15
9.Sales pattern		
Open place	35	58.3
Cart	11	18.3
Basket	7	11.7
Carryon head/hand	7	11.7
10.Monthly Income(Rs.)		
1500-3000	15	25
3001-4500	36	60
4501-5000	9	15
11.Monthly Expenditure(Rs.)		
1500-3000	18	30
3001-4500	34	56.7
4501-5000	8	13.3
12.Monthly Savings(Rs.)		
500-1000	17	28.3
1001-1500	19	31.7
1501-2000	24	40

PROBLEMS CAUSED FOR STREET VENDING:

Following listed by street vendors as the major problems they faced in their business; raids and confiscations of their merchandise both the national and municipal police, that problems are

- Competition from new entrants
- Erratic supply of raw materials
- Lack of business management skills (especially vending skills)
- Lack of proper selling techniques

- Hostile customers (especially men), some of whom seldom refuse to pay
- Harassment and exploitation by national police and municipal authorities
- Poor social protection
- Constant fatigue caused by spending long hours in the sun
- Lack of public utilities (roads, electricity, toilets, potable water and waste disposal)
- Lack of organisational strength and voice
- Lack of dignity and/or right to work
- Insecurity of mobile women vender

TABLE: 3

PROBLEMS OF STREET VENDORS

Problems	Men in %	Women in %	Above 55 aged in %	Total in %
new entries	4.3	3.4	2.3	10
Poor social protection	3.5	4.4	2.1	10
Harassment and exploitation	5.5	3.5	1	10
public utilities (Toilets, roads, electricity, toilets, potable water)	3.2	5	1.8	10

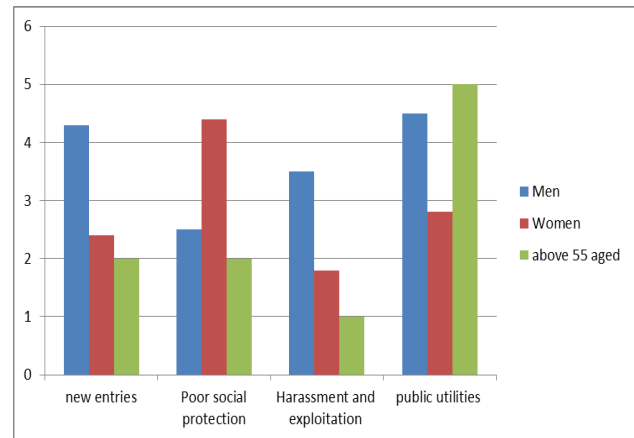
Source: Primary Data

In this table says about the problems of street vendors in various ways. Maximum number of street vendors affected by new entries, because that new entries are attract the consumers in many ways. This table shows men affected by the new entries in 4.3%, women 3.4% and above 55 aged 2.3%. Above table explanted poor social protection of men affected in 3.5% women 4.4% and above 55 aged 2.1%.

Harassment and exploitation of municipality and other govt. peoples are punishing the street vendors unnecessarily men affected in 5.5% women 3.5% and above 55 aged 1. Street vendors very much affected in public utilities (Toilets, roads, electricity, toilets, and potable water) men 3.2%, women 5% and above 55 aged 1.8% respectively.

Graph-1

Problems caused for Street Vending:



SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

This Chapter presents major findings, suggestions and conclusion on the basis of the results arrived in the analyzing chapter. To pursue this study the project team have selected to sample in the Nagercoil Municipality to study about the street vendors. The major findings of this study are presented in the following manner.

FINDINGS

- In this study, Majority (35%) of the respondents are belong to the age group between 30 to 40 years group. On the other hand 11.7% of them belonged to the age group between 50 to 60 years group.
- In this study, Majority (73.3%) of the respondents are male and (26.7%) of the respondents are female.
- In this study, Majority 63.3% of the respondents are married. On the other hand 13.3% of the respondents are widowed.
- In this study, Majority 75% of the respondents are backward caste (BC). On the other hand 15% of them lowest sample respondents are Scheduled Caste (SC).
- In this study, Majority 71.7% of the respondents are satisfied in his job. On the other hand 28.3% the lowest number of sample respondents not satisfied.

SUGGESTION

Based on the findings, the following suggestions had been made to improve the education, welfare measures and socio-economic conditions street vendors.

1. The government must provide the facilities like, drinking water, lighting toilet facilities etc., for the street vendors.
2. The income of the vendors must be improved.
3. The saving habits of the vendors must be ensuring.
4. Government must be increasing the saving schemes for the development of street vendors.
5. The state government to make small saving of the street vendors.
6. Harassment of street vendors must be controlled. The government should take necessary measures to reduce the harassment of street vendors.

CONCLUSION

This study has given a clear picture about the study on street vendors in Nagercoil Municipality, kanyakumari district. As a matter of fact that street vendors are the class of extremely poor and weaker sections of the society. It has been found from the study that they received low income. They are a very low level of standard of living. Women and men energetically hawk variety of goods. In this study revealed that most of the street vendors were in the age group of 20 to 60 years old. They came from poor and illiterate families and prefer this occupation because of diverse reasons. Most of them were working eight to ten hours daily without any holiday. However despite variety of occupations and long working hours, they were

satisfied for vending as they earning enough to meet their family needs. Thus, can conclude that vending is a profitable business and contributes to the economy in a huge way besides a form of self-employment which brings down the numbers of unemployed.

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