



# A STUDY ON PROBLEMS FACED BY THE STREET VENDORS IN MADURAI CITY

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## Abstract

Today, vending is an important source of employment for a large number of urban poor as it requires low skills and small financial inputs. Broadly defined, a street vendor is 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 (or head-load). Street vendors could be stationary and occupy space on the pavements or other public/private areas, or could be mobile, and move from place to place carrying their wares on push carts or in cycles or baskets on their heads, or could sell their wares in moving buses.

Street vendors have poor social protection and their working conditions on the streets expose them to a variety of safety and health issues. The street vendors complained of stress related diseases – migraine, hyper acidity, hyper tension and high blood pressure. In general, there are more men vendors than women vendors in India. Women vendors earn less, on average, than men vendors: their earnings range from 40 to 60 rupees per day. The lack of toilets has an adverse effect on women's health and many suffer from urinary tract infections and kidney ailments. The mobile women street vendors also face security issues. Vendors are often regarded as public nuisance. They are accused of depriving pedestrians of their space, causing traffic jams and having links with anti-social activities. The municipal authorities and housing societies, aided by the media, have targeted vendors at frequent intervals. "The lack of recognition of the role of the street vendors culminates in a multitude of problems faced by them: obtaining license, insecurity of earnings, insecurity of place of hawking, gratifying officers and musclemen, constant eviction threat, fines and harassment by traffic policemen."

Keywords: street vendors, livelihood, health issues.

## INTRODUCTION:

### Meaning and Definition of "Street Food Vendor"

Street vendor means a person who offers goods for sale to the public at large without having a permanent built up Structure from which to sell. ' Street vending may be stationary in the sense that they occupy space on the pavements or other public or private spaces or they may be mobile in the sense that they move from place to place by carrying their wares on push carts or in baskets on their heads. 12 Street-vended foods or its equivalent "Street foods" which are defined as foods and beverages prepared and sold by vendors in streets and other public places for immediate consumption or consumption at a later time without further processing or preparation. This definition includes fresh fruits and vegetables which are sold outside authorized market areas for immediate consumption. 13 The terms "Street foods" as used in this study refers to the vending of ready-to-eat foods in permanent structures or mobile units.

## **Categories of Street Foods Vendors**

Street vendors may be stationary in the sense that they occupy space on pavements or other public or private spaces or they may be mobile in the sense that they are moving from one place to another place. There are three main categories of street foods vendors.

1. 'Mobile Vendors' includes those vendors carrying baskets, hung on balancing poles on their shoulders, bicycle, tricycle, and motorcycle, vendors of bread or ice-cream, as well as trucks or vans selling commissioned food stuffs such as ice-cream.

2. 'Semi-Mobile' vendors include those selling from carts, which may be stationary or moved from one site to another.

3. 'Stationary' vendors may sell their foods from permanent structures at certain points in the city or even in front of shops, providing tables and chairs for immediate consumption.

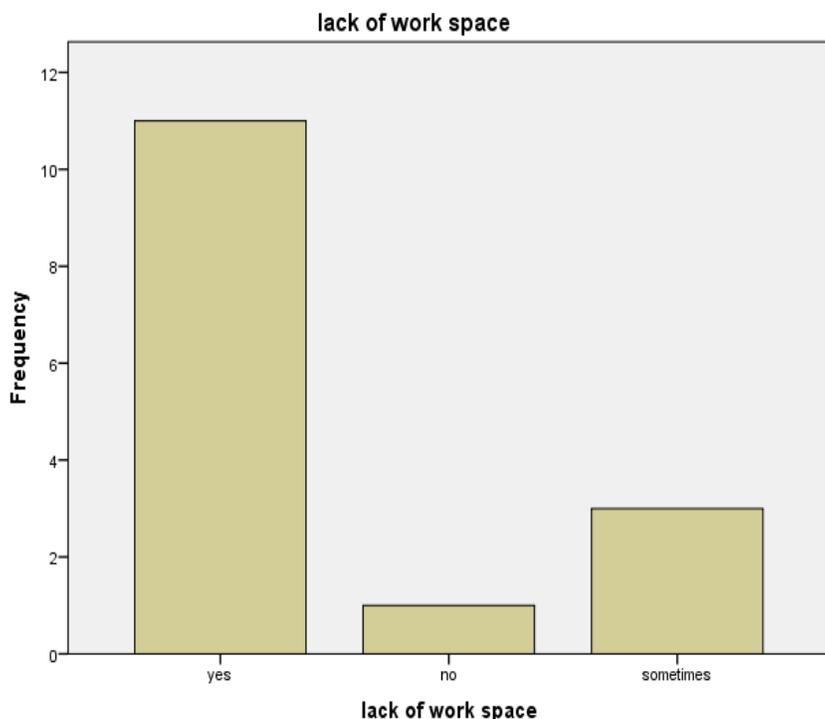
## **Special Characteristics of Vending Operations**

1. The business is not located at definite points permanently, the venue of business changes at varying intervals.
2. The business is governed by hardly any regulative or protective laws.
3. The business covers a wide diversity of works, operation and products.
4. The business contribution to self employment generation opportunity in the country.
5. The vendors are found in retail trade of various products ranging from natural produce to processed and prepared products.
6. Long hours of work involving continuous strain; they work from very early hours of morning until sunset, some times beyond that. They work in unsafe and unhealthy conditions.
7. They occupy the lowest position in the long chain of hierarchy i.e., their economic conditions are as poor as that of a coolie.
8. The street food vendors are the exploited class who eke out a pitiable living under conditions of penury and poverty.
9. It is the economic compulsion, more than any other factor, which motivates the vendors to do the business.'

## **Problems of street vendors:**

- 1) The street vendors lead a very difficult life, the mode of travel or their working hours, it providing hardly any time for rest and for relaxation, which creates adverse effects on their health.
- 2) Increased traffic affects their mobility on Main Street.
- 3 )Pollution is affecting them in many ways, road widening also effect of street vendors.
- 4) Harassment from local authorities or from policemen during vending.
- 5) Uncertainty and insecurity is the basic problem vendors as their profession is considered illegal.
- 6) Vendors are not protected by government, NGO's, labour union by any labour laws.

- 7) They are insecure due to their low income, irregular employment and their sale fluctuation.
- 8) They are not getting easy financial assistance from bank due to their low income and fluctuation in income.
- 9) Vendors need some market amenities such as water toilet, storage or shades, waste disposal.
- 10) Sanitation and work place security.



Hours of working

|                     | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid 1-4 hours     | 4         | 26.7    | 26.7          | 26.7               |
| Valid 5-8 hrs       | 5         | 33.3    | 33.3          | 60.0               |
| Valid 8 hours above | 6         | 40.0    | 40.0          | 100.0              |
| Total               | 15        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

normally operate each day

|                       | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-----------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid street pavement | 7         | 46.7    | 46.7          | 46.7               |
| Valid public space    | 5         | 33.3    | 33.3          | 80.0               |
| Valid others          | 3         | 20.0    | 20.0          | 100.0              |
| Total                 | 15        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

reason that forced to start street vending

|                             | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-----------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| self employed               | 2         | 13.3    | 13.3          | 13.3               |
| to support my family        | 8         | 53.3    | 53.3          | 66.7               |
| i have no one to support me | 5         | 33.3    | 33.3          | 100.0              |
| Total                       | 15        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |



## Solutions:

- 1) Authorities should provide license to the vendors so that they can be protected by harassment and eviction by local authorities.
- 2) Some street vendors are food vendors; they have not received formal training as they are less educated while selling ready food. Local authorities should have to provide training to those vendors.
- 3) Skill training and credit facilities to be made available to the vendors.
- 4) Scheme like regular health check up or health care and pension should also be extended to vendors.
- 5) In town there must be a vending committee they should take care of vending issues.
- 6) Authorities should provide permanent sheds for vendors and minimum facilities such as first aid, drinking water, toilet, garbage collection and solid waste disposal etc.

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