

ECONOMIC CONDITION OF STREET VEGETABLE VENDORS IN THE FIVE MUNICIPALITIES OF NORTHERN PART OF SURIGAO DEL SUR, PHILIPPINES

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ABSTRACT: *The purpose of the study is to determine the economic condition of street vegetable vendors in Northern part of the province of Surigao del Sur and to know their motivation in doing the business and what are their problems encountered. A total of eighty seven street vegetable vendors was considered as respondents. The result shows that street vegetable vendors in the area was dominated by female, married, with only have secondary level or graduate as their highest educational attainment and who does in vending for one to three years. In terms of their level of income, the result confirmed that some have breakeven and some have below 3,000.00 pesos and a few have revealed a losing income, to the change of income twenty percent says that their income was decreasing with working hours for more than six hours. Further, the respondents revealed that their source of capital came from loans either banks, cooperative, or any lending institutions present in the area. Most of them don't have any helper in doing the business. In terms of motivation in engaging the business 93.33% answered due to poverty and only few replied as their past time. The extent of problems encountered by the respondent time consuming, lack of capital, competitions and price fluctuation were described qualitatively as high.*

Keywords: Street vegetable vendors, vendors, informal sector

1. INTRODUCTION

The alleviation of poverty has been a top concern of nations particularly those in the developing countries. The Philippine is no exception in this regard. Based on statistics presently, as of year 2009, Mindanao has the highest poverty incidence of 38.8% (ADB, 2009) some of the reasons are due to lack of gainful employment in the rural areas and however, these people generally possess low skills and lack the level of education required for the better paid jobs in the organized sector. Besides, permanent protected jobs in the organized sector are shrinking hence even those having the requisite skills are hardly or unable to find proper employment That is why majority of them are finding ways and means to survive and vending fruits, vegetables, readymade garments etc. are one of many ways of earning livelihood, as it only requires minimal capital and minimum skills. Street vending is not only a source of self-employment to the poor in urban and rural areas but also a means to provide 'affordable' as well as 'convenient' services to a majority of the population. The significance of the street vending industry has often been ignored because it is considered part of the informal sector. As defined by ILO in 1991, the term "informal sector" refers to very small scale units producing and distributing goods and services consisting largely of independent self-employed producers, which operates with very little capital or none at all and utilizes low level of technique and skill, which therefore operate at a low level of productivity generally provide very low irregular income and highly unstable employment to those who work in it. In addition, Basumatary, R. (2013) added that it is informal in the sense that they are for the most part unregulated and unrecorded in official statistics. They tend to have little or no access to labour markets, to credit institution, to formal education and training institution or to many public services and amenities. The workers of the informal sector work as piece workers, self-employed workers, paid workers in the informal enterprises, unpaid workers in family business, casual workers without fixed employer linked to the formal

enterprises. For these people work in the informal sector are the only means for their survival. As cited by Panwar, A. M. (2015) in most Indian Cities according to Sekar, H.R., that majority of the urban poor survive by working in the informal sector. Meanwhile, the importance of this sector cannot be undermined, especially considering that the government does not have the capacity to provide jobs to the millions of unemployed wage earner and underemployed people in the country.

The term "street vendor" as Jain, A et. al. (2016) states that it is frequently interchangeably with "street trader" or "street hawker". Street vendors are distinguished from vendors who use off-street markets, which can be public/private. When, they move off the street, they are referred to as market vendors/micro entrepreneurs, although their businesses might be the same or they may be in mobile in the sense that they move from place to place by carrying their wares on push carts or in baskets on their heads. According to the Indian government, there are three basic categories of street vendors: stationary, peripatetic and mobile. Stationary vendors are those who carryout vending on a regular basis at a specific location with implicit or explicit consent of authorities. Peripatetic vendors are those who carry out vending on foot while Mobile Street vendors are those who move from place to place vending their goods or services on bicycles or motorized vehicles (Rani, S. V. 2016). Street vendors are very visible workforce, yet it is difficult to accurately estimate their numbers. Official statistics are available for some countries, though they may underestimate the population engaged in street vending (WEIGO, Street Vending). They sell everything from fresh vegetables to prepared foods, from building materials to garments and crafts, from consumer electronics to auto repairs to haircuts and many more. Most of them provide the main source of income for their households, bringing food to their families and paying school fees for their children, also they create jobs, not only for themselves but for porters, transport operators and others and generates revenue for the town

through payments for licenses and permits, fees and fines, and certain kinds of taxes.

However, despite their contributions, street vendors meet many challenges and are often overlooked as economic agents and unlike other businesses, are hindered rather than helped by Municipal Policies and Practices. In African countries street vending is not considered as a model occupation for male rather it is more appropriate for women. In the west, a high degree of specialization and hierarchy are also present. Women are found in greater number in Vietnam and Cambodia where they form the majority in general is the poorest and economically vulnerable. (Cagoklu and Eder 2006) (cited by Banerjee, S. 2014). Saha, D. (2011) added that in Mumbai, vendors came from a socially backward and are among the most economically deprived sections of the self-employed workers. Moreover, they faced many problems as they are a vulnerable population, who are neither protected by government NGO's labour union nor by any labour law. They always suffer competition with other street vendors because of fluctuation in prices and irregular employment. Their income is often minimal and their sales fluctuate. Another problem for women street vendors was they become the victim of crimes like eve-teasing, sexual harassment, rape, human trafficking (Rani, S. V. 2016). Likewise, street vendors usually associated with encroachment of public spaces, causes traffic congestion, inadequate hygiene, and poor waste disposal. Safety of food has been increasingly become a concern in regard to street vendors (Jaishankar, V. 2016). Also as identified in the study of Panwar, A. (2015) in Sonapat City, India that the street vendors have to pay regularly to the police in form of a bribe and then also they are constantly harassed by the different authorities.

In addition, study of Brata, (2006) finds that other aspects of vendors' vulnerability besides insufficient institutional arrangement for vendors are such as having to provide and care for dependants, working long hours and coping with debilitating consequences of their material poverty, or in their relation with suppliers or creditors.

Presently, in the Philippines people are engaging street vending and they are expanding rapidly specially on the vegetables, with or without any support from the government or other agencies as their means in surviving their daily needs. Thus, there's no study yet concerning their economic condition, their problems or challenges faced. Street vegetable vendors are an important segment in rural areas whether they are stationary, peripatetic or mobile. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to determine their status economically focusing on their level of income. Likewise, knowing what are their problems or challenges encountered while doing the business. Finally, identifying their economic condition and their problems and challenges encountered is a worthwhile undertaking that could be used in helping this street vegetable vendors alleviate their status.

2. Methodology

A descriptive survey is conducted to determine the economic condition, challenges and problem encountered of the respondents. Questionnaire was used as the main tool in collecting the data accompanied with formal interview to validate their answers. Questions are made simple and easy to understand provided with various possible answers for

schematic recording of answers. Simple percentage and weighted mean were calculated. The locale of the study composed of five municipalities in Northern part of Surigao del Sur, Philippines known as CARCANMADCARLAN. The places are accessible by land, water and air and connected by a farm to market road which is almost 90 percent cemented. This was undertaken from May 2017 up to June 2017. A total of 87 street vegetable vendors in the area served as respondents. Utilization of 87 street vegetable vendors made the researcher believe that the pertinent and relevant data furnished by the said respondent would satisfy the information sought in this study.

3. RESULTS

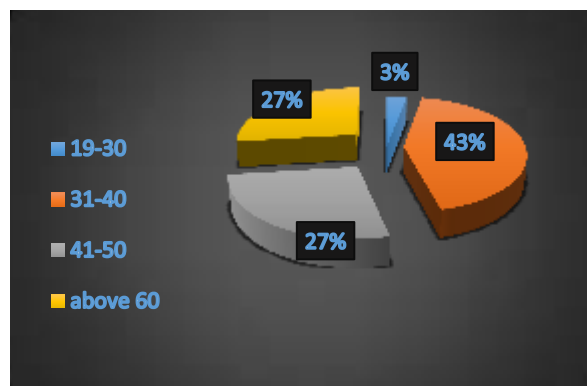


Figure 1. Age of the Respondents

Figure 1 shows the age bracket of the respondents. Majority of the respondent or forty three percent (43%) were at age ranges from 31 years old to 40 years old while twenty seven percent (27%) of respondents are at age ranges 41 years old to 50 years old. Likewise, twenty seven percent (27%) are at age above sixty years old and only three percent (3%) are at age ranges 19 years old to thirty years old who engaged in vending in the area. This result shows that vendors in the area are common to the middle age.

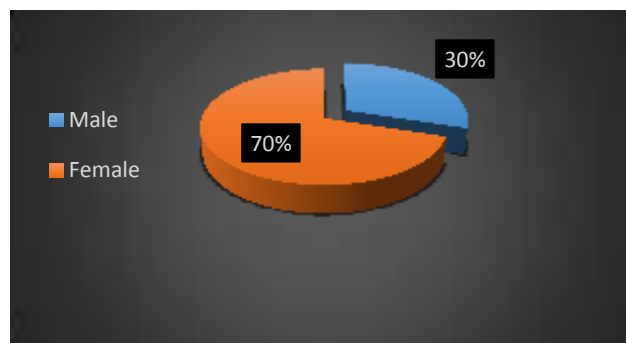


Figure 2. Sex of the Respondents

The sex composition of the respondents revealed that the street vegetable vendors in the area were dominated by a female (70%) and only few (30%) are males. This result was in contrast with the study of Kumar, P. (2015) in Kerala, India that street vending profession is mainly male oriented.

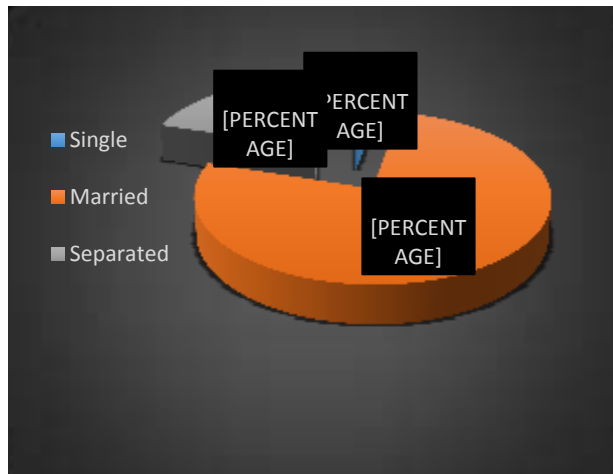


Figure 3. Civil Status of the Respondents

The civil status of the respondents was presented in figure 3 and it shows that street vegetable vendors were common to married individual at seventy seven percent (77%) while three percent (3%) were single and twenty percent (20%) are separated or widow.

Figure 4 presents the highest educational attainment of the street vegetable vendors in the area and it shows that majority of them were only at high school level or graduate (70%), some were at elementary level (20%) and three percent (3%) were uneducated. Seven percent (7%) were in the tertiary level or graduate. This result indicates that most of the street vegetable vendors engaged in this kind of business as their source of income, because they lack of minimum qualification to find a better job in a formal sector in which most of the companies belongs to the formal sector in the Philippines prefer a manpower who were at a tertiary graduate or at tertiary level.

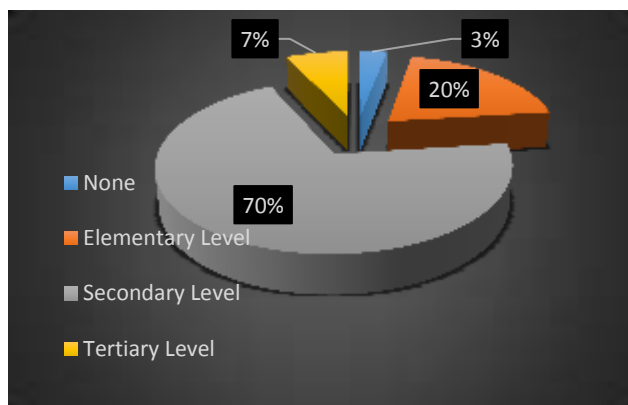


Figure 4. Educational Attainment of the Respondents

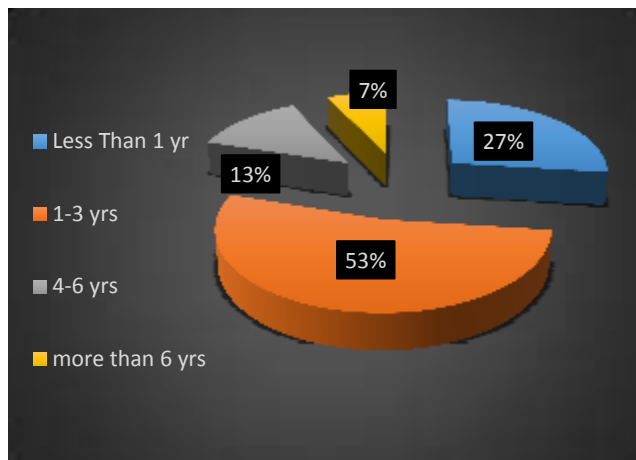


Figure 5. The number of years in Vending

As to the number of years engaged in vending vegetable in the street, fifty three percent of them doing this business for 1 to 3 years, twenty seven percent were new. Thirteen percent (13%) engage in vending vegetable for 4 to 6 years and seven percent (7%) of the respondent is in the business more than 6 years already. The result implies that in doing this kind of business requires persistence, hard work to survive.

Level of income per month, table 1 presents that twenty percent (20%) of responses have breakeven income. Three point thirty three percent (3.33%) of the respondent replied that they are losing. Twenty percent (20%) of the respondent gained 3,000.00 below. The fifty point zero one percent (50.01%) answered that they gained 3,000.00 to 12,000.00 per month.

In terms of change in income per month, result shows that forty percent (40%) of the respondents signified that their income was increasing, twenty percent (20%) of the respondents answered that their income is decreasing and forty percent (40%) bringout that their income is same per month. To their working hours per day fifty three percent (53%) of the respondent works more than 6 hours per day. As to their source of capital, majority or fifty three point thirty three percent of the respondent acquired their capital from loan either from banks, cooperatives and other lending institutions. To the number of helpers, sixty three point thirty three percent (63.33%) of the respondent has no helpers in doing the business, another thirty percent (30%) have helpers less than three person and six point sixty seven percent (6.67%) with 4 -7 persons.

Table 2 shows the respondent motivation in engaging the business. Poverty is one of the main motivation of the respondent engaged in vending vegetable in the street Same result of Banerjee, S.(2014) on his study of socio economic condition of vegetable street vendors in Ranchi that their main reason in joining women in vegetable vending because of poverty. Followed by jobless or insufficient income (80%)

Table 1. Economic condition of street vegetable vendors in terms of level of Income/month, their trends, the working hours per day, their source of capital and the number of helpers in doing Vegetable Vending.

Particular	Percentage	Rank
Level of Income/month		
Breakeven	20.00%	1
Losing	3.33%	5
Below 3,000.00 php	20.00%	1
3,001.00- 6,000.00 php	16.67%	2
6,000.00 – 9,000.00 php	16.67%	2
9,001.00 – 12,000.00 php	16.67%	2
Above 12,000.00 php	6.67%	4
Change in Income/ Month		
Increasing	40.00%	1
Decreasing	20.00%	2
Same	40.00%	1
Working Hours/ day		
1-3 hrs	30.00%	2
4-6 hrs	16.67%	3
More than 6 hrs	53.33%	1
Source of Capital		
Savings	30.00%	2
Relatives	16.67%	3
Loans	53.33%	1
Number of Helper		
None	63.30%	1
Less than 3 person	30.00%	2
4-7 person	6.67%	3

and for school tuition (76.67%). Moreover, fifty percent (50%) says that due to lack of skills to adopt other formal job, twenty percent (20%) declares that they want to support the chief earner of their family. Likewise, some of the respondents engaged in vending because it is their tradition profession (20%), while surprisingly there were few respondent engaged in vending just for past time (3.33%) and few due they own a farm(3.33%).

The vegetable street vendors in the area met various problems as reflected in table 3. The data confirmed that time consuming, lack of capital and competitions are the most of the problems encountered by the respondent with the same qualitative description of “high” though the components have different average mean of 2.40, 2.57 and 2.80 respectively. No social support, no protection, high fees and taxes, less controlled supplies, and no safety at work place describe as their medium problem faced by the vendors.

Meanwhile, problem on related to bribe by authority or other group got the lowest average mean of 1.56 describe qualitatively as low. This is in consonance with the study of Panwar A. (2015) that vendors in Sonipat City has to pay in a form of bribe to the authorities as one of their problems encountered. The over-all mean as to the problems faced by the respondent was 2.20 describe qualitatively as medium problem.

Table 2. The Respondents motivation in engaging the business

Particular	Average Mean	Verbal Description
Time Consuming	2.40	High
No Social Support	1.73	Medium
Lack of Capital	2.57	High
No Protection	1.90	Medium
High Fees/Taxes Paid	2.04	Medium
Less/Controlled Supplies	2.27	Medium
No safety at work place	2.10	Medium
Competitions	2.80	High
Bribe by Authorities/other group	1.56	Low
Price FL actuation	2.65	High
Grand Mean	2.20	Medium

Table 3. The extent of problems encountered by the respondents

Particular	Percentage	Rank
Poverty	93.33%	1
Jobless/Insufficient Income	80.00%	2
Traditional Profession	20.00%	5
Lack of Skills to Adopt other Job	50.00%	4
Breed winner of the family	6.67%	6
Pass Time	3.33%	7
To support the chief earner	20.00%	5
Own a farm	3.33%	7
For School Tuition	76.67%	3

CONCLUSION

Street vegetable vending is one of many ways and means to survive against poverty. Respondents work more than 6 hours per day to survive without hiring a helper to minimize expenses since their income per month is not stable and their source of capital came from loans in which they need to save for their payment of their loans. Vegetable street vendors is not only a source of self-employment to the poor in urban and rural areas but also a means to provide affordable as well as convenient services to a majority of the population in northern part of the province of Surigao del Sur,

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