



Working Patterns and Quality of Life of Street Vendors in Chapainawabganj Municipality of Bangladesh

Md. Abu Sayem^{1*}, Md. Sajidur Rahman², Smriti Akter², Md. Tipu Sultan²

¹Department of Statistics, EXIM Bank Agricultural University Bangladesh, Chapainawabganj-6300, Bangladesh

²Faculty of Agricultural Economics and Rural Development, EXIM Bank Agricultural University Bangladesh, Chapainawabganj-6300, Bangladesh

| ARTICLE INFO | ABSTRACT |
|--|--|
| <p>Received date: January 17, 2021</p> <p>Accepted date: August 23, 2021</p> | <p>Most of the urban poor in Bangladesh survive by working in the informal sector. Street vendors are regarded as self-employed workers in the informal sector. Street vending is one of the means of earning livelihood, as it requires minor financial input and the skills involved are low. The aim of this paper was to study the working patterns and quality of life of street vendors in Chapainawabganj municipality. For this study, researchers collected data from 70 respondents through convenience sampling method. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the primary data. Researchers observed that large family members, low sales, low income, sales pattern, earning member's and excessive working hours impact the working patterns and quality of life of street vendors. Some recommendations were also made to increase their quality of life.</p> |

Keywords: Informal sector, Livelihood, Quality of life, Self-employed, Street vendors

*CORRESPONDENCE

asayem89@gmail.com

Department of Statistics, EXIM Bank Agricultural University Bangladesh, Chapainawabganj-6300, Bangladesh

1. INTRODUCTION

Today, urbanization has been regarded as one of the primary keys for societal development and progress. As a result, many people assembled to cities and urban areas in search of better opportunities and quick money. However, not all individuals who moved to trade centers can equally reap its fruits.

Poverty and lack of useful employment in the rural areas and the smaller towns drive large number of people to the cities for work and their employment. These people usually own low skills and lack in the level of education required for better paid jobs in the formal sectors but those who do not have economic powers and those who were left-out add on to the statistics of unemployment. Hence, in order for these individuals to survive in the competitive world, they sort working in the informal sector of the society and one of the means of livelihood is sidewalk vending, as it requires minor financial input and the skills involved are low (Alfie, 2014).

Majority of urban poor survive by working in the informal sector (Sekhar, 2010). This has led to a rapid growth of the informal sector in most of the larger cities. The informal sector represents an important part of the economy and the labour market in many countries, especially in developing countries like Bangladesh, plays a major role in employment creation, production, and income generation (Kolli & Sinharay, 2011).

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.

Husain et al. (2015) carried on a study, titled, assessment of the socioeconomic aspects of street vendors in Dhaka city: evidence from Bangladesh. This study indicates that poverty, migration from rural area, low education,

exorbitant supply of labor and large family size are the major driving forces of carrying out this business.

Khairuzzaman et al. (2014) surveyed a study on food safety challenges towards safe, healthy, and nutritious street foods in Bangladesh. They observed that street vendors face more routine occupational hazards as well. They need to lift and haul heavy loads of goods to and from their point of sale each day. The work environment lacks proper infrastructure, such as clean running water, toilets, and solid waste removal.

Karthikeyan & Mangaleswarn (2013) conducted the study of the quality of life among the street vendors, Trichy, Tamil Nadu. They found that there is need for revision of their psychological health and physical health area unit appear to be taken care of their business at the moment they are swollen their environmental factors, and social relationship to develop their quality of life.

Studies indicate that an extremely high proportion of vendors surveyed had suffered harassment, confiscation of goods, fines or evictions. Almost half had suffered evictions, some with violence that further caused injury. Therefore, the current study attempts to understand whether there have been any changes in the working conditions and the quality of life of street vendors.

The main objective of the study was to explore the issues concerning the street vendors working patterns and quality of life in Chapainawabganj municipality that had to work out by (i) to assess the socio – economic status of street vendors and (ii) to portray the working patterns and quality of life of street vendors.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1. Study Area and Respondents

The researchers used convenience sampling technique to select 70 respondents from different places in Chapainawabganj municipality. This study was conducted during the period from 2nd to 28th January, 2020.

2.2. Tools for Data Collection

The primary data for this study was collected by structured questionnaire through face-to-face interview.

2.3. Analytical Technique

The primary data has been analyzed in SPSS 16.0 version and descriptive statistics was used to analyze and interpret the results of working patterns and quality of life of street vendor's in Chapainawabganj municipality.

3. RESULTS

3.1. Socio-economic Status of Street Vendors

Table 1 showed the socio-economic characteristics of the street vendors of Chapainawabganj municipality. It was observed that 59 (84.29%) of the street vendors were male and 11 (15.71%) were female. Females confront various challenges such as insecurity, money, arduous labor to run the street vendor business. They join into this profession only when they have no choice. In context of age, majority (52.90%) of the street vendors belonged to 25-35 age groups. This indicates that the economically active age

group is participating in street vending which is not fruitful for our country.

In case of family member, a lion's share (48.60%) of the street vendors has 4-6 family members. It means that they live in a joint family. For the characteristics daily income, it was observed that most (68.60%) of the street vendor's daily incomes were limited to Tk. <500. This suggests that they belong to poor class people with lower standard of living though they work hard. So, it is very difficult to maintain a standard of living with this low income.

Table 1 Socio-economic characteristics of the street vendors

| Variables | | Number (%) |
|-----------------------|-----------------|------------|
| Gender | Male | 59(84.29) |
| | Female | 11(15.71) |
| Age (In years) | 15-25 | 08(11.40) |
| | 25-35 | 37(52.90) |
| | 35-45 | 12(17.10) |
| | 45-55 | 04(5.70) |
| | 55+ | 09(12.90) |
| Family member | 2-4 | 21(30.00) |
| | 4-6 | 34(48.60) |
| | 6-8 | 11(15.70) |
| | 8-10 | 02(2.90) |
| | 10 and above | 02(2.90) |
| Daily Income (In Tk.) | <500 | 48(68.60) |
| | 500-1000 | 11(15.70) |
| | 1000-15000 | 04(5.70) |
| | 15000 and above | 07(10.00) |

Data source: Field survey (2020)

3.2. Working Patterns and Quality of Life of Street Vendors

Table 2 showed the working patterns of the street vendors of Chapainawabganj municipality. It was revealed from the characteristics type of goods that 10(14.30%) street vendors were sold tea and coffee, 11(15.70%) sell cigarette and chocolate, 3(4.30%) sell vegetables, 9(12.90%) sell fruits, 12(17.10%) sell nuts, jhalmuri, chotpoti and fuchka, 25(35.70%) were sold other types of different products and utensils. In case of manner of displaying items, 33(47.14%) of the street vendors were displayed their items on carts, therefore they could easily move away in case of any trouble from the authorities or in case of any weather change, followed by 23(32.86%) of them in open places and the remaining 14(20.00%) of the respondents had stalls for displaying their items.

In context of earning member, 52(74.29%) of the street sellers have only one earning member. It is very difficult to meet the basic needs for survival in this condition and 18(25.71%) of them has another earning person in their family. For the characteristics average working hour per day, Maximum (78.60%) of the street vendors spend 8-11 working hour on an average in a day in Chapainawabganj municipality. This means that they work hard for better livelihood. About 9(12.90%) spend 4-7 hours and 6(8.60%)

spend 12-15 hours in a day on an average which is excessive workload according to the labor act of Bangladesh.

Table 2 Working patterns of the street vendors

| Variables | | Number (%) |
|------------------------------------|--|------------|
| Type of goods | Tea & coffee | 10(14.30) |
| | Cigarette & chocolate | 11(15.70) |
| | Vegetables | 03(4.30) |
| | Fruits | 09(12.90) |
| | Nuts, jhalmuri and chotpoti & fuchka | 12(17.10) |
| | Other | 25(35.70) |
| Manner of displaying items | Open place | 23(32.86) |
| | Stall | 14(20.00) |
| | Cart | 33(47.14) |
| Earning member | Only one | 52(74.29) |
| | More than one | 18(25.71) |
| Average working hour (Per day) | 4-7 | 09(12.90) |
| | 8-11 | 55(78.60) |
| | 12-15 | 06(8.60) |
| Encountering problems in workplace | Local leader's harassment | 06(8.60) |
| | Harassment from police and government authorities' | 15(21.40) |
| | Political leader's harassment | 01(1.40) |
| | No problems | 48(68.60) |
| Daily providing bribery (In Tk.) | 50-100 | 05(7.10) |
| | 100-150 | 00(0.00) |
| | 150 and above | 00(0.00) |
| | Not providing | 65(92.90) |

Data source: Field survey (2020)

A larger part, i.e., 48(68.60%) of the street vendors were not encountered any problems in their workplace and they worked smoothly, 15(21.40%) were sometimes harassed by police and government authorities because they sell unhygienic foods to the customers or for their shop on the pavement, 6(8.60%) were harassed usually by the political leaders of the locality as they have no particular place to set up their business permanently. In case of daily amount paid in bribes, 65(92.90%) of the street vendors did not pay any bribe to continue their business and only 5(7.10%) street vendors have to pay Tk. 50-100 bribe daily to run their business.

3.3. Quality of Life of the Street Vendors

From the Fig. 1, it was found that 87% of the street vendors felt safe in their business workplace as they are local of the municipality and only 13% did not feel safe in their business workplace because of the political leader's harassment of the locality.

It was seen from the Fig. 2 that 44% of the street vendors have body pain as they carry their items on their cart or shoulders in different places of Chapainawabganj municipality and 56% street vendors have no body pain in their daily works as they have stall on the pavements.

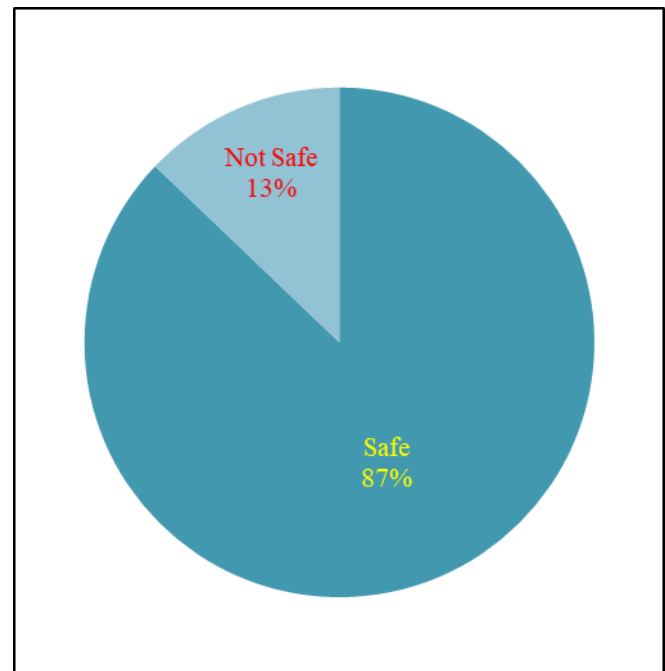


Fig. 1 Pie chart for the safety or security of the respondent's in their workplace.

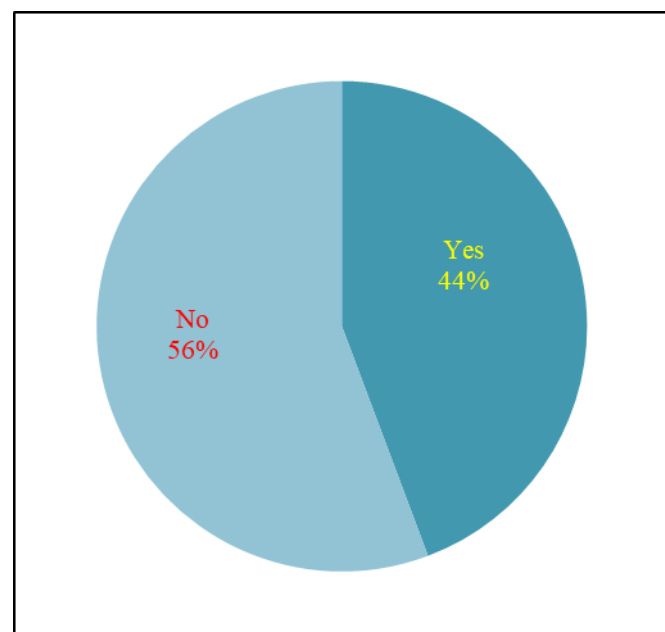


Fig. 2 Pie chart for the respondent's health condition (Body pain).

It was observed from the Fig. 3 that 46% of the street vendors suffered from insomnia and dizziness due to body pain as they move here and there in Chapainawabganj

municipality and 54% street vendors did not suffer from insomnia and dizziness due to body pain as they have a temporary shop on the pavement.

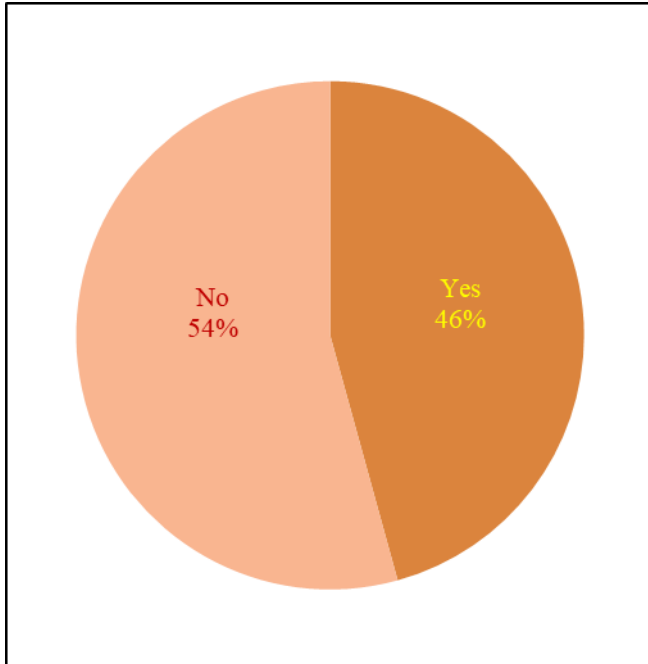


Fig. 3 Pie chart for suffering insomnia and dizziness due to body pain.

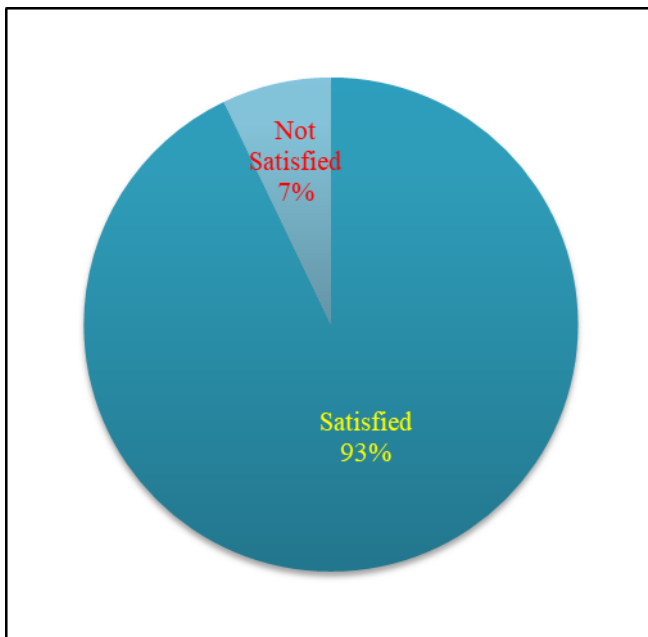


Fig. 4 Pie chart for the respondent's satisfaction with their profession.

It was found from the Fig. 4 that 93% of the street vendors were satisfied with their profession as they have a less capital and have independence in their workplace and only 7% street vendors were not satisfied with their

profession because they involved with this street vending due to poverty and extreme need.

4. DISCUSSION

Husain et al. (2015) found that large family size is the major driving forces of carrying out street vending. We also found in our study that large family members affect their quality of life. Rao et al. (2015) observed that extensive workload; very low sales and profits impact the quality of life. In our study, we also observed that excessive workload, low sales and low income hamper the quality of life of the street vendors. Karthikeyan & Mangaleswaran (2013) seen that there is a lack of proper structure to protect their goods and we also got the same results from our study. Valli & Subhamangala (2020) investigated that most of the street vendors do not have any option to depend on any other person for continuing their business and we also found that most of the vendors have no other earning members.

5. CONCLUSION

Street vendors are an important part of the informal sector not only because of their numbers but because of crucial roles they play in preserving their sector. Moreover, a significant amount of goods produced by small industrial units in the informal sector is marketed through them. The findings of the study on street vendors revealed precarious conditions of work and life, implying large family members, excessive workload, very low sales and low income. The business is not possible during monsoons due to heavy rains and in the summer season due to high levels of heat as the vendors displayed their items on carts, open place or stall. When such street vendors fall ill or are injured, they do not have any option to depend on any working partners for continuing their business. To improve the quality of life of street vendors, their working patterns should be improved. The present study is to recommend the following issues.

- i. Street vending is considered an illegal activity and street vendors are treated as criminals. The improvement in the condition of vendors requires giving them a legal status, fixation of the number, organization themselves into trade unions and associations.
- ii. As the street vendors are worked long hours in a day in an open places so the government should look in to the problems of the street vendor's each and every corner of life.

As the low sales and low income of the street vendors leads a lower standard of living so they have to inspire to join other potential job.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Author was grateful to all the students of 7th batch of the Faculty of Agricultural Economics and Rural Development, EXIM Bank Agricultural University Bangladesh for their kind help in the present research.

REFERENCES

- Alfie (2014). “Mangalore: kankanady market merchants associations want street vendor out of their area”, available at: <http://www.mangalorean.com/php?newtype=broadcast&broadcastid=454689#> (accessed 28 August 2020).
- Husain, S., Yasmin, S., & Islam, S. (2015). Assessment of the socioeconomic aspects of street vendors in Dhaka City: evidence from Bangladesh. *Asian Social Science*, 11(26), 1-10.
- Khairuzzaman, M., Chowdhury, F. M., Zaman, S., Al Mamun, A., & Bari, M. L. (2014). Food safety challenges towards safe, healthy, and nutritious street foods in Bangladesh. *International Journal of Food Science*, 2014, 1–9.
- Karthikeyan, R., & Mangaleswaran, R. (2013). Quality of life among street vendors in Tiruchirappalli City, Tamil Nadu, India. *International Research Journal of Social Sciences*, 2(12), 18-28.
- Kolli, R., & Sinharay, A. (2011). Informal employment by institutional sectors and activities in India. *Journal of Income & Wealth*, 33(2), 79-89.
- Rao, D. A. N., George A. G., & Shah, A. M. (2015). Working conditions and quality of life of street vendors in city of Ahmedabad. *International Journal of Social Science & Interdisciplinary Research*, 4(12), 20-31.
- Sekhar, H. R. (2010). *Insecurities and vulnerabilities of informal sector vendors with special focus on street vending children of Noida*. V.V. Giri National Labour Institute Pub., India.
- Valli, D. V. A., & Subhamangala, S. (2020). A study on living conditions and working patterns of street vendors in Tenkasi. *Mukt Shabd Journal*, IX(IV), 622-627.