



## ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

## Commerce

### A STUDY ON EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS AND RISKS AMONG STREET FOOD VENDORS IN THIRUVANNAMALAI DISTRICT

**KEY WORDS:** Street Food Vendors, Employment Status, Service Situation, Etc.,

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#### ABSTRACT

Street food vending is found around the world, but has variations within both regions and cultures. Street foods are consumed in many areas. Often sold by street vendors and peddlers, street food is usually ready-to-eat food or drink sold in a street or other public place, such as a market or fair, by a hawker or vendor, often from a portable stall. The present study explores that employment conditions and risks among street food vendors in Thiruvannamalai District. The study explores that street food vendors in Thiruvannamalai District are independent self-employed on whole time as well as part time basis in undesignated market place. Working outside, street food vendors and their goods are exposed to strong sun, heavy rains and extreme heat or cold. Unless they work in markets, most don't have shelter or running water and toilets near their workplace. Inadequate access to clean water is a major concern of prepared food vendors.

#### CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Urbanization has resulted in a proliferation of street food vendors and hawkers as the movement of people from rural to urban areas has led to the need to feed large numbers of working people away from their place of residence. In many countries, street vendors prepare the first meal of the day for low-income workers. The FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) estimate that up to 30% of household food expenditures were devoted to prepared food purchased outside of the household and Tinker (1993) also reports at least twenty percent of the household food budget is spent in this way.

Street vendor means a person engaged in vending of articles, goods, wares, food items or merchandise of everyday use or offering services to the general public, in a street, lane, side walk, footpath, pavement, public park or any other public place or private area, from a temporary built up structure or by moving from place to place. Street vendors are an integral component of urban economies around the world. Distributors of affordable goods and services, they provide consumers with convenient and accessible retail options and form a vital part of the social and economic life of a city. Street vending as an occupation has existed for hundreds of years (Bromley 2000) and is considered a cornerstone of many cities' historical and cultural heritage.

Street foods are very well patronized in many developing countries since they are affordable, easily accessible and also serve as an important source of income. However, these street foods largely do not meet proper hygienic standards and can therefore lead to morbidity and mortality due to food borne illnesses, and concomitant effects on trade and development. Street foods have been considered as an important element in the urban food production and consumption and employment sectors for the past 15 years or so. The Equity Policy Center (EPOC) of Washington, USA examined the employment generated in the street food sector, particularly for women (Tinker, 1997). Street food vendors can earn a reasonable income, in some countries well above the minimum wage. For consumers street foods are also a dependable source of cheap foods, often economies of scale in preparation mean that they can be cheaper than food prepared at household level and thus constitute a significant portion of nutritional intake for the urban poor.

Street food vendors are a self-employed category of small entrepreneurs who are not dependent on any institutional structures to find their livelihoods. Their enterprises evolve exclusively around their own individual strengths and the support extended to them by their immediate social networks such as family members and other close associates. The earnings from their business enterprises are a means of living for the vendors

themselves and their dependent family members. As such, these economic activities of the street food vendors have not only provided a source of livelihood to the vendors and their dependent family members but also have reduced the plight of their becoming an economic and social burden on the State.

#### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

**M Bartley, A Sacker, and P Clarke, (1991 - 2001)**, in their research work on, "Employment status, employment conditions, and limiting illness: prospective evidence from the British household panel survey" stated that, Secure employment in favorable working conditions are associated with a greatly reduced the risk of healthy people developing limiting illness. Lower income is associated with a higher risk of limiting illness, independently of education, social class, education, and employment status. Secure employment increases the likelihood of recovery. Deterioration in job security may be an important reason behind the increasing prevalence of limiting illness in the community.

**Jacob Olang'oOnyango, Prof. Olima W.L.A, Dr. Leah Onyango, (2012)** The study concludes that street vendors identify the locations where they vend on their own without any guideline. The sites taken at random by vendors make the pattern of street vending look haphazard within the urban built environment. This make Local Authorities view street vending as disorganized activity giving bad image to the town.

**R.Karthikeyan and Dr. R.Mangaleswaran, (2013)**, in their research work on "A Study on Working Patterns of Unorganized Sector with Particular Reference to Street Vendors in Tiruchirppalli, Tamil Nadu" concluded that, street vendors are integral part of human society. These people are to be looked after by the individuals, groups and communities. Even though they have this type of occupation, their life on this earth is threatening. Government should take active roles to implement the policies effectively which they have made. Hence, the government should look in to the problems of the street vendor's each and every corner of life. As professional social workers, it is our duty and obligation to work for the well being of the Street Vendors.

**M J Saurel-Cubizolles, J Zeitlin, N Lelong, E Papiernik, G C Di Renzo, and G Bre'art, (2003)**, in their research report on "Employment, working conditions, and preterm birth: results from the Europe case-control survey" concluded that, these findings show that specific working conditions affect the risk of preterm birth. They also suggest employment related risks could be mediated by the social and legislative context.

#### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The broad objective of present study was to study the Employment

Conditions and Risks among Street Food Vendors in Thiruvannamalai District and the specific objectives were to study the employment context, location of work place, income risk, and health hazards of street food vendors.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### STUDY AREA

The present study was confined with the street food vendors carrying out their business activities in the main city of Thiruvannamalai.

### METHODOLOGY ADOPTED

The present study was exploratory research work, as it explores the employment conditions of street food vendors in the city of Thiruvannamalai and it also explores the employment risks that were faced by the street food vendors in the city of Thiruvannamalai.

### SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

The present research work was followed random sampling. The researcher went for data collection in the city of Thiruvannamalai for a period of one month and could able to cover 90 street food vendors. Hence, 90 respondents were considered for the present study.

### TOOLS EMPLOYED

The present research work used structured interview scheduled for the collection of field work data, that is, primary data. To analyze the primary data statistical tools such as, Percentage, Mean and Standard Deviation were employed.

**TABLE 1: INCUMBENT POPULATION BY PERSONAL DETAILS**

Variable	No. of Respondents	%
<b>Age</b>		
20 – 30	08	8.8
31 – 40	42	44.5
41 – 50	26	28.8
51 – 60	12	13
61 – above	02	2
<b>Mean</b>	40.9	
<b>Standard Deviation</b>	9.3	
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	54	60
Female	36	40
<b>Educational Qualification</b>		
Illiterate	22	24
Primary	31	34
Secondary	14	15.5
Higher Secondary	19	21
Graduate	04	5
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Married	74	82
Unmarried	12	13
Widow/Widowed	-	-
Separated	04	05
<b>Religion</b>		
Hindu	57	63
Muslim	33	37
Christian	-	-
Others	-	-
<b>Community</b>		
General	15	16.6
SC/ST	30	33
OBC	45	50
Others	-	-
<b>Family Size</b>		
2 – 3 members	19	21
4 – 5 members	48	53
6 – above members	23	25.5

Source: Primary Data

**TABLE 2: DISTRIBUTION OF THE RESPONDENTS BY THEIR POSITION OF BUSINESS**

Variable	No. of Respondents	%
<b>Initial investment</b>		
1000 – 5000	47	52
5001 – 10000	21	23
10001 – 15000	16	17.7
15001 – 20000	06	06.6
<b>Type of business</b>		
Vegetables	22	24
Fish	03	3
Fruits	24	26.6
Readymade Foods	41	45.5
<b>Profits per day</b>		
100 – 500	68	75.5
501 – 1000	12	14
1001 – above	10	11
<b>Time spends on vending</b>		
4 – 8 hours	40	44
8 – 10 hours	28	31
10 – 12 hours	14	15.5
12 and above hours	08	09
<b>Savings per month</b>		
1000 – 5000	12	13
5001 – 1000	58	64
10001 – 15000	11	12
15001 – 20000	09	10
20001 – above	-	-

Source: Primary Data

**TABLE 3: DISTRIBUTION OF THE RESPONDENTS BY THEIR EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS**

Variable	No. of Respondents	%
<b>Years of Business</b>		
1 – 5	10	11
6 – 10	13	14.4
11 – 20	30	33
21 – 30	35	38.8
31 – 40	02	2
40 – 50	-	-
<b>Location of workplace</b>		
Designated	16	17.7
Undesignated	49	44.8
Mobile/Variable	25	27.7
<b>Employment Perspective</b>		
Whole time	37	41
Part time	43	47.7
Weekly	10	11
Seasonal	-	-
<b>Employment Status</b>		
Independent self employed	24	26.6
Semi – dependent employees	58	64
Dependent employee	08	8.8

Source: Primary Data

**TABLE 4: DISTRIBUTION OF THE RESPONDENTS BY THEIR EMPLOYMENT RISKS**

Variable	No. of Respondents	%
<b>Income risk</b>		
There was local govt. Eviction	62	68.8
There was seasonal variation	18	20
There was competitive pressure	10	11
<b>Sanction risk:</b>		
Legal sanction	24	26.6
Social sanction	66	73

Health risk:		
Operates near open drainage	14	15.5
Due to movement in open air	52	57.7
Must lift and pull heavy loads	24	26.6
No health hazards	-	-

Source: Primary Data

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

INCUMBENT POPULATION BY PERSONAL DETAILS

Table 1 represents the distribution of street food vendors’ general information. It shows that, most of them belong to the middle age group (31-40 years 44.5%) with their mean age 40.9 years and standard deviation 9.3 years. The street food vendors by their gender show that, absolute majority (60%) of them was male and minority (40%) of them was female. The educational qualification of the respondents showed 34% of respondents were primary, 24% illiterate, 21% had completed higher secondary school, 15.5% had completed 10th standard and 5 % were graduate holders. A vast majority (82%) of the respondents got married, 13% of the respondents do not married and 5% of the respondents were separated. Majority (63%) of the respondents followed Hindu Religion and remaining 37% of the respondents belonged to Muslim Religion. Half (50%) of the respondents community was Other Backward Classes (OBC), 33% of the respondents were comes under SC/ST category and 16.6% of the respondents were General category. The family members of the respondents showed that, majority (53%) of the respondents had 4 – 5 family members, 25.5% of the respondents have 6 – above family members and 21% of the respondents had 2 – 3 members in their family.

BUSINESS POSITION OF THE STREET FOOD VENDORS IN THIRUVANNAMALAI DISTRICT

Distribution of respondents by their business position as street food vendors in Thiruvannamalai District is presented in Table 2. Majority (52%) of the respondents initial investment was Rs.1000 – 5000, 23% of the respondent’s initial investment was rupees above 5000 – 10000, 17.7% of the respondents initial investment was rupees above 10000 – 15000 but 6.6% of the respondents was invested rupees above 15000 to Rs.20000 in their business. The street food vendors by their type of business show that, nearly half (45.5%) of the respondents were doing ready to serve business, 26.6% of the respondents selling fruits, 24% of the respondents involving vegetables selling activities and remaining 3% of the respondents retailing fish business in the study area. A vast majority (75.5%) of the respondents saving per day was between Rs.100 – 500, 14% of the respondents earning rupees above 500 – 1000 per day and very few 11% of the respondents earning above Rs.1000. The street food vendors by their time spends on vending show that, 44% of the respondents was working short span of 4 – 8 hours a day, 31% of the respondents spends 8 – 10 hours to vending activities, 15.5% of the respondents was working more than 10 – 12 hours a day and 9% of the respondents more than 12 hours a day. The street food vendors by their monthly level of savings show that, absolute majority (64%) of the respondents had savings per month was Rs.5001 – 10000, 13% of the respondents had Rs.1000 – 5000, 12% of the respondents had rupees above 10000 – 15000 per month, 10% of the respondents had earned rupees above 15000 – 20000 and none of them do not exceed 20000 per month.

EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS OF THE STREET FOOD VENDORS IN THIRUVANNAMALAI DISTRICT

An employment condition of the street food vendors in Thiruvannamalai District is presented in table 3. The years of business as street food vendors in Thiruvannamalai District showed 38.8% had 21 – 30 years business, 33% had 11 – 20 years of business, 14.4% had 6-10 years of business, 1% of the respondents had 1 – 5 years of business and two respondents had 31 – 40 years of business. The location of their business represents that 44.8% of them were carrying out in undesignated natural market and 27.7% carried out as mobile/variable, 17.7% of the respondents working in designated market place. The

employment perspective of the street food vendors showed that, nearly half (47%) of the respondents working as a part time, 41% of the respondents working as whole time worker and 11% of the respondents were weekly worker in the study area. A vast majority (64%) of the respondents were semi – dependent employees, 26.6% of the respondent’s independent self employed and 8.8% of the respondent dependent employee among the street food vendors in Thiruvannamalai District.

EMPLOYMENT RISK AMONG THE STREET FOOD VENDORS IN THIRUVANNAMALAI DISTRICT

Table 4 represents the employment risk among the street food vendors in Thiruvannamalai District. It revealed that 68.8% had a risk of local government eviction, 20% of the respondents have a risk of seasonal variation and 11% had competitive pressure from the other competitors.73% of the respondents facing social sanction and 26.6% of the respondents were facing legal sanction risk. The study revealed health risk among the street vendors in many ways such as; 15.5% faced due to operations near open drainage, 57.7% due to movement without any protection from sunlight and 26.6% faced due to lifting and pulling of heavy loads.

CONCLUSION

Street food business plays an important role in contemporary urban areas in Thiruvannamalai District. It represents a viable employment opportunity for vulnerable groups and ensures food access for a large part of the middle- and low-income working classes. Majority (60%) of the respondents was male and 63% of the respondents belonged to Hindu religion. Majority (52%) of the respondent’s initial investment was Rs.1000 – 5000, absolute majority (64%) of the respondents had savings per month was Rs.5001 – 10000, The years of business as street food vendors in Thiruvannamalai District showed 38.8% had 21 – 30 years business, The location of their business represents that 44.8% of them were carrying out in undesignated natural market. The employment perspective of the street food vendors showed that, nearly half (47%) of the respondents working as a part time, a vast majority (64%) of the respondents were semi – dependent employees among street food vendors in Thiruvannamalai District.

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