



Women Street Vendors in Bangalore Main Markets.

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DOI- 10.5281/zenodo.7499028

Abstract

The rationale of the study is to understand how the women street vendors in Bangalore city's main markets in the post covid period faced their problems. The period of study was from July to October 2022 during the festival time. Street vendors or hawkers are those who sold their goods on the pavements or makeshift stalls. They belong to the unorganized sector and are unskilled individuals. This period was chosen to understand under what conditions did the women vendors sell their merchandise? Though the government has come forward to assist the urban vendors by means of SVAnidhi and SUSV, Deenadayal Antyodya Yojana the study found women vendors unable to face market competition, and were elbowed out of their selling space by rival competitors. They grappled many issues concerning problems of transporting and pricing of flowers, fruits and vegetables etc. The main markets chosen for the study were Yeswanthpur's Dr. Ambedkar Nagar market, Malleshwaram 11th cross market and K.R market. Eight categories of street vendors were selected. Flower sellers, vegetable sellers, fancy items sellers, Agarbathi sellers, mud pots sellers, Rangoli powders sellers, sweet condiments sellers and finally pani puri sellers. From Yeswanthpur main market 50 samples, K.R market 120 samples and from Malleshwaram main market 30 samples were taken for study. Total sample size was 200 and descriptive analysis was followed. The research problem pertained to their access of finance for business purpose and how they fared in the post-covid period during the festival season from July to October. All markets post pandemic which witnessed an economic slowdown wanted a fast economic recovery. Research methodology consisted of both primary as well as secondary data. Their main source of finance was the local money lenders. The findings indicated though these sellers incurred losses in the post pandemic season they still struggled to make both ends meet due to lack of finance and high cost of merchandise.

Keywords: Hawkers, Street vendors, economic slowdown, markets, festival season

1.Introduction

A street vendor is a person who sells anything on the street either from a stall or van or with their goods laid out for sales on the pavement. A street vendor can also be known as a person who doesn't have a permanent or temporary building to sell their daily wares. They are thus transitory in nature. They are known as hawkers or peddlers too. They mostly sell snack items such as pani puri, gobi manchuri, fried noodles, idli dosa, samosas, tea and coffee, lemon and sugarcane juice besides non eatables such as fancy items like fake jewellery woven plastic bags, wicker baskets sewing jute bags, straw mats etc: They are mostly market oriented peddlers selling all kinds of knick knacks. They belong to the

unorganised sector. The core of this study was to find out the main issues faced by women street vendors. Women peddlers were hit by the merciless inflation in the post pandemic period. The sample size taken was 200 and the main places surveyed were main markets of Yeswanthpur, K.R. market and Malleshwaram 11th cross market to collect samples. The research problem seen here was that their day to day existence was a hard one and the covid-19 pandemic had only worsened their livelihood followed by the inflation. How did they maintain their petty trade in the face of rising prices? Or did these hawkers collapse being unable to invest new funds in their petty trade and face exploitation at the hands of policemen and municipal authorities?

Two hundred samples were collected from major markets in Bangalore. The main variables used were their socio-economic status, their access to money, loans needed for business, day to day livelihood, how was inflation (rising prices) handled? Did they sink into debts or managed to keep afloat and await better times? Did they go for alternative employment? This study tries to find answers to all these questions. Most of these hawkers were from migrant families who camped in empty sites and lived in packs and on pavements itself. Most of them had come from distant villages from surrounding areas of Bangalore city in search of a livelihood. Some others were from the neighbouring states of Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. They stayed in slum areas. All the samples were collected from the market area itself from the respondents. The sampled areas were Yeshwanthpur market (Dr Ambedkarnagar market) K R Market and 11th cross Malleshwaram flower market. The sampled groups were flower sellers, vegetables sellers, hawkers of fancy items, agarbathi rollers, sellers of mud pots and pans, Rangoli powder sellers of sweet condiments, and panipuri sellers. Totally eight categories of hawkers were chosen for the study.

2. Review of literature

1. (Akimboade, 2005) Many people have no alternative but to enter the informal street vending. These people are forced to do so as they cannot find job in the formal sector, or they earn insufficient money elsewhere, or they have a large household to look after or a combination of any of these.

6. Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1 (a)

Sl no	Area of sample collection	No of sampled respondents
1	K R Market	120
2	11 th cross Malleshwaram market	30
3	Yeshwanthpur market	50
	Total	200

Source-Field Survey-July October 2022.

Table -1(b) Sampled groups in K R market, 11th Cross Malleshwaram and Yeswanthpur main market.

Sl no	Sampled groups	K R Market	11 th cross Malleshwaram market	Yeshwanthpur main market
1	Flower sellers	20	05	10
2	Vegetable sellers	25	05	10

2. Sharit Bhowmik (2001) The income of street vendors ranges from rupees 50-100 for males and rupees 35-40 for females. They were persecuted by the municipal authorities and the police. The working condition of street vendors is very poor and most of them lead a very hard life. They work for more than ten hours a day to earn a very small amount.

3. Research problem

How did these women street vendors manage their investment and livelihood sustenance post pandemic?

4. Objectives

- To compile a profile of the sampled respondents of Bangalore main markets.
- To find out their business investment and rate of returns from it.
- To find out their socio-economic problems, during the sampled period post-pandemic.
- To make suitable suggestions to ease their day to day living.

5. Research Methodology

There is use of both primary as well as secondary data for the survey. For primary data a field survey was conducted for collecting samples. A questionnaire was designed and interview method was followed. Descriptive analysis was used in the dissemination of data. Simple random sampling was used to collect samples and percentage method was used to analyse the collected data. The secondary data supported the primary data which formed the basis of the study. Secondary data was sourced from previously published articles, government reports, surveys etc.

3	Fancy items	20	05	05
4	Agarbathi items	10	05	05
5	Sellers of mud pots & pans	10	02	05
6	Rangoli powder	05	03	05
7	Sellers of sweet condiments	10	02	05
8	Pani puri sellers	20	03	05

Source –Field Survey July October 2022.

Table-1(c)-Investment status per month made by different sampled groups.

Sl.no.	Sampled groups	K.R.Market	11 th cross Malleshwaram market	Yeswanthpur main market
1	Flower sellers	Rs.2000	Rs.1000	Rs.1000
2	Vegetable sellers	Rs.5000	Rs.8000	Rs.5000
3	Fancy items	Rs.5000	Rs.3000	Rs.4000
4	Agarbathi items	Rs.2000	Rs.2500	Rs.1000
5	Sellers of mud pots & pans	Rs.4000	Rs.4500	Rs.3000
6	Rangoli Powder	Rs.3000	Rs2000	Rs.2000
7	Sellers of sweet condiments	Rs.4000	Rs.2000	Rs.2000
8	Pani puri sellers	Rs.3500	Rs.4000	Rs.3500

Source Field Survey July October 2022.

Table -2 -Street Vendors- rate of returns from their businesses.

Sl no	Sampled groups	Yeshwanthpur 50samples		K R Market 120 samples		11 th cross Malleshwaram -20samples	
		Profit	Loss	Profit	Loss	Profit	Loss
1	Flower sellers	10%	10%	30%	10%	30%	10%
2	Vegetable sellers	20%	10%	30%	10%	20%	10%
3	Fancy items	10%	30%	15%	10%	20%	15%
4	Agarbathi items	10%	10%	30%	10%	20%	20%
5	Sellers of mud pots & pans	25%	10%	30%	10%	15%	10%
6	Rangoli powder	20%	10%	20%	10%	35%	05%
7	Sellers of sweet condiments	20%	10%	25%	10%	25%	10%
8	Pani puri sellers	20%	10%	25%	10%	25%	10%

Source : Field survey data from July to October 2022

Table 3—Socio –Economic problems of women street vendors post pandemic .

Sl no	Sampled groups	Yashwanthpur			K R Market			11 th cross Malleshwaram		
		Total household income p.m	No. of earning members per family	Size of the family	Total household income p.m	No. of earning members per family	Size of the family	Total household income p.m	No. of earning members per family	Size of the family
1	Flower sellers	Rs3,000	1	8	Rs3,500	1	7	Rs 2,000	2	8
2	Vegetable sellers	Rs 4,000	1	7	Rs 2,500	1	9	Rs 3,500	1	8
3	Fancy	Rs 1,000	2	9	Rs 2000	1	8	Rs 1,500	1	8

	items									
4	Agarbathi items	Rs 1,000	1	10	Rs 500	1	7	Rs 600	1	8
5	Sellers of mud pots & pans	Rs 1,500	2	7	Rs 1000	1	8	Rs 1,000	1	6
6	Rangoli powder	Rs 2,000	1	8	Rs 700	2	9	Rs 1500	1	7
7	Sellers of sweet condiments	Rs 4,000	2	9	Rs 3,000	2	9	Rs 2,000	1	9
8	Pani puri sellers	Rs 3,000	1	9	Rs 2,500	2	9	Rs 1,000	1	9

Source –Field Survey July –October 2022.

7.Findings

1.Totally there were eight groups of sellers taken for study from Bangalore main markets. This study falls under unorganised sector and comprises of unskilled workers.

2.Only vegetable sellers and sweet condiments sellers earned the most income per month in all the three markets as shown in the third table.

3.In table-3,K R Market with a sample size of 120, the highest profits were made by the flower sellers while the largest investment was made by the vegetable vendors of the K.R Market and Malleshwaram 11th cross market. Their investment was more while their earnings was less. Their main source of loans were money lenders who charged a high rate of interest, relatives and neighbours. With a hand to mouth existence these sellers supporting big families always were on the lookout for small jobs like washing clothes and utensils in the nearby houses within their courtyards. When they went out of goods to sell and had no money to purchase fresh merchandise they opted to work in construction sites often for very little wages.(Rs150 which was not enough to feed their families which were always on the verge of starvation.)

4.In the third table Malleshwaram market (20 samples) the vegetable sellers made the most profits.

5. In the second table as far the profits and loss margin was concerned, profits increased during the festive season starting from July end to October 2022. This is the time when sales are maximised for all the sales persons. Even during rainy season prices keep increasing for flowers, fruits and vegetables which in turn increased the profits of vegetable and flower sellers.

6..The third table shows the number of family members was more compared to the working members who were only one or two per family. This accounted for low earnings and economic difficulty for the families of women street vendors. The earning members were also women for every household as men were working and residing in different places often not contributing to family expenses. These women and their families mostly lived in slums and shanties without access to running water, had two square meals per day, electricity, and toilet facilities.

Limitation

The main limitation was most of the hawkers were reticent to speak about their profits though they were forthcoming in disclosing details about losses.

These women and their families mostly lived in slums and shanties without access to running water, two square meals per day, electricity, and toilet facilities. They lived in unhygienic conditions but were not forthcoming with any output regarding their living conditions.

Suggestions: It would be in their best interest if they joined the government schemes such as SVAnidhi, the Special Micro credit facility scheme launched by the Prime Minister to provide loan facility to street vendors to resume their daily business that was seriously impeded due to lockdown because of covid -19.

Conclusion

After studying their sales, profit, loss and investment per month it was seen that these women vendors earned moderate income in post pandemic period due to rising prices. Major problem was these women street vendors were always elbowed out of their usual selling space by male vendors and policemen. Most of the time they were bullied

and their produce vandalized and they had to pay some amount from their pockets to sit and hawk in front of shops to the shop owners. They sat from morning 7a.m to evening 8:30 pm in the market place and went home late in the night travelling in buses and trains to their shanties. Basic facilities such as food water and restrooms were totally absent in these markets .This speaks volumes about their hard life.

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