



Research for the Sustainable Development of the Megacities of Tomorrow - Energy and Climate efficient Structures in Urban Growth Centres

Hyderabad as a Megacity of Tomorrow: Climate and Energy in a Complex Transition towards Sustainable Hyderabad – Mitigation and Adaptation Strategies by Changing Institutions, Governance Structures, Lifestyles and Consumption Patterns

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WOMEN IN THE STREET FOOD SYSTEM OF HYDERABAD/INDIA

Livelihood Opportunities, Vulnerabilities and
Conflicts

V. Usha Rani

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Background Study

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Abstract

The report of the study is covering street food vending system and its role in the transition of Hyderabad into a mega city. The study about the vending system and the women vendor's status is discussed in the context of the problems, situations, health aspects and socio-economic conditions. The report while focusing on issues of women food vendors from a gender-related perspective also speak of the diverse aspects of vending within a caste and class perspective in the emerging policies of globalization that have an impact on cultural and traditional institutions in food vending and food consumption.

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Introduction

It is virtually impossible to imagine life in India without associating it with life on the streets. In other words street life is the essence of Indian social and cultural life. Yet it is the very people who eke out a bare livelihood on the streets that are the ones who suffer the maximum discrimination. Students and other working people have their breakfasts standing on the streets, countless tea-stalls, snack-centers and fruit-juice stalls cater to the passersby, fruit and vegetable vendors that are a source of our primary food items, hawkers selling various items ranging from peanuts to various other household items – all these aspects of street life are what add an important dimension to the city life in this country.

The aim of this background study is to make an argument in defense of the street food-culture across the city of Hyderabad. This study intends to show how this culture far from being a hindrance to progress and development is in fact the basis of an alternative economy which is environmental-sensitive, energy-conscious and people-friendly.

The pilot project on the street food vendors of the Hyderabad “Urban Street Food Vendors in the Food Provisioning system of Hyderabad” by Marlis Wipper and Christoph Dittrich (2007), already confirmed in their study that the street food vendors are an important part of the food provision in Hyderabad.

The urban writer and activist Jane Jacobs (1961) who wrote in favor of community-based approaches to planning in her book *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* made “a strong critique of the urban renewal policies of the 1950s (in the United States), which, she claimed, destroyed communities and created isolated, unnatural urban spaces.” She made a fundamental point when she said that, “the sight of people attracts still other people, is something that city planners and city architectural designers seem to find incomprehensible. They operate on the premise that city people seek the sight of emptiness, obvious order and quiet. Nothing could be less true. The presences of great numbers of people gathered together in cities should not only be frankly accepted as a physical fact... they should also be enjoyed as an asset and their presence celebrated...”

Our study is a way of saying that street food culture is extremely significant to urban life and town planners ought to be more and more concerned about giving a solid footing to the people involved in these street-related economies.

The “modern development” mentality is oriented towards malls and other expensive spaces which are private visions of few individuals. They’re not built around the concept of a public that can barely afford to live expensive lifestyles. This study shows how not only the street-food economy is inexpensive and affordable to a large number of people, but they also are capable of maintaining the so-called hygiene that development theorists are fond of using against the street-vendors. In fact we make the point that because these people who do their businesses on the streets are a competition to the malls and other profit-oriented large-scale ventures or other so-called chain stores or franchises there is a deliberate and active propaganda against them.

According to Bhowmik (2005) “vendors are regularly subjected to mental and physical pressures by city officials. At times this has led to riotous situations, loss of property, or monetary loss. A major problem is that master plans prepared for our cities do not allocate space to vendors/hawkers, as planners blindly imitate the western concept of marketing, ignoring Indian traditions. No wonder, weekly markets struggle to survive and natural markets are ignored. The policy statements of the regional development authorities talk of making provision for trading and commercial activities, which unfortunately is interpreted as making provision for rich traders and big business.”

The most important thing about shopping on a street is that there is a human touch to it. The prices are usually negotiated through interaction. You’re dealing with a human person at the end of the day. But when you enter a shopping mall or any of those places whose goal is to sell with a profit in mind the scope for negotiation is rather limited. You’re dealing with an employee or someone who has no interest in you as a person. The treatment is mechanical and carries a sense of alienation. You don’t feel that there is any kind of productive dialogue that brings the buyer and the seller together. It’s a transaction which has no humanity in it. That’s not the case with shopping on a street. The person

knows you and acknowledges the fact that you're a human person. There is tremendous scope for socially beneficial dialogue that brings people together.

Street-shopping is community-centered rather than motivated by pure profit. Once again to quote Jane Jacobs who approached the city in a maternal-feminine manner: "Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody. Vital cities have marvelous innate abilities for understanding, communicating, contriving, and inventing what is required to combat their difficulties... Lively, diverse, intense cities contain the seeds of their own regeneration, with energy enough to carry over for problems and needs outside themselves."

Two things are important in any city that has a friendly attitude to the poor who're attempting to make a livelihood on the streets. The first is that we recognize the importance of people or human beings in general. The second is that as Jane Jacobs (1961) points out is that we create a diverse environment and a certain kind of positive energy that is useful to create nonviolent and crime-free neighbourhoods.

Our study moves from the global to the local. Our emphasis on the local is a response to the atrocities that are committed in the name of globalization. "The term 'globalization' is a gross distortion. Labour remains as trapped in national boundaries. Capital, no doubt, is armed with freedom of entry and exit worldwide (allowing it to maximize its exploitation of labour worldwide). But *ownership* of capital is by no means dispersed over the globe; it is more *centralized and concentrated* than ever before in imperialist hands."

We have made a strong and sincere attempt to speak the truth and challenge the various myths and stereotypes associated with the poor who live and make a living on the streets. One of the myths related to street food is that there are health hazards involved. However our study proves the opposite that fresh stuff such as vegetables and fruits are more easily available and are more seasonal than what we find in the big stores. With a little more encouragement from policy-makers at the national and state level we could find an improvement both in the standards of cleanliness and an atmosphere for the community to grow as a whole rather than a few individuals.

Our basic perspective is to emphasize the importance of local economies in the context of street food culture. “Food structures families' schedules, provides social activity, defines relationships, and represents ethnic identities. Food is part of family celebrations, ceremonies, and rituals. Food-related health concerns such as malnutrition and obesity impact family members' emotions and their relationships with each other. For some families, food is easily accessible. Other families are starving. Through food demands and concerns, families shape societies and societies influence families” (Food Culture and Society). We intend to throw a new light on the nature of this particular local economy that we associate with food. The basic assumption behind large-scale specialized kind of a development is contested through our study. The popular view that long-term growth is achieved through large-scale ventures is challenged. Our model of development puts common people at the forefront of development. In our view development is meaningless if it does not have the person-on-the-street at the center. Social change or what we call transformation is meaningful when it is beneficial to the community as a whole.

Given the discrimination against local economies by the government and by wealthy entrepreneurs and rich and powerful lobbies in favor of big companies it is hard for the street vendors to succeed in creating a space for themselves without any support. On the ground level our study indicates that they hardly have time for social life; there is a serious lack of financial growth because their work does not provide enough in the form of savings; the business is anything but peaceful because they are constantly harassed by the police; there is a fear of losing their livelihood; there is no time for unionization; they are motivated by fear rather than a sense of building for a future for themselves and their children.

In the past decade or so there has been a sudden interest in street life and more and more studies are concentrating on the same. Owing to global food insecurities created by conspicuous consumption and a one-track model of development there has been a greater interest generated in studying alternate and less expensive modes of food production and distribution especially in the cities. The street food economy is interesting both as a concept and as a reality.

As a concept its uniqueness lies in the fact that we begin to see the beauty in smallness something was visualized by the British economist Schumacher (1973) in his book, *Small Is Beautiful: Economics As If People Mattered*. The street food economy is certainly a place where people matter. People are not just objects or tools of development. People are the reason for development or in other words any development is meaningless where people do not matter. As Schumacher (1973) says: "The most striking about modern industry is that it requires so much and accomplishes so little. Modern industry seems to be inefficient to a degree that surpasses one's ordinary powers of imagination. Its inefficiency therefore remains unnoticed. Ever bigger machines, entailing ever bigger concentrations of economic power and exerting ever greater violence against the environment, do not represent progress: they are a denial of wisdom. Wisdom demands a new orientation of science and technology towards the organic, the gentle, the non-violent, the elegant and beautiful."

Diversity is extremely important for a healthy community life. We need diverse kinds of peoples and also diverse kinds of economies to sustain a lifestyle where people are at peace with the environment and also with themselves. From the perspective of Jane Jacobs cities are seen as "living beings and ecosystems." Our model of development tends to move in the same direction. We tend to see hawkers as protectors of environment and efficient conservators of energy. The street vendors play a very significant role in the street food vending in the sustainability of Hyderabad as a big city. Most importantly it is the contribution of women vendors in sustaining street food culture while thus ensuring food security, accessibility and affordability. We strongly believe and our study goes to prove that without the labor of women, street food culture would be virtually impossible. The street vendors help the city to function as a natural ecosystem.

The very meaning of sustainable development in a city like Hyderabad is linked to street food culture. The purpose of our study is to recognize the aspects that make streets vendors a vulnerable section in need of both protection as well as promotion by the government agencies. Apart from that the main thrust of the study was also on solutions to the vulnerabilities, problems of street food vendors, focusing on women vendors to build the conceptual understanding of street food as a culture, street food vending as a livelihood,

contribution to food security, service to the society rather than obstacle to the development of mega cities. As an unorganized section and service providers in the context of urbanization they seriously need to be helped with devising strategies for their wellbeing.

Mahatma Gandhi says that: “Our inner strengths, experiences, and truths cannot be lost, destroyed, or taken away. Every person has an inborn worth and can contribute to the human community. We all can treat one another with dignity and respect, provide opportunities to grow toward our fullest lives and help one another discover and develop our unique gifts. We each deserve this and we all can extend it to others.” One of the arguments central to our study is that the basic dignity of work of the street vendors needs to be acknowledged. They should not be seen as coming in the way of development. Their contribution to the larger economy needs to be understood and accepted.

Street food culture is not something of a recent innovation to this country. On the contrary, it is a part and parcel of Indian social life as it has been for centuries. In fact we can confidently assert that street food vending is a part of Indian culture that cannot be detached from its existence and cannot be vanished. In India mothers and other guardians or teachers encourage children to do basket vending as a playing technique. Children learn the names of vegetables and fruits through this game. Like hawkers on the street they shout aloud the names of the vegetables or fruits and ask their parents or friends to buy from them. At the heart of this simple game is the fact that street food culture forms the basis of our primary education and knowledge of food. It is a means of learning to most of us as children.

From a historical perspective we note that Kautilya in his book the *Arthashastra* which is an ancient Indian treatise on statecraft, economic policy and military strategy points out that in the 6th century BC itself there was mobile vegetable vending and soup centers. Sometimes the soup centers played a prominent role as spying centers because the women who served food were unofficial spies for the protection of the township who made sure that there was no unofficial entry of foreigners, or unwanted elements. Usually these centers were located at the boundary lines of the city.

In the Holy Quran also while speaking of the characters of a true believer it is said that a person has to acquire his wages through genuine vending only for the purposes of livelihood and not as a business. According to the Quran a street vendor should not charge any commodity for high price and that should not exceed $\frac{2}{3}$ of the original rate. Also in the Bible it is said that a man should get his livelihood through vending of fresh food commodities.

Therefore there is a strong historical as well as religious justification in favor of the street vendor. In fact Schumacher (1973) makes an important point with regard to what he calls as Buddhist economics. According to him: "A modern economist is used to measuring the 'standard of living' by the amount of annual consumption, assuming all the time that a man who consumes more is 'better off' than a man who consumes less. A Buddhist economist would consider this approach excessively irrational: since consumption is merely a means to human well-being, the aim should be to obtain the maximum of well-being with the minimum of consumption. . . . The less toil there is, the more time and strength is left for artistic creativity. Modern economics, on the other hand, considers consumption to be the sole end and purpose of all economic activity."

Our study is a declaration that street food consumption as a culture is vital to Indian life as a whole. Street food vending in India is a common phenomenon to the layman. The food on the street is seen as a primary service and it offers mental assurance to him or her about the availability of food on a regular basis. It is understood by all of us that you can get food within your affordable rates and you do not have to worry or think about it. This perception is ingrained within us and its existence is so common that we don't even think, acknowledge or worry about it. Most of the time, people whose work is travel are dependent upon this availability and that's what makes this culture synonymous with the development of society as a whole. Unfortunately stereotypes abound and the people involved in street food economy have to fight a survival battle on a day-to-day basis.

The most important objective of our study is that false perceptions with regard to street food culture need to be confronted. India is a nation of more than a billion people. We've to accept that the privileges of citizenship through parliamentary democracy apply to each

and every person whom we call as Indian. We cannot have a democracy where the majority of people are denied of the opportunity of a decent and honest livelihood rather than indulging in anti-social or other criminal activities. One of the important ways in which that can be achieved is through the street-based economies primarily in relation to food.

The eradication of poverty and ignorance is both a short-term as well as a long-term goal. Education and healthcare are possible only when a person has the opportunity of a decent livelihood. As Gandhi made the point famously: "I will give you a talisman. Whenever you are in doubt, or when the self becomes too much with you, apply the following test. Recall the face of the poorest and the weakest man [woman] whom you may have seen, and ask yourself, if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him [her]. Will he [she] gain anything by it? Will it restore him [her] to a control over his [her] own life and destiny? In other words, will it lead to Swaraj [freedom] for the hungry and spiritually starving millions? Then you will find your doubts and your self melt away." The point of our study is that any model of development must include the poorest of the poor. This is possible when we think of development in terms of people and not just infrastructure. It is in this context that we recognize the significance of street food culture that privileges people rather than profits.

According to the Directive Principles in the Indian Constitution, "Article 38(1) directs the state to promote the welfare of the people by securing a social order in which justice – social, economic and political, shall inform all institutions of national life. The state is also directed by Article 38(2) to 'minimize the inequalities in income status, facilities and opportunities.' Article 39(a) directs the state to formulate policy to ensure that citizens, men and women equally, have the right to an adequate means of livelihood. It further provides that ownership and control of material resources of the community must be distributed to serve the common good, and that the operation of the economic system must not result in the concentration of wealth and means of production. Article 41 specifically provides for 'right to work' within the limits of the economic capacity of the state." The national policy on street vendor which was formulated after great efforts of activists, organizations and unions of street vendors of 2004 is not taken seriously by state

governments. The state governments mostly did not take enough care to sustain the spirit of the law which dealt with most of the issues taking the issues of vendors into consideration. The directions to form the committee were ignored and many unions on vendors had to give a tough fight to challenge the attitude of Municipal authorities. Our study reveals that how the policy isn't implemented and what were the problems of miss representing the policy. The policies that are existing for the poor always face the problems of proper, committed implementation.

The other important point, which often is missed by the global level leadership, decision makers definers of the development is integration of views, needs, diversities, disabilities, vulnerable, marginalized oppressed communities and diversified cultural practices world-wide, customs that they practice while designing policies, schemes, and markets. It is the presence of ignoring the religious, class, caste and gender denomination of people. For example, many physically challenged persons, who are poor, cannot do any work, because they are too old to earn trough selling vegetables, fruits etc. on the streets. If policy framing does not include the needs of these people it is bound to lead to failure or thoughtless implementation attempts of improper policies.

1. Research Methodology

Broadly speaking any research can be either qualitative or quantitative. By qualitative we mean to say that the researcher aims to gather an in-depth understanding of human behavior and the reasons that govern such behavior. The discipline investigates why and *how* of decision making, not just *what, where, when*. Hence, smaller but focused samples are more often needed rather than large random samples. Our investigation of street vendors' livelihoods relies extensively on qualitative research since we recognize that we do not intend to take a neutral or objective stand but rather a stand in favor of street vendors and what they offer to the economy.

Our research was also quantitative, because we generated hypotheses to guide our work, our data was empirically collected, analyzed and results evaluated based on the data obtained and not on purely subjective criteria.

Research objectives are usually declared as a part of the research methodology itself:

a) Long term objectives

- contribution towards sustainable Hyderabad,
- protecting livelihood of street food vendors as a fundamental right,
- integrating urban street food vendors into the mainstream development paradigm.

b) Short term objectives

- exploring issues and the role of vendors in the mega city of Hyderabad,
- identifying issues that are underlying on street vending,
- facilitating arguments, demands, needs of street food vendors,
- identifying solutions, views, and needs to the problems of street vendors,
- identifying capacity building measures,
- understanding possibilities, address strategies, initiatives of policy level advocacy,
- analyzing data with special focus on women and gender issues.

We made certain assumptions in this regard which would be that street food vendors are vulnerable, marginalised, and are under constant threat of displacement.

The research methods used are a vital part of any study because they are meant to establish the credentials of the researcher herself. Since the object of the research is a fluid reality

such as street food vendors it is harder to approach the subject from a purely academic or scientific perspective. However we had certain goals in mind before we embarked on the research. These goals can be labeled under the following headings:

In case of general goals we were out to establish the importance of street food culture and everyone actively involved in the work such as vegetable and fruit vendors. The major purpose why the research is being done is something we decide beforehand itself by recognizing that street food economy forms the basis of an important segment of city life in Hyderabad. In our view it is impossible to dissociate city life from life on the streets and food is one of the main reasons why the dissociation is impossible.

In terms of general goals our methodology consists of a positive bias based on history and personal experience in favor of the street food economy.

Another general goal that is vital to our study is related to the importance of women. Female labour forms the basis of alternate economies such as the ones we see on the streets. Women invest a lot of their time, energy and work into their own survival and that of their family on the streets. For instance, take the case of vegetable vendors in the markets who usually tend to be women. They literally spend the whole day on the cart itself irrespective of the weather conditions. They also bring their children along with them to prevent the possibility of abuse and for the help. They are one severely vulnerable section of the population who are seriously in need of protection. The government needs to take proactive measures to promote their interests.

In the case of the specific goals we went into the details of the individual vendors to ascertain their personal, educational, caste, religious, gender and economic backgrounds to ascertain the basis of their livelihood. Our intention is to enlighten our audiences with respect to the information we've elicited to make the basic point that street vendors serve an important purpose in our socio-political economy.

Our research methodology can broadly be placed under the following headings:

A. Method: appreciative inquiry

a) Street visits b) Identification of interviewees

B. Intensive study of vendors and leaders of associations

C. Focus Groups discussion

D. Questionnaires Survey – empirical case study

2. Qualitative Research Results

2.1 Gender dimension; women as street food vendors.

We have done 16 semi-structured interviews with vendors. Out of this 14 were women. These women include cooked food vendors, fruit vendors and vegetable vendors. These interviews were conducted in the Uppal Market, Ramanthapur, Sultanbazar, Shivam Market, Vanastalipuram, L.B. Nagar, and Dilsukhnagar of Hyderabad.

These women have been in the vending business for a long time and they include migrants and women with strong leadership qualities. These women were chosen after some discussion and participant observation. The choice of these interviewees was done keeping the personal day to day transactions in view, some of the known vendors, and few of them are in self help groups and one or two of them who happen to be leaders. The interviews were done on an informal basis and developed as a case history in the discussion mode.

The national policy states that women constitute a large number of street vendors in almost every city. Keeping this in mind, we have focused our interviews to represent wide spectra by selecting women numbers at random. Women vendors who are street food vendors play a prominent role in street food vending, vegetable vending, and fruit vending.

In our interviews most of the women told us that they had to sell their ornaments and pawn their jewelry varying from anklets, chains, ear studs and silver bangles. They said that these articles were not like jewelry but there is a personal emotional attachment with these ornaments; yet they had to use them to start their petty business. This must be the situation of women all over the country who play a major role in vending, prepared to do cooking and selling as a livelihood.

Ms. Ela Bhat from SEWA the ex-parliamentarian when interviewed in a symposium expressed the result of organizing the vendors into unions through banking system and described how women cooperatives can help them financially to protect them from debts and pawn brokers. This also is precious to the women because they mostly have a personal attachment to jewellery, because it's mostly a gift or a presentation. She states in the interview that "during the early days, many women were helped to recover their ornaments and jewellery from the pawnbrokers. In rural areas, the focus was on mortgaged land. The women vendors had lovely silver bangles and anklets which are invariably pawned. Unfortunately whenever there is a crisis in the family, it is these ornaments which are pawned first. They were all highly indebted, so reclaiming their pawned jewellery was the most effective programme in those days."

About one-half of the interviewees were female cooked food vendors. These women were playing multiple roles as mothers, wives, vendors, and social servants. These cooked food women vendors build a motherly kind of relationship and attachment with their regular consumers, and sell them food with care. They also take care of food that needs to be given to the consumers in case they are sick. The women vendor gives space to the consumers who are regular to their shops, in understanding the needs of the consumers, understanding their tastes and making things convenient to the customer's timings. They add simple medicinal elements to the food that they prepare, or beverages like tea to deal with seasonal health disturbances. For example, they add various medicinal valued items to tea like white pepper, ginger, tulsi leaves, elaichi during winter and monsoon seasons. In summer the famous Indian common person's juice, the sugarcane juice is flavored with lemon and ginger. While discussing about the environment and surroundings of their shop the vendors told us, that mostly all of them

clean their surroundings, sprinkle water also in their carts to avoid the dust particles (water as binding over restrains dust). They are trying to maintain hygiene and avoid using water by serving food items in the leaves and cups that are made of leaves. These leaves coming from trees as varied as from 'moduga' 'madapa' 'planten' and 'badam'. It is proved by *ayurveda* scientists that these leaves have medical benefits, avoid liver problems and improve appetite.

Women food vendors develop a social relationship with the habitants of the colonies where they serve food. In this relationship sometimes the exchange of the dialogue involves concern as a neighbor at a friendly level, rather than as a pure business relationship just as a vendor and a consumer. In this exchange of food programme it is also notable that regular consumers are given preference and their share is kept aside to ensure him or her that their order is safe.

The consumers also feel happy about such concern and treatment, and respect the vendor that they buy food from and also recommend the same place to their friends and neighbors. There is an interaction, communication, information involved in these relationships. Vendor's business secret is serving food affectionately, respectfully.

This relationship between vendors and consumers involves not only with guidance, advice, suggestions, counseling and strategy sharing.

(Case study) Sasikala is a high qualified woman. She is a postgraduate and Education degree holder. For some time she worked as teacher. After giving birth to a child she was retained at home. At that time she did not find a sibling to her child. She decided to start a business which is convenient to take care of her child. After a lengthy discussion with her relatives and friends she started a food center at her rented house only. It took 6 months to pick up the business. About her business in her own words: "My food center is near to one IT company, most of my customers are IT employees. Daily 20 to 30 employees are my regular customers. Now many of them lost their jobs because of the world economic crisis and left to some other place in search of livelihood. IT customers used to spend 100 to 150 rupees daily in the food center. Sometimes I used to suggest them in a friendly tone not to spend too much money but to save it for the future purposes. I feel that global

economic depression affected my business very much. Three months ago my customers spend their money freely, but now they think twice before they spend.

Women said about saving the leftovers, *idly* or *dosa* dough by making it into ‘*punukus*’ and make it a snack item and sell it to nearby toddy shops (local bars). (Anne:2 *Upendramma* interview) while talking about using the left over dough which was meant for ‘*puri*’ in the morning (wheat powder) makes it into a delicious, soft healthy food by using it to prepare ‘*phulkas*’ which are made without using oil.

The women vendors are not hesitant to talk about their business, and they are proud of it, and they take it very openly and do not feel ashamed to share their business issues, as the women vendors take it as a very respectable, dignified way of earning a livelihood and feeding her family. They know about their contribution to the food security as they say that without us where a common person can buy food within this price.

Rural women that we interviewed who came to vending said that they are the ones who encouraged migration. This is in the context of their poverty. They have opted vending as a solution to their poverty and vending as a livelihood option. They said that they cannot do the food vending in their native villages, because in the village they are known to everyone, cannot demand money for food, and they feel it’s an insult as they were mostly independent farmers, laborers and housewives. Migration was the only option to survive and feed the children.

The vendors who were then farmers had to give up their farming because of various reasons such as drought, debts, losing life partners, children’s education, to feed the children and family members. The women were forced to take such decisions and have to move to cities, because of their limited knowledge of farming, agricultural labour, animal rearing, weaving, and artisans. This also happens, because of the development policies which discarded farmers, artisans’ existence by ignoring their traditional knowledge and encouraged by focusing upon urban and industrial development rather than agriculture-based economy.

The lack of balancing in the development pattern affected mostly rural working classes, the majority belonging to severely vulnerable rural communities. SC, ST, BC communities are mostly the marginalized, oppressed sections of our society. There are variations of status within these communities but migration has a uniform impact. The situation forces women to take over the lead as the burden of serving food is seen as the responsibility of a woman. In many villages even today caste discrimination dominates the society. The customs, traditions of food culture is rigid and followed by hidden untouchable attitudes within the communities obstructing food vending as a source of livelihood in rural India.

These women whose husbands are landless laborers are not able to support them, because when their husbands became landless, poor, workless, they had no other knowledge, but only to sell their labour. Usually these women do not receive any support or help from their husbands. Without even basic knowledge they are able to save a lot of energy and use energy efficiently by using charcoal, kerosene, pushcarts and personal labour.

While sharing about their market strategies and coping methods, the women said that they change oils, reduce size, sometimes use spices differently, and change food items without affecting the basic principles of suitability with regard to the consumers. For example, *dahi vada* in summer, *sambar vada* in winter, *hot vada* in rainy season etc.

Vegetable vendor Ms. Krishnamma says that she loses relationships because of the business, as this becomes the primary need of their life. She doesn't have time to attend any social gatherings. Their relatives come to Krishnamma to give her invitation but they do not expect her. Her relatives back home in the village also do not take her seriously and thus gradually she loses interaction with their relatives.

The women vendors speak about children and say that they have no education. The women are associated with the children and the children constantly seeing the mother as a vendor get the same idea and would like to become the same as their parents. Their perspective cannot be broadened and vendors cannot provide them with alternatives. The children don't see any other world but only food in the form of vegetables, which are not meant for them.

Most of the vendors were doing this cooking as vending and as vegetable and fruit vendors for the past 10 to 15 years and did not see any growth in their personal life, but continue to contribute to the food security and assuring the continuance of globalization by training their children as vendors. Around twenty percent of the children are not going to schools.

2.2 Results of group discussions

The group discussions surprisingly have a character which is common to all of them. The markets where we have done group discussions look like informal unions. Unorganized vendors with unorganized unions which are more like a group rather than a union. A union has different character which has an objective such as fighting against the government or a policy or for some common benefits. But these groups don't acknowledge even that they are unions, or that can be called as unions. They talk less about the problems with Greater Hyderabad Municipal Cooperation (GHMC) officials, because they are in threat of losing their livelihood. As an important coping mechanism they do business as a group.

Our group discussions were done where there is diversity in the vending community. Kottapeta Fruit Market is almost a women vendor market. These women vendors decided to work as a group rather than be competitors against each other in order to deal with the problems they face in their day to day vending. They have adopted a coping mechanism to challenge the prices of the main market by doing business in a united manner. The 'common community selling' means that women bring the material with common equally shared money and distribute the profits or loss for that day.

Kottapeta has a fruit market inside the market where there are facilities like regularization, power and cold storage, and are not bothered by the questions of illegality. But there are around 300 families who do the retail selling and most of them are women who do their business in the temporary shades in an insecure environment as they are termed as 'illegal' encroachers. They feel that they should also be regularized and issued identity cards, license and have structures, and provided with cold storage. They are of the opinion that they should be provided with a secure place inside the market since they

have paid a lot of fees to *thai bazaar* which is leased to a private agency, who is obliged to take monthly fees. They face a lot of problems, because they use electricity illegally, there is no guarantee of the 'vending place' and the female vendors have to depend on the inside market lobby group for their privacy, and to freshen up. According to them, the consumers also take them for granted and bargain for a lesser price. The women spend from 8 am to 8 pm on the street to empty their baskets. They don't have space to eat their food properly. The surrounding is stinky, full of flies, and polluted by the traffic dust as it's a busy road (National Highway No. 9). During the group discussion they were not able to share with us their problems of personal health, because we were surrounded by many men listening.

Group discussions were also held with self help group (SHG) leaders who were vegetable vendors. These are mobile vendors in and around Moulali, Rajiv Nagar, HB colony, ECIL and AS Rao Nagar. These women argue that the frozen food from the new supermarkets is not be tasty at all, frozen vegetables lose their essence, their energy, and color and taste because of refrigeration. They say that they don't like to cook food that is frozen, or bought from these supermarkets, because they don't feel healthy with that kind of a cooking. They told us that they cook vegetables that are brought from the *rytu bazaars* (farmer's markets), weekly markets, and open retail markets. They start their mobile marketing very morning at 6 am to 10 am and in the evening from 7 pm to 9 pm. Every day they walk around 10 to 15 km selling their food items. They usually face tremendous weakness in the evening, but they cannot take rest in the afternoon as they have to bring the material by 4 pm from the wholesale market nearest to them. This means that they work more than 13 hours per day including their duties at home.

Near LB Nagar bus stop where there are around 20 families of mostly women selling leafy vegetables, vegetables from pushcarts we attempted a group discussion. Here the vendors came from an unregistered slum close by. All these women come to the market by 4 pm and start setting their places, setting the vegetables and arranging them according to the season. Here, they stand in line and have an understanding between them for the places where they have to be. Mostly these people try to start the market after 7 pm in the hot summer months, because they cannot keep the leafy vegetables fresh. They

have to stand all the time, and have no toilets, sitting arrangements, or shades against dust and heat. Since they have a mutual understanding they avoid coming in the way of the fellow vendor. They say that they have hardly any profits and fewer consumers in monsoons and winter. During the last 6 months they lost many of their consumers, because the market is down, the prices of gold, silver, fuel and rice have increased so many consumers decided to buy vegetables only every alternate day. Most of the women vendors' daily activity schedule varies from 13 to 16 hours.

Our team almost spent three hours in this market and observed the position of the women, and the situations that they are facing is never been paid attention to by all of us. We observed their pricing of the vegetables, and the consumer's way of choosing and bargaining of the same. On top of this they don't have demand for certain vegetables in certain seasons because people have some belief or inhibitions towards some vegetables, for example, *gongura* (a certain variety of spinach) and also other leafy vegetables are not much consumed during the rainy season.

These women do not bring their children to the market as they don't have any sitting place and often are subjected to pollution by vehicles that pass by in hundreds and thousands. They say that these vehicles pollute the vegetables that are being sold.

Nallakunta Shivam Market is a 'non risky zone' according to the vendors. It is established in an upper middle class residential colony. It is an L shaped market; on the main road we find fruit vendors, beside the main road there is a lane where we find all vegetable vendors ending with a *chaat* place and a small hotel. The vendors keep their items on pushcarts in front of shops. These shops are retail Kirana shops which are very old, the market has been established in 1973. The residents who support these vendors and give them a voice are mostly from middle and upper middle classes background. Residents co-operate with them because there is a friendly, homely relationship between these resident consumers and kirana shop owners, fruit vendors, vegetable vendors, shop keepers and residents who give them power connections, allow women vendors into their toilets and take care of informal advocacy with GHMC and traffic police. The colony

residents question the police on why they threaten and harass the petty vendors as they are not disturbing anyone but are serving them for years (pic 3).

Opposite to these vendors the Heritage Super Market, Spencer's Chow Pall, and Satya Market are functioning from the past three years. The consumers started going to these markets but soon returned to the vendors. They started discussing their problems with these vendors about the new supermarkets and hypermalls. Such incidents make these vendors as competitors that the big markets cannot compete with them. The vendors in this market are united, and decide upon the prices which are lower than the so-called 'fresh' supermarkets. There is an old woman whose husband was a vendor who passed away two years ago. The co-vendors were ready to feed her for some time, but she refused accept such help and was motivated to start selling leafy vegetables with the help of these vendors.

These groups of vendors buy their vegetables from the Shamshabad wholesale market and bring them to the local market through a common transport. They save some money through such cooperation. This is the reason for which they can afford to sell the vegetables for a bit less than the others.

Gutta contractors (retail contractors) inside of Monda Market/Secunderabad who sell on retail basis shifted to Boinapally. Most of the women vendors, who have no proper structures, seniors lost their place in the Boinapally, their livelihood depend on the contractors of vegetables and the place around 200 labourers are leaving in such condition. They have no rights and proper structures are also not available to them. Their livelihood is dependent on these contractors. 200 labourers are living in such a way. They have been doing this business from generations.

3. Quantitative Research Results

Our empirical case study with the help of questionnaire survey delves and examines into the issues of street vendors broadly at the level of personal profiles, financial status, the number of hours of working, economic conditions, health status, vending situations, habitation hazards and covers information related to vending items, security of livelihood, religion,

caste, regional migration status, civic amenities etc., which explore the vendors' world from a gender perspective along with other related perspectives as well.

We have focused our empirical study mostly on the causes and effects of the problems of vendors rather than the problems of vendors themselves. This is because of two main reasons. We understand that in order to develop a policy, or improve the status of the beneficiaries, the poor, victims of social and economic injustices etc., it's always important to know the causes of the problem and effects on the victims of the problem as it would enable us to find solutions.

There is an advantage in such analysis that helps a researcher, an institute or a government body to avoid repetition of mistakes in analyzing issues related to people, their welfare, development, as well as modernity or modernization. However the previous studies, surveys on street food vendors, and vendors have already discussed most of the problems involved in making these studies. For example, the study on "Urban Street Food Vendors in the Food Provisioning System of Hyderabad" conducted by Marlis Wipper and Christoph Dittrich (2007) attempts to address the problems of vendors and all concomitant problems related to livelihood that are discussed in detail. They refer in their study report to the studies that were done in Mumbai, Ahmadabad, Kolkata, Impala, Patna, Bhubaneswar and Bangalore (Bhowmik 2005). Wipper and Dittrich (2007) state that "there was no detailed study conducted until now in Hyderabad." A limited research on specific elements of the street food vending system has been done, focusing on safety and hygienic aspects (Bharathi 1995, Naga Lakshmi 1995, Wagray & Bhat 1994).

As a part of the study we browsed at great lengths through articles published online on diverse street food systems, their histories, and cultural backgrounds. There are practically hundreds of reference pages that discussed the importance of street food, its role in the sustaining of a micro-economy, as well as a micro-enterprise unit, its importance and its existence in almost every country of the world. Most of them specify the dependence of the urban middle and poor sections on street food. The studies and discussions that we focused upon mainly confirm that street food is undoubtedly a part of the three meals or two meal segment of the urban middle and poor income group.

It is also further observed that street food is not only a meal, or a *tiffin* but also a snack or a treat to oneself or to one's friends, to free oneself from cooking, a snack in the evening to many parents, a snack for many students and daily wage labourers. Children particularly like street food as a way of having something different from what they get at home. They are crazy about the street food like *pav bhaji*, *pani puri*, *samosa*, *mirchi*, *makka butta*, *punuku*, hot cooked peanuts which almost define childhood for any Indian.

Street food is defined as all meals, snacks, and sweets currently sold on the streets of the world for immediate consumption.

Keeping the study background that was done in consideration we have taken 334 vendors, women and men as a random basis and interviews. Out them female are 55.75% male vendors are 44.25%. They were covered in all over Hyderabad covering around 58 areas covering four to five vendors in each area. The percentage here is an indication of the role of women in street vending which is often ignored when it comes to livelihood analysis, and contribution to the micro-economy, micro-enterprise and contribution to the family economy. Economic and Political Weekly March 19th 1994 covers of issues related to women's status.

Ms. Lakshmi Lingam (1994) conducted a study on "Women-Headed Households: Coping with Caste, Class and Gender Hierarchies", where she pointed to the important politics of family, gender and globalization. She addressed why women become heads of households, and growing evidence that other causes such as changes in traditional occupational base, agricultural practices, landholding patterns and patron-client relationships along with population growth contribute to the growing numbers of women-headed households.

The study covers two villages of East Godavari Districts to observe the roles of women in the reproduction and production spheres of wet and dry lands.

Ms. Lakshmi Lingam says in her study that "efforts of development brought about regressive rather than progressive changes for people, in general and women in particular." She says

that long sustained myths of a) ‘trickle down’ about roles of man and women are b) households as egalitarian units and c) man as the sole economic provider and the head of the household were demythified by macro and micro level data”

Figure 1 shows that the 55.75% of vendors interviewed were male and 44.25% were female vendors.

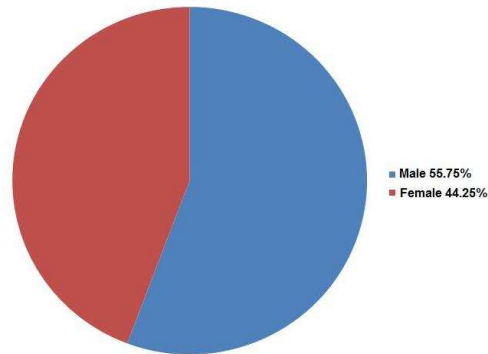


Figure 1: Number of persons interviewed as per sex.

3.1. Vendors profile

Religion

Figure 2 shows that vendors interviewed belonged to different religions. It's important to analyze the status of vendors in the context of religion, too. The religion in the present context plays a major role in the world politics. The constitution of India in its article 15 is equal to 15. Prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth. (1) The State shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them. (2) No citizen shall, on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them, be subject to any disability, liability, restriction or condition with regard to- (R. constitution of India)

But for the past 10 years, the politics of the world has changed its face moving from class, race and gender point of view to religion, caste and ethnic identities. In spite of equal laws within the United Nations legal framework, marginalized and minority communities continue to suffer different kinds of oppressions. These oppressed minority religions are fighting to reclaim their lost spaces, by identifying with their religions and caste and placing themselves in the framework of their respective caste, religion etc. This kind of unilateral identification

means discarding one's caste, religion and region including the way one speaks. The loss of their language is what is of a lot of concern these days. These marginalized groups are not ready to listen or accept a concept of secularism, nationalism, and equal justice that does not address their immediate cultural needs and ethnicities.

For example, in the Charminar area of the old city, most of the vendors are of Muslim faith and face lots of problems while selling their goods, and harassment by officials, political leaders. It seems impossible to implement anything here without the cooperation of the local leaders. The threat these vulnerable minority communities face varies from being seen as trouble makers to terrorists. This treatment resulted into a) making these groups more and more religious, unionization based on religious and caste identity groups, or finding themselves as radical rebellious groups. This is causing more oppression by the state towards realizing its 'objectives' which is to 'control,' to establish 'law and order' and ensure 'security for the nation state' These are the few conditions that can make vendors very oppressive, and leave them with no space nor voice to fight for their livelihood, shelter etc.

The vendors who were interviewed are Hindus 63.75%, Muslims 31%, Christians 3.25%, and Sikhs are 1% and other are 0.5% (see figure 2)

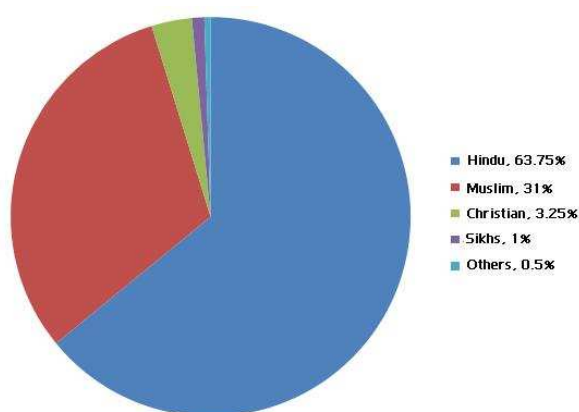


Figure 2: Percentage of vendors according to religion

Figure 3 provides details of female and male vendors in percentage as well as their religion. We focused religion for two reasons. One was the economic status and the other one the gender perspective of the religion. In the first bar the 21% are male vendors and 30% are female vendors who are Hindus. When it comes to Muslim community the female vendors are lesser than that of male vendors of their community and also female vendors of other community. There are 4% Muslim women vendors and 25% Muslim male vendors. This figure is communicating two issues. The stereotypical analysis would be that “Muslim men do not allow Muslim women to go out”; their customs, religion do not agree to do so. But the basic issue here is that the Islam as a religion promotes men taking responsibility of feeding women. The liberty for Hindu women unfortunately gradually turned into a major responsibility of feeding the family, market and globe. We can also interpret this data in this perspective because if we listen to women’s stories on the street vending that talk about many struggles of women of the field to feed the family because it’s mostly women who are held responsible of keeping the spirit of the ‘family’ as an Indian culture at any cost. Middle class women have to balance the modernization and upper class women have to contribute to ‘greater’ market economies. But the ‘Muslim women’ are not available to this market and media, and ‘western sponsored programs aims to ‘develop’ Muslim women into modern women’, media contributes to it by equalizing Muslim women as only ‘*burqa women*’. Market is very restless of this unavailability of Muslim women to the main stream market.

The other side women’s labour in the family is never acknowledged. It’s always shown as a responsibility of a wife to feed the children and husband and taking care of the elders, where as in Muslim community it’s the other way round. The men have to feed the family both wife and mother equally. It’s also interesting to know that the son should serve his mother. The daughter in law has no obligation to take care of the mother in law. It’s actually as per religion is only the son’s responsibility. The other communities like Christians and Sikhs are very less in vending, because of the charity concept is more in this religion. In the Sikh religion the community support is more. They cooperate with others and do business.

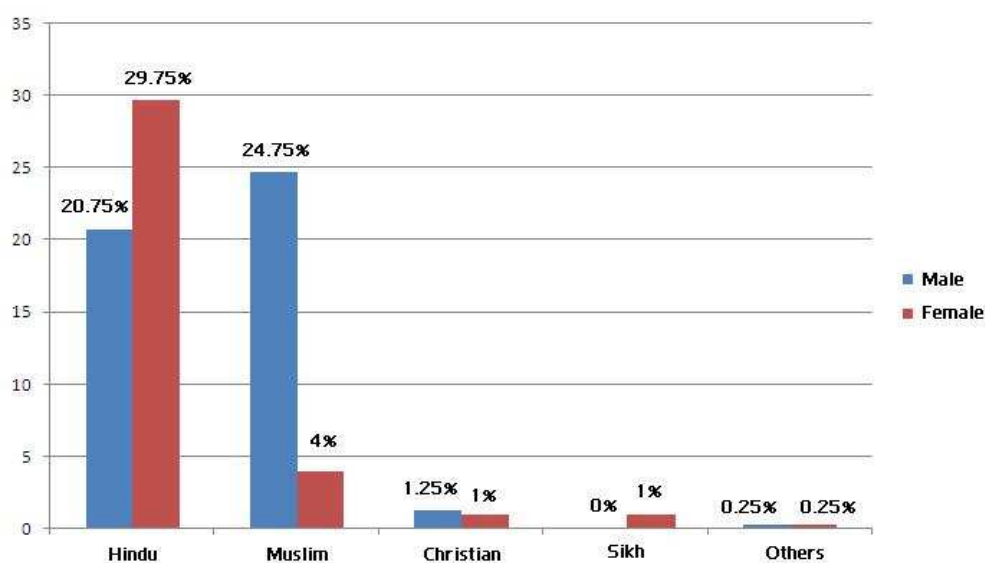


Figure 3: Vendors religious denomination and gender perspective

Literacy Status

Figure 4 shows the literacy status of male and female vendors. It is also a comparative presentation which clearly indicates the education status of women and the affects of such status. Only 23% of male vendors are able read; the literacy rate of female vendors is even lower and shows 12%.

The percentage of male vendors who are able to write was 4.27% where as female vendors who can write is only 0.75%. Men have knowledge of reading and writing but women have less but whoever have learnt to read also know to write. Lack of educational opportunities, only little encouragement of the family, and household responsibilities, mobility, economic status, accessibility of educational institutions are the main reason for lack of literacy. The male vendors who can write and read are 1% and female who can read and write are 1.75% surprisingly the data here shows percentage increasing. All this shows the low status of vendors in general and the very low status of women in particular. The assumption about the status of women are proved to be unfortunately correct in spite of self help groups movements and adult literacy programs, etc.

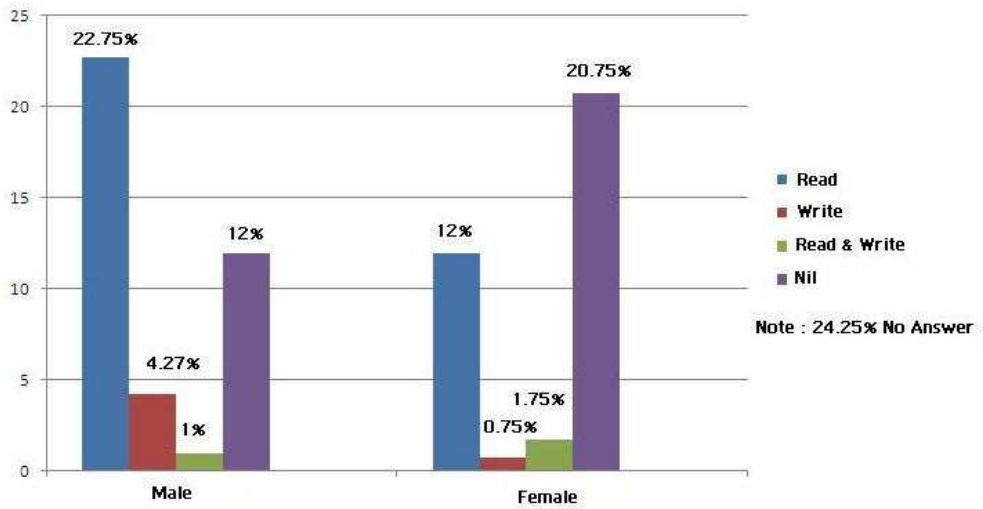


Figure 4: Gender and literacy status

The total 37.25% who can read and 4.5% can write the vendors who can both read and write are 19.5%. Out of interviewed vendors 42.5% are illiterate. In the context of globalization, primary education was promoted but mostly concentrated to towns, while peripheral villages were neglected. The *dalit* analysis of education is that the government schools previously had middle and upper class families coming to these schools, so teachers use to concentrate and teach with interest and fear of punishment. But since the villages are vacant because of migration and brain drains, the schools in villages have no proper teaching or quality education. Apart from this there is a slight change and increase in the educations status but when compared to *dalit* men *dalit* women’s status is low.

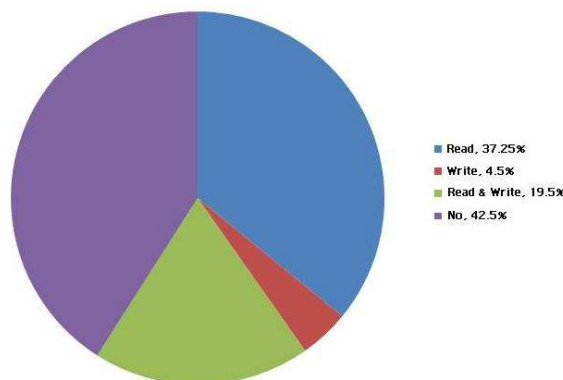


Figure 5: Literacy status of street vendors

Marital Status

Figure 6 shows the marital status of vendors. According to the empirical study, about 35% of male and 30% of women are married. Single men are 10.25%, single women are 2.75%. Widows are 3%. Deserted men are 0.5%. Invariably poverty, unemployment, landlessness, causes problems within the family and leads to rural-urban migration. This situation forces women to take burden of children, elders and debts. Inevitable conditions force women to start working to earn money for family purposes. Vending as an important income source serves to feed the children. One of the reasons of deserting husbands is that bearing triple burden of the family, not able to accommodating joint family needs and demands, stereotype roles of wife, mother, even daughter at all levels, for example, husbands demand that his wife should learn to live with his mother, but women are not ready for such arrangement, as they are not ready to live in 'policing' conditions. They want peace, rest, or food at least full meal for two times.

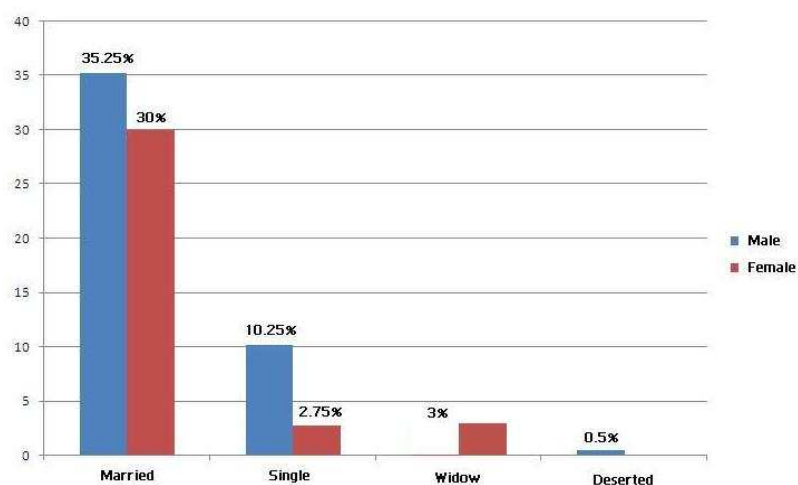


Figure 6: Marital status of street vendors

Places of Origin

Most of the vendors originally belong to rural villages of Andhra Pradesh to Hyderabad. The migration is very high since the past 10 years. Many studies reveal that the globalization has positive effects on the development of industries, multinational companies, IT parks, SEZ's and gated communities, but it weakens the rural economy, agriculture. If we observe

these migrants they are not accommodated in this development. Actually when migration happens then they should be seen in this ‘developed’ arena. But this developed arena gave these rural poor migrants by accommodating them to class IV employees only. They are not in better positions. If we see toilets in the malls, Imax-cinemas, big bazaars, complexes, most of the young migrants work as salespersons in departmental stores, as watchmen, sweepers, and toilet cleaners. They wear uniforms, ties, and identity cards, and have to work with lots of humiliation. The migrants who are even more vulnerable are ending up choosing the options of rag picking or begging.

When it comes to women, most of them not literate and have no knowledge to earn their livelihoods and don’t know options of technical education etc, so they end up working for minimum wages without proper livelihood security. The vendors that we have interviewed mostly belong to from Telangana Districts like Nalgonda, Medak, Karimnagar, Mahboobnagar, Warangal, Khammam, Nizamabad or Adilabad. About three-quarters are from these districts. Most of the vendors interviewed nowadays live in the Charminar area of the old city (see figure 7)

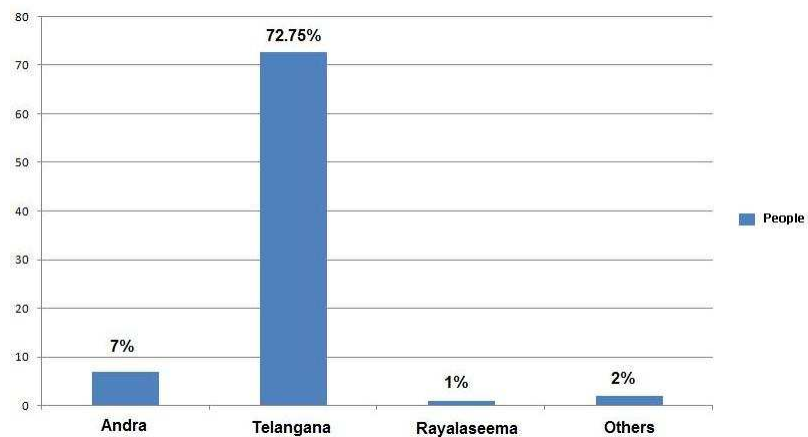


Figure 7: Regional provenance of street vendors

3.2 Livelihood Aspects

Types of street food

Figure 8 shows the different type of street food products, sold by men and women. Out of this the male vegetable vendors are 3.75%, where as female are 18.75%. This means most of the vegetable vendors are women and prefer to sell vegetables, because the static type of vending, and can manage to push the cart, weight the basket over their heads. Ms. Kantamma told us that women “*carry the load of the family over their heads so carrying vegetables over my head is no big deal.*” When it comes to fruits it is the male who take the burden to push the carts as fruits are heavier than vegetable and mostly they are mobile vendors. It is also because the fruit vendors face lots of harassment from officials, and they have to keep running from to one corner to other corner. The juice vendors are male 1.25% and female vendors are nil out of four-hundred interviewed. Usually the juice vendors are less in percentage, because they have to stand all the time, hours together and taking care of the children, so it is difficult while doing vending. The preparation of juice cane needs physical strength, because of the poverty, and lack of proper care, nutritious food and plenty of health disorders and general weaknesses, women are unable to do this kind of vending. It is also because women have to take care of the children and the fear of the accident, kidnap or abuse, because these vending places are very unsafe, and busy with traffic. So women generally at any cost like to take livelihood options that accommodate baby care and family.

Non-vegetarian items are mostly sold by men, while women are hardly selling non-vegetarian food on the streets (see figure 8). Male chat vendors are 4.25% where as 2% are women. Mostly these 2% cover snacks like *mirchi bajji*, (*chilli* is been cut and ingredients like Tamrind, salt, and other *masala* powder is mixed and fixed into *mirchi* and fried in the oil after dipping the *mirchi* into the liquid basin powder), *idli*, *dosa puri*, boiled ground nuts, fried ground nuts. Recently many young girls take up door to door supply of packet food inclusive of biscuits. Many women vegetable and fruit vendors also attend the door to door supply. Fish vending is mostly done by women. They are mostly not mobile but selling within markets. But some women sell fish as mobile vendors from their basket and men sell fish from their bicycles. When it comes to snacks the men and women are selling in the equal

ration. This is because mostly the husband and wife together manage this vending. This means women are ready to vend any item if it is manageable, since chat is a manageable, and women play a major role in preparation in dough mixing, adding spices, and frying them, they play a major role. They opt to do their living out of any livelihood which is manageable. They are not hesitating because they have no option. When it comes to local fast food items the number of male is more against women. This is because most of the fast food centers are open in the evenings when most of the women are busy with homework. During evening women are also busy in preparing food for the coming day. The other category like snacks again but this consists of mostly items made with soaked pulses, and cereals, *queera* (cucumber), *burfy*, a sweet snack made with grated coconut which is added by *jaggary* or sugar, *Peechu mithai*, which is liked by children very much, which is made of sugar and maida powder and sold by male mobile vendors. It is rounded to stick and pink in color.

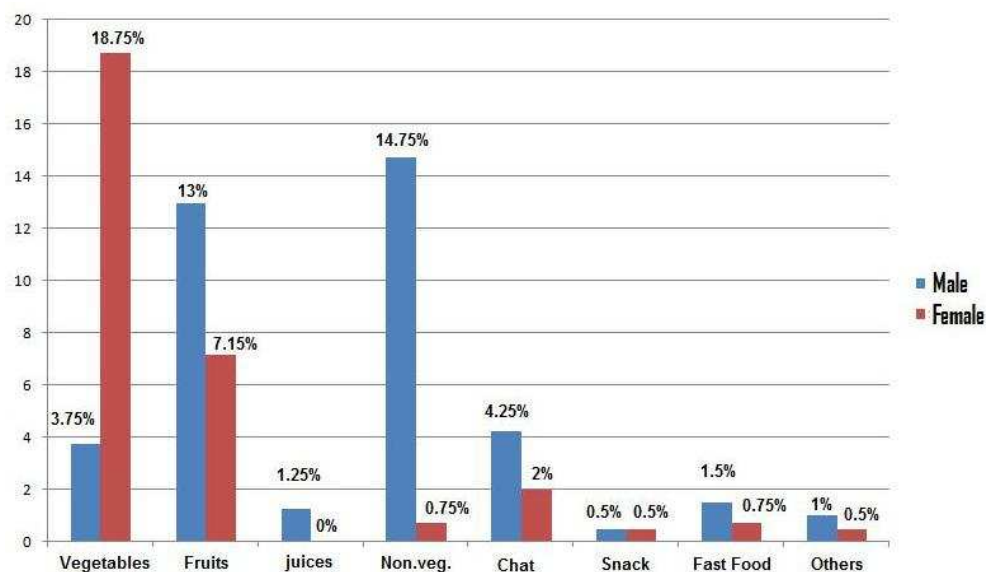


Figure 8: Street food items sold as per category and gender.

Vendors and their Customers

The livelihoods of a street vendor depend on many factors. His or her conditions of livelihood, where he is doing the business (his/her pushcart is placed), where is he/she placed, what kind of official is coming or posted, to that street, road or circle. How many

consumers are coming to buy, what kind of personality, attitude, financial status they are coming from. How often they come. More than this the policy at local, city and state also matters a lot. All this matters to his/her working environment and livelihoods. Especially when it comes to the street food, from the larger food policy what kind of grass root level understanding the policy maker, implement, scheme planner do have, what kind of advocacy we can do, is what ultimately matters. If we analyze the street food with this framework then we can find cause effectiveness with possible solutions. Figure 9 shows the number of daily customers. The vendors with the most customers usually sell vegetables or fruits. Less to that are vendors selling non-vegetarian items, chat and fast food. Street vendors' hot spots with most customers are near *Mehdipatnam*, *Nallakunta*, *Dilsukhnagar*, *Narayanguda*, where many educational private, coaching center (academic zones) are located. Many of the students, riksha drivers and migrants without permanent residence depend on street food.

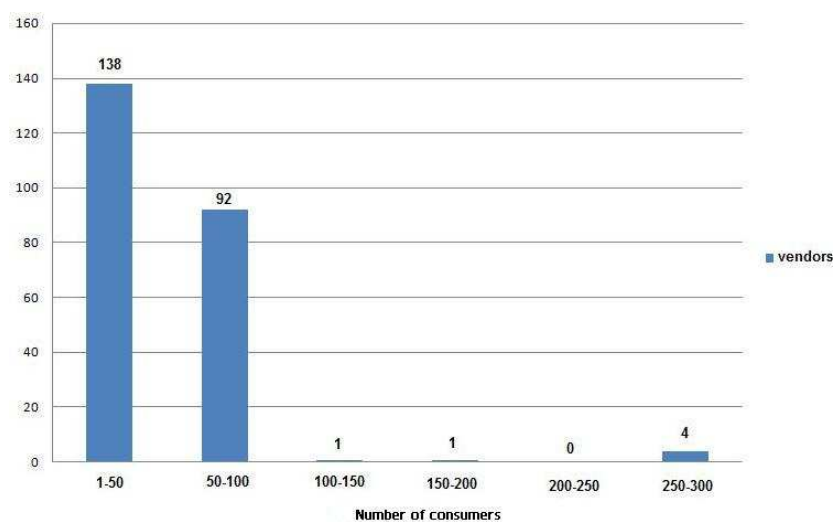


Figure 9: Number of daily customers per street vendor

The important point that we have to remember is whether the food is available when we are hungry or not? Whether the poor is able to buy the food or fill her stomach is not is the question. When this important human concept is concerned, it's the street food which is contributing not at all like as a business, or profit but a bare minimum surviving option and service to the community, Majority of the vendors said that they give food on loan 99.75% (see figure 10) to their regular customers, for monthly payments. This means a lot to many of the people whose life depends on these streets.

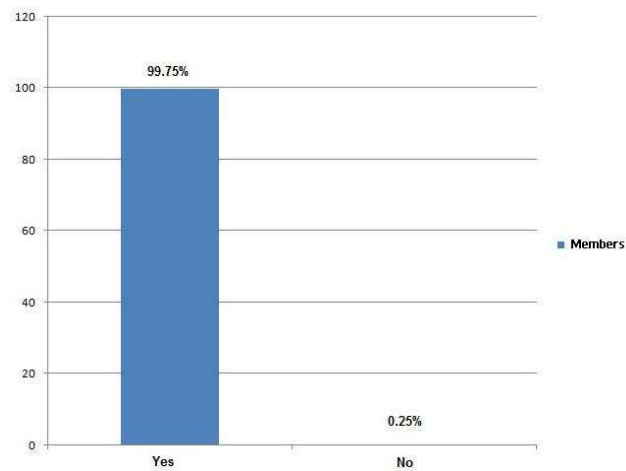


Figure 10: Customers offered food items on credit

Most of the middle class people who are the major consumers of street food (see figure 11), upper class 25%, and poor 30% are consumers of street food items. They never ever think or imagine of vanishing these street stalls out of their sight. They want cars, and want to be part of the modern India with cell phones, scooters, computers but definitely prefer food varieties from the street. Which are majority in visiting the street chat for whom it can be a birthday treat, gossiping, saving time, going to picture with family, satisfying the angry child, forgetting the sad days, to discuss their grievances about their boss, sorting out a battle, consoling partner, discuss official matters, anything.

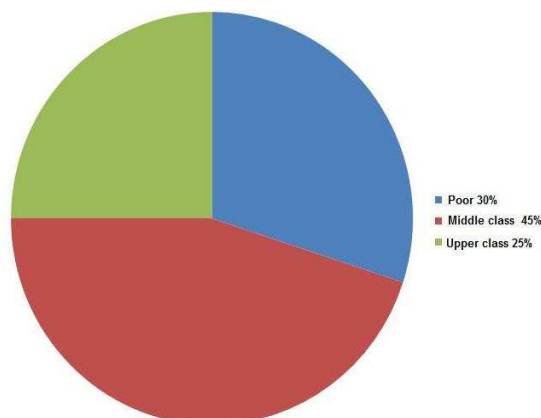


Figure 11: Economic Status of Customers

Issues of women vendors

Many of the women interviewed said that they have encouraged their men to come to Hyderabad to start street food vending business. The main reason why women start their own business is that they feel respectful and comfortable and earn their own money. They say that this is a respectful job. As in the villages, husbands have no land and family has no respect, no work, and no labour, despite of Food-for-Work programmes. Figure 12 clearly indicates that one-fifth of the female respondents get support from the family, which means that their husbands also work with them on the streets at the business site. Women have confidence in their working knowledge about cooking and initiating new livelihood options as street food vending. They have no choice to take risk. Taking risk means keeping the children hungry. About 25 % of interviewed women vendors did not receive any support within the family framework, which was especially true within joint families, where young ladies have to deal with the needs of the family in spite of starting their own business.

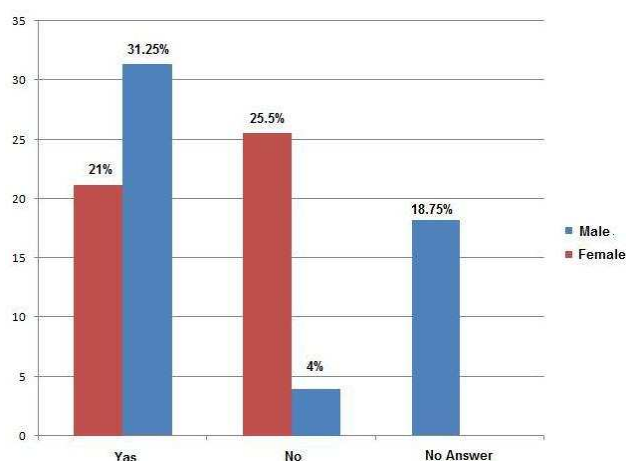


Figure 12: Vendors about family support

Daily routine of vendors

Street food vendors are contributing to the society, for our communities, saving the environment and saving the future, sustaining the futures in realistic situations. But in return the street food vendors are forced to pay commissions on their daily earning *challans (fine)*. In Hyderabad the street vendors' livelihoods are under threat. They have to struggle for their survival on a daily basis. These street vendors are struggling, which is often addressed by

them is complaint against the harassment about how their pushcarts and material which is been taken away by policemen and officials. The officials have no interest in finding solutions, which are beneficial in a mutual way. Street vendors are saying that why can't all of you think a solution which is good, convenient, benefit and sustainable to all with all it perspective.

Most of the street vendors do not know about the new zoning system that is defined by GHMC. Where do they place themselves in this frame?

About two-thirds of the vendors interviewed did not know under which zone they are doing their business, only one-third did know about the new regulation system. Figure 13 provides details about the vending areas. Police and town planning are not very keen on this. Vendors' knowledge on this issue is a disadvantage for them. Many vendors where ever they find a place for vending, they occupy it temporarily.

Government officials should give up their misconceptions about street food. For example, the ministry of health website explores street food as unhygienic and foot path vending as encroaching. Every one is ready to work with government if they want to systematize these food security systems in a humane attitude, professional but with a balance. This will help the street vendor and consumer.

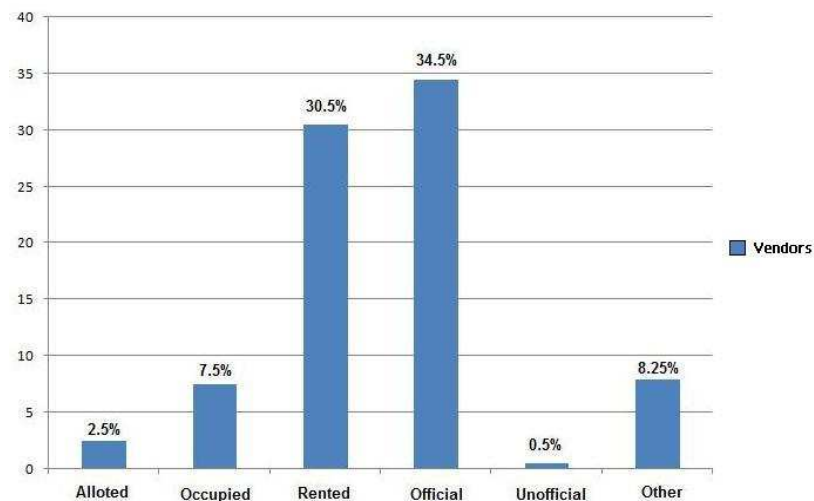


Figure 13: Area of vending and authenticity

During our research it was found that the question about support from the government to the petty trade business implies so many underlying relationships of caste hegemony, hierarchy within the concerning departments and lack of coordination between these departments. For example, when it comes to street food vending it has so many issues within and beyond. It depends on the larger food policy at the state and national governments level. Asking the vendors about government programmes many of them did not respond because they did not know anything about these programmes or they were afraid to answer because they feared government oppression (see figure 14).

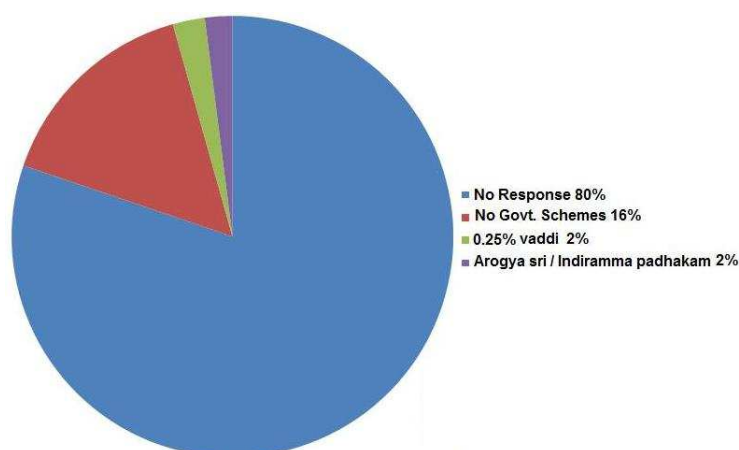


Figure 14: Government support

3.3 Social Conditions

Caste affiliation of vendors

We have already discussed that street vendors often are migrants and most of them are from underprivileged social segments of society (see figure 15). In the Indian society power, knowledge and other resources are still in the hands of upper caste people. The underprivileged communities are artisans who make traditional agricultural instruments, carpenters, blacksmiths, tailors, barbers etc. Tribal communities call themselves *lambada*,

yarakala, yanadi, gonds, koya etc. Scheduled castes are *mala, madiga*. *Mala madiga* communities are now identifying themselves as '*dalits*'. This group particularly reclaims its identities and factors of oppression. More than 40% of the vendors interviewed belong to the so-called backwards castes of agriculturalists, who own some land and work hard, so that they are able to invest at least small amounts of money in starting a petty trade business.

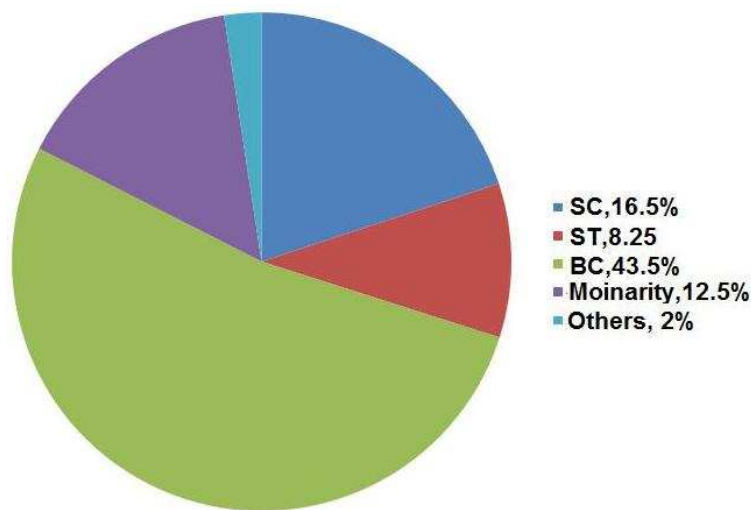


Figure 15: Caste affiliation of interviewed street vendors

Status of Children

We also looked at the number of children and their educational status. This is for two reasons. To develop children the cause of the problems that they are facing, are seeing everyday should be understood and estimated. The effect of such problem leads to child labour, street children, homelessness, deserting parents, begging and vending. The national policy states that below 14 years children should not be engaged in vending. Figure 16 shows the number of children of the vendors interviewed. The second bar shows that the number of vendors who have two boys are a little higher and those who have two girls. If looking at the first bar the number of vendors who have one girl are more than the vendors who have one boy; this means these parents are waiting for a boy child. Mostly this is the case. Therefore

we can justify the statement and it is shown in the higher percentages of male children. This however needs a deeper interpretation as there is a very dangerous hidden trends happening, against girl children, they are been aborted, killed, and deserted by many people in all social categories even today in the so called technically advanced society.

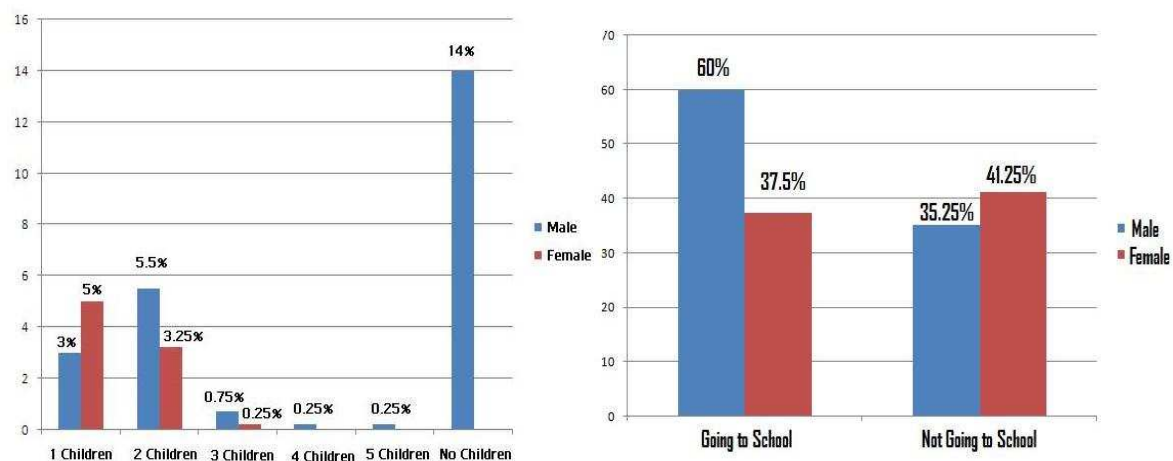


Figure 16: Number of children and their school attendance

Educational status of children

Figure 16 also shows the school attendance of the vendor's children. Important to note is the high percentage of children not attending school. This is an indication of the work burden particularly of the girls. Many mothers depend on daughters while selling vegetables, food cooking, cane juice selling and sibling.

3.4. Income Situation and economic conditions

Financial issues

We all take loans and vendors are forced to take loans to sustain their livelihood. 15.75% take loans from friends, 13.25% obtain loans from their relatives, but about 25 % depend on money lenders (see figure 17). These financiers give loans or material to the vendors as day to day basis. This is in a positive perspective, which is an assured financial support from a known lender losing some money as an interest. Some times even the regular interaction between the lenders and vendors may help vendors. The negative part of this dependency on lenders is that the vendors are caught up in a vicious cycle of loans which they are not able to get rid of which further negatively affects the livelihoods of the families.

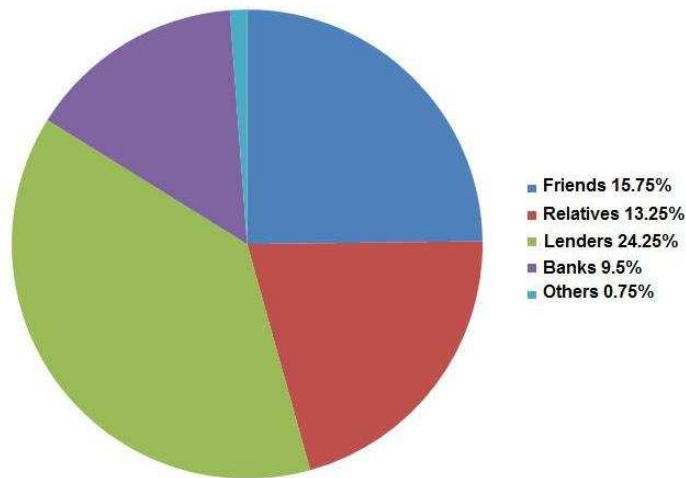


Figure 17: Source of credit

Vendors told us that they regularly borrow money from the lenders, friends, relatives or banks and others. Others can be a self-help group, chit funds or pawn brokers who take their gold, silver and brass as security. Most of the vendors said that they got loan from lenders. Money lenders play a major role in the capital mobilization of vendors.

Number of persons depending on the vendor's income

The number of persons depend on the vendors is an important point of analysis, because it gives hints about the economic condition.

Figure 18 shows the average high number of dependants on one income. In some of the cases ten people depend on one income earning person.

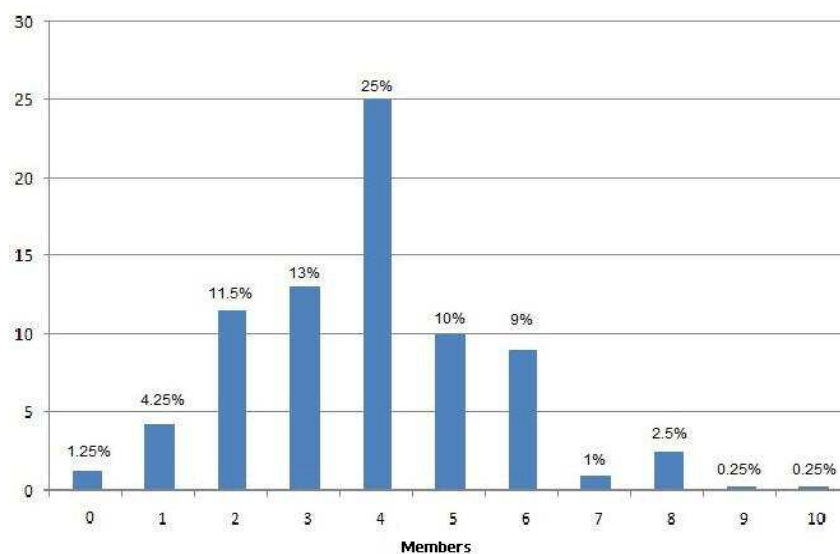


Figure 18: Number of persons depending on the street vendor's income

Income situation

68.5% vendors earn Rs 100-500 per day, about 10% earn Rs. 500-1,000, and only 3.75% earn Rs. 1,000-1,500 per day (see figure 19). The higher income groups mostly were owners of their business, the lowest income-group consisted of employed persons and female roadside vendors. For a family of five, 200 Rs. daily income is needed to fulfill at least their nutritional needs.

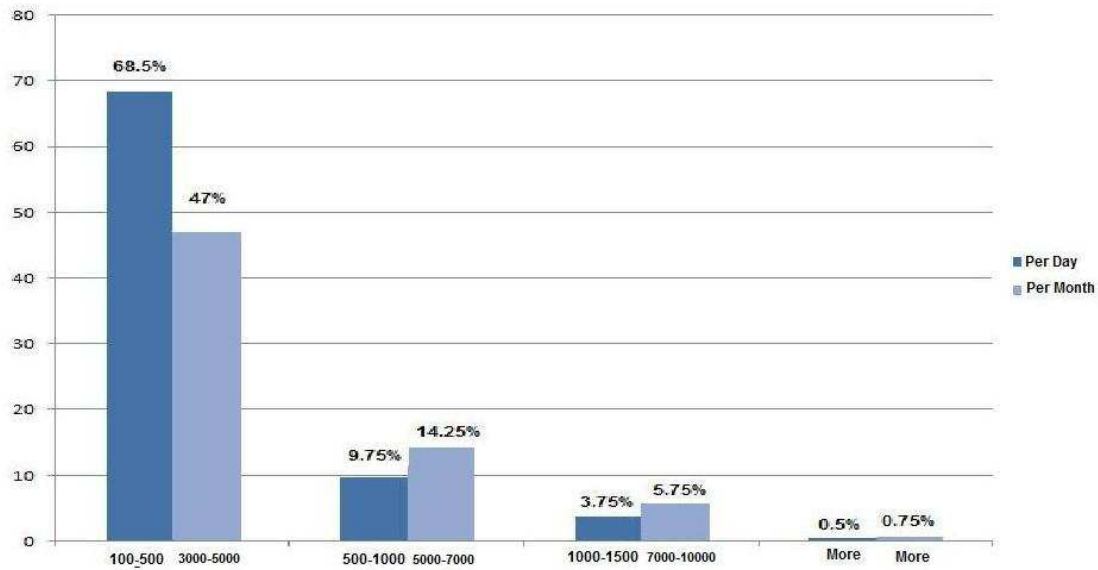


Figure 19: Income situation

Access to government schemes

The obligation of state Government to continue with the subsidies has become a burden to the Government, but they cannot escape from giving food grains to its citizens who are at below poverty line, this obligation need to be addressed but at the same time they have to compensate there losses by making benefits out of mainstream marketing system the period of past two year is the tough period to the nation as it faced a tremendous economic crises which leads to food insecurity.

All this reasons reflect the plight of the urban poor in their day to day living and eating standards. The government Rs. 2 rice distribution scheme has not been useful to its poor beneficiaries and also not to the pink card holders who are middle and upper middle class, because the ration is not sufficient to feed an average family. The rice in the open market is significantly more expensive. Because of recent price increases the burden on women also increased in order to cope with this situation of worsening food security. Because of the spending need they are not able to buy any nourishing food that contains calcium, protein, carbohydrates, iron and important vitamins. Figure 20 shows how the vendors' food security depend on purchases from the open market.

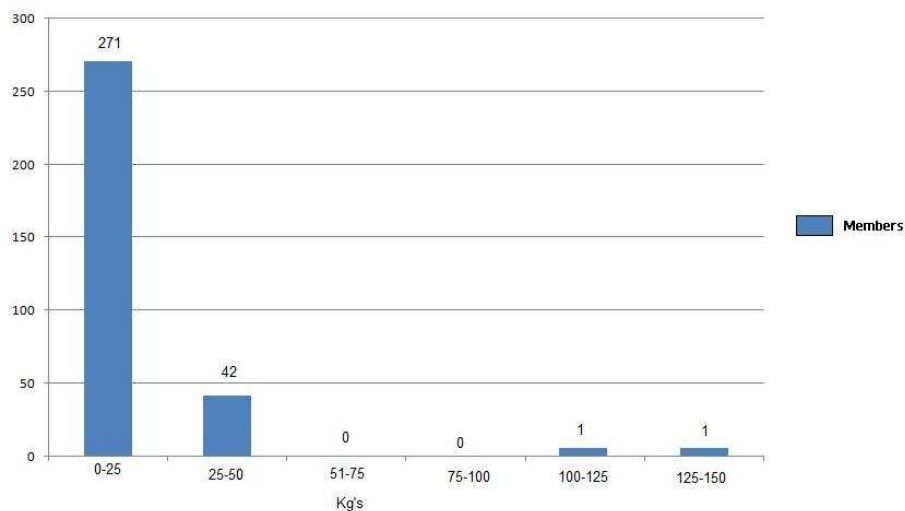


Figure 20: Street vendors depend on rice purchased from the open market

Food status

Figure 21 shows the poor food status street food vendors. Many of the vendors interviewed take only two meals a day. About one-half will not even take breakfast.

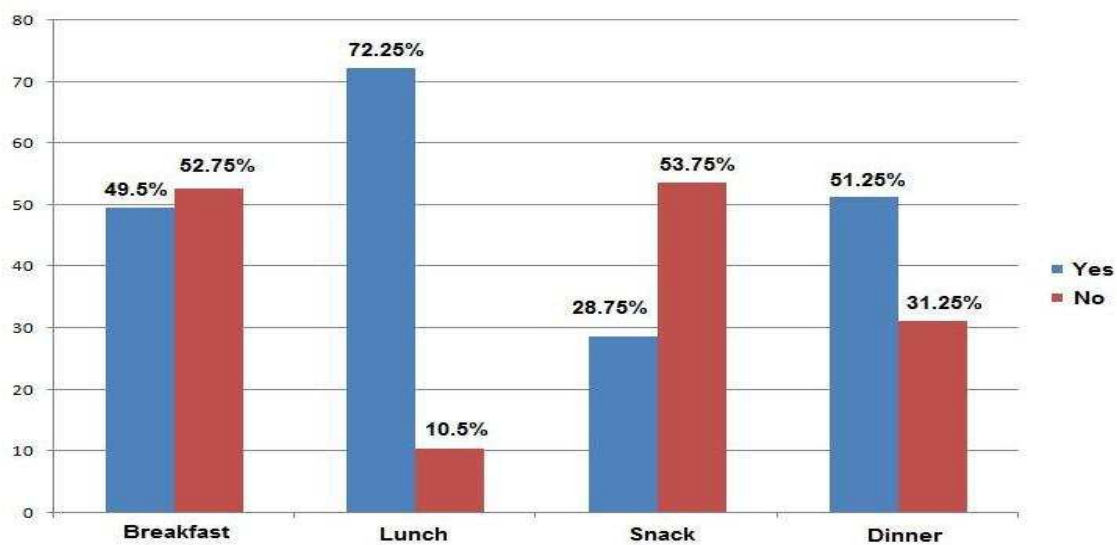


Figure 21: Food consumption status of street food vendors

3.5 Health aspects and hygiene

The below figure 22 provides an overview on the daily mobility of the street food vendors. Usually they walk or use their cycle. The large majority of street vendors interviewed cover 1-10 km per day, less than 10% even cover between 10 to 20 km a day.

Case study: *Ilaiah* is a mobile vendor who sells a snack. Many of his customers are children. The snack he sells is called in *Telugu* as *muntakinda pappu*. It is made with boiled crushed paddy, baked in country oven (*batti*). This is a mixture of cereals: *fried channa dal*, (*putnal* in *Telugu*), *ground nuts*, *Chilli powder*, *salt*, *finally chapped onions*, *little bit of oil*, *decorated with coriander leaves* and added flavor of little lemon juice (half spoon). This snack is available from Rs.1, so everybody is entitled to purchase it. *Ilaiah* moves 10 -15 km per day to sell this snack in many residential parts of the city. He also likes to do his business at those places most visited by tourists, lovers and families and children. Usually he starts at 3 pm from his house and keeps walking till 10 pm. *Ilaiah* is feeding his wife and two children. His wife is still living in their home village where she takes care of their daughter who is mentally challenged. *Ilaiah's* son also sells this kind of snack. *Ilaiah* complains of continuous pain in his legs and shoulder. He explains it as “professional health disorder”, but he has to walk by carrying the load left with no option.

He argues that if he would use cycle he would still save the money for fuel but he then will lose costumers, because he may miss their “calls”. *Ilaiah* earns about Rs. 300 per day and out of which he is able to save about Rs. 50. The picture shows *Ilaiah* presenting his *muntakinda pappu*.



While India is discussing the Tata's Nano-Car, the common Indian is still predominantly a walking species. Like *Ilaiah*, thousands of petty traders carry their vegetables and fruits on foot, a basket-load on their head and deliver their items at the doorsteps. The majority of street vendors use motorized transport facilities only to purchase their material from

wholesale market. Then they use two wheelers or motor-rikshas. About 15% travel by bus, 7% walk and 1% use their own bicycle (see figure 22). The 7% of respondents who walk needs particular attention, because this highlights the necessity to build retail market yards and to create public spaces for street vendors closer to those wholesale markets.

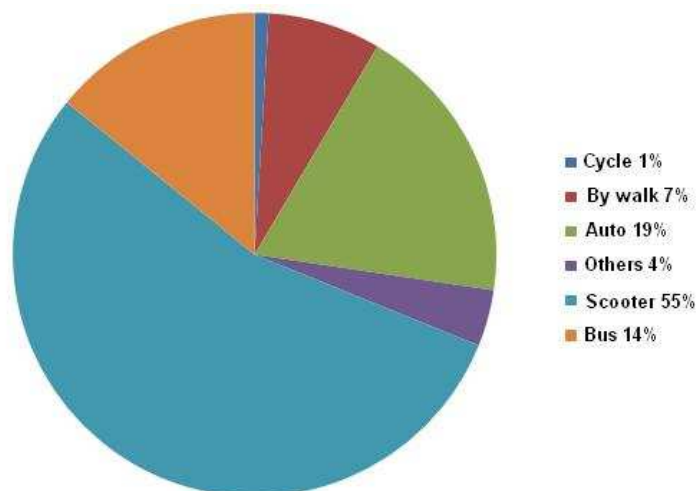


Figure 22: Mode of transport of street food vendors

Energy efficiency

It is the street vendor who is contributing to the sustainable urban food provision system; his business is resource saving, energy efficient and after all he/she feeds the city in a healthy and sustainable manner. Thus energy, environment, health and hygiene are in a cycle (see figure 23), so the development paradigm should consider this cycle and plan cities according to this cycle.



Figure 23: The energy-environment-hygiene-health cycle

Food gives energy and health. So food should be defined and designed as a locally available, suitable to the local needs and suited to the regional climate and soil conditions. Recently many studies and surveys on food and nutrition have explored that modern food items like pizza, burgers or carbonated soft drinks are spoiling the health. Obesity has emerged as a serious health issue particularly among middle class children and women. At the same time poor urban communities have to starve from undernourishment and hunger because their food security is severely under threat.

There is no person who does not complain of any health problem these days. People who are practicing exercises and are conscious of their health and taking precautions for good health are mostly from the small segment of urban upper classes. Many of the middle and upper income groups are spending a lot of money to fight obesity and other fat related health problems. Most of it addresses food habits.

At the same time the poor communities are dealing with malnutrition and other health problems, like TB, body pains, respiratory diseases, alcoholism, liver related problems and skin allergies. Many women face reproductive related problems, cervical disorders, uterus cancers, breast cancers, urinary track infections and problems related to very early marriage. The problem here is the balance between sufficient food availability and nutritious food.

The interviewed street vendors suffer from different health problems. About one-third suffer from chronic diseases, another one-third suffer especially during rainy season. About 10% have work related problems like skin diseases, respiratory diseases, headache, throat problems because of air pollution, or they suffer from burn-out syndromes because of overexertion and permanent psychological tensions relating to their business and livelihoods (see figure 24).

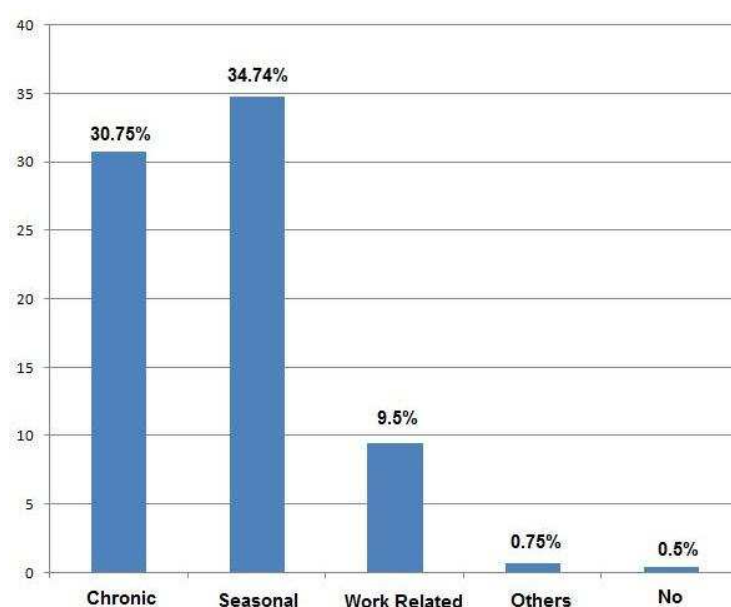


Figure 24: Health issues

Fuel usage by street food vendors

Fuel is one of the basic elements that affect our health. 30% of food vendors use charcoal for the food preparation at work place and at home, 67% of them use kerosene. They get 10 liters of kerosene on white card ration which is still not sufficient for home and work place. They purchase the fuel from the open market for a high rate. 18.5 % use gas; no vendor is using electricity or firewood for cooking purposes (see figure 25).

Preparing street food items does not need much energy, moreover it is fresh, because it is made on the spot and sold and consumed immediately. But the oil that is used is often from substandard quality.

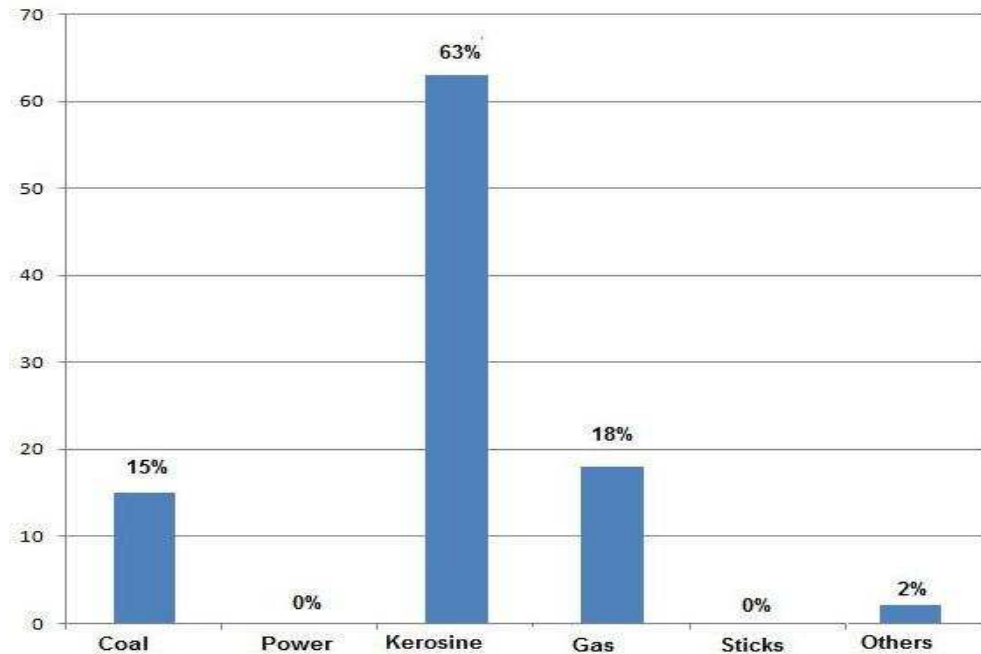


Figure 25: Fuel usage of street food vendors

Material usage

Usually during marriages or other functions thousands of plastic cups used by middle and upper class people are thrown away. This is called health conscious, but we find no consciousness of eco-friendly perspective here. Many parties, all well-dressed people just throw away paper and plastic and ice cream cups very carelessly. And the urban middle classes all use plastic bags for various purposes.

Figure 26 is talking something else. Usually about one-half of the street food vendors use bowls, which means they clean it with water after use. Only 20% are using plastic plates, 15% use glass cups, 7% steel bowls and plates and 10% even leafy items (for example banana leaves as plates), which is very eco-friendly. Leafy items can be even fed to cattle after their use as plates.

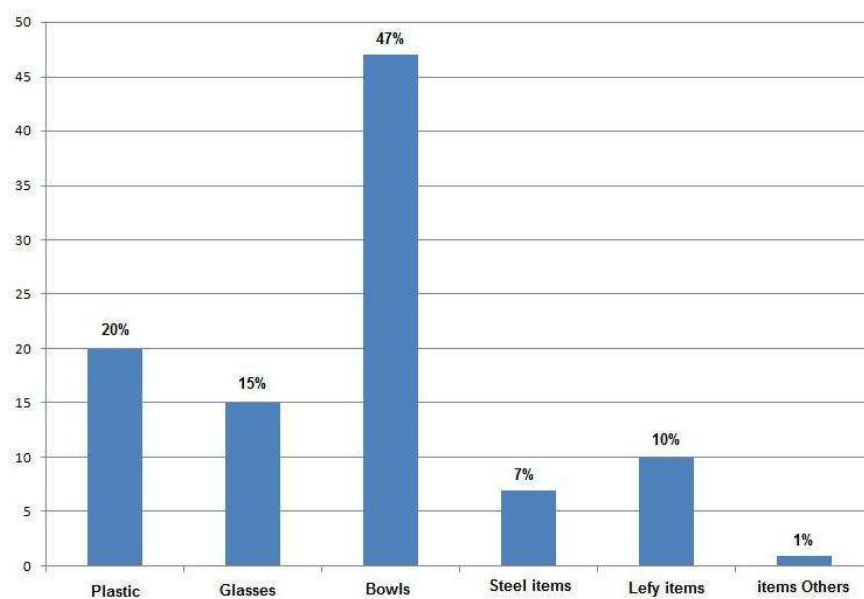


Figure 26: Material usage of street food vendors

Cooking oil usage by food vendors

Regarding health there are many discussions on the type of cooking oil that one should be used to prepare food. Thousands of advertisements on TV every day make consumer confuse and these advertisements are from big multinational companies and they promote the cooking oil for their benefit. But when it comes to street food vendors they are concerned of the cooking oil that it is safe, affordable and efficient. Many consumers think that the cooking oil street vendors usually use may be harmful to their health. In some way their concern is notable, but street food vendor point that they only use refined oil which is harmless to human health.

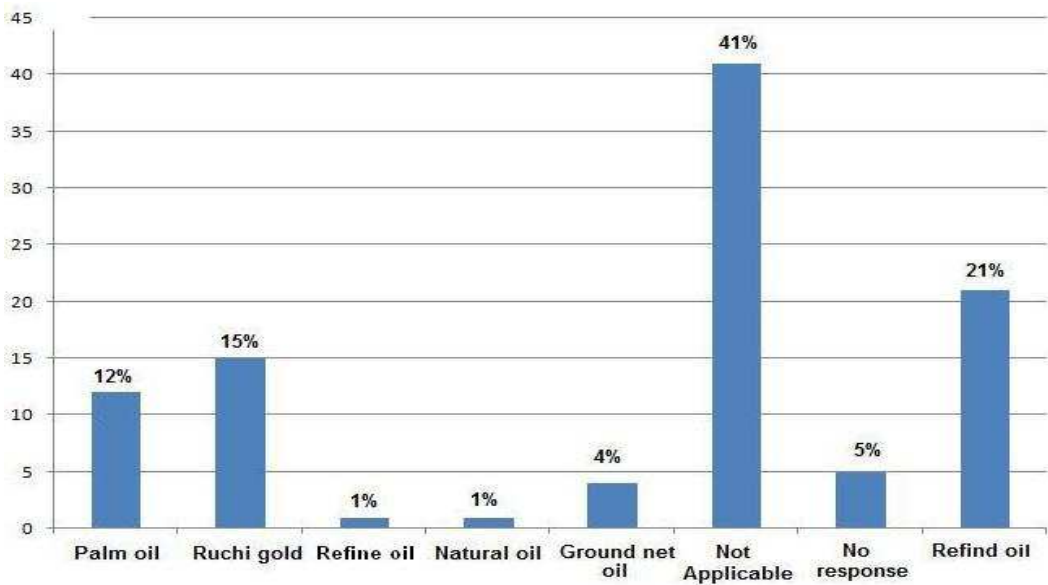


Figure 27: Cooking oil used by food vendors

Use of left-over food

The topic and issue of the remaining food is one of the most common factors of our life. When it comes to the questions of surplus food refrigeration is a blessing in disguise to many housewives and employed women. They keep everything left-over in the fridge and heat it again later when needed. When this question of surplus food items was posed to food vendors, 5% said that they don't have any food left, some of them said that they sell it to cheap restaurants, 3% answered that they eat this at home and 12% feed animals. The majority will sell it the coming day but at cheaper rates (see figure 28).

The street vendors don't have refrigerators or freezers. Many of them also use the left-overs to convert it into other food products, for example *idli* mix can be converted into round balls called *punukulu*. *Punukulu* are then fried for evening snack.

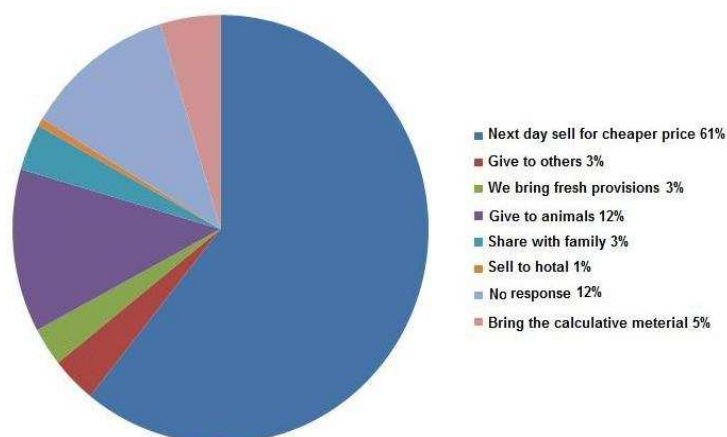


Figure 28: Use of left-over food

Consciousness about customers' health

Health aspects of the customers are often discussed when it comes to street food. The ministry of health website concentrates only on street food hygiene. But, the ministry does not offer any training to street food vendors, nor show any solutions on health problems. There are studies from other Indian cities who mention street food contamination and adulteration. No such cases were heard during our research work. Our interviewed street food vendors claimed that they only use fresh material, and 50% of them said that they need awareness and education how to improve the hygienic and sanitary conditions of their business.

3.6 Women vendor issues

Women vendors spend around 17 hours per day to earn their livelihood. It was found out that women suffer from different health problems. Many female street vendors complain that they don't have enough medical care as the family income does not meet with their health needs. They face many gynecological problems. Usually they do not have any toilet facility while doing their trading on the roads and feel ashamed to ask the customers to use their toilets. Because of their heavy work burden they suffer from many health problems. Usually they don't have any option, nor can take rest even when they are not healthy, having pain or fever.

They cannot take rest during menstruation and even during pregnancy or after delivery. Mr. *Inayat Ali*, president of Bhagyanagar hawkers union, point out that “even during pregnancy women work hard every day, they come to the market and stand there to sell their vegetables, make snacks, sit on the floor hours together on the streets in the hot sunlight and have to fight hard when officials ask for protection money”.

Usually, women vendors´ don´t have the time to take rest after pregnancy because they will lose their income and are afraid to lose their regular customers or their accustomed vending place. Women vendors´ issues have to be analyzed in a distinctive way, because if the ladies belong to the underprivileged social classes we have to develop specific measures to improve their livelihoods. For example, young female street food vendors can not leave their children unattended at home; she has to bring the babies with her and leave them on the roadside often in the open sun and exposed to noise and air pollution. A mobile crèche could ease these problems. In an interview near *Nallakunta Shivam* market Ms. Lavanya who completed her higher secondary level education make her two kids to sit beside her pushcart and make them do home works. Since she is an educated person she is sending her children to school because she knows the value of literacy. But she is doing vending only? We have to think about how her education can improve her quality of life and develop her position in the society. Because of her educational background Lavanya is also helping the other female vendors in accounting. She is planning to organize and unionize the female vendors. But the male vendors are not encouraging her to improve.

About health we have asked questions like cervical problems, menstrual problems, while discharge, depression etc., the below figure is an example of women´s rejection of sharing their women´s related health issues. Having cervical pains as 74% of women said they have no problems. Our assumption in this context is that female vendors face health problems especially when they have no proper care, food and attention. In this case food vendors have no time to take care of themselves.

Generally women complained on problems relating to their menstrual cycle. Mostly they mentioned hormonal imbalance, stress, workload, age, food habits, medication, deliveries and questions relating family planning. Often, women were unable to connect their mental

stress or emotional outburst with their physical and mental health. Many women were unable to “read” their bodies and to connect their mental health with their physical fitness. After all, about one-half of the female petty traders interviewed said that they often feel depressed, which is a clear sign that women’s mental health is alarmingly disturbed for various social, personal and family related issues.

Social relations of women vendors

The women who work all day long are exposed to lose their social relationships. Many female vendors complain that particularly during marriage season (April and May) when they usually want to enjoy their family life their business improve and high demand their presence on the road. So they prefer to be on the workplace rather than going to a marriage. Even this is the case in the festival season.

Women also lead their families. Many vendors are playing a major role in feeding the whole family. For example, *Munta Laxmi* works as a mobile fruit vendor. She is caring for her two children and her husband. He works as a motorriksha driver but is heavily addicted to alcohol. So he spend all his income on alcohol (many women don’t come out about such issues but with a regular motivated dialogue and mutual understanding many of these issues of women’s health, poverty or coping mechanism can be detected).

Health and Hygiene - Public Health

Women vendors often complain about the lack of public toilet facilities. For mobile street women vendors some of the customers allow them to use their toilets. Vendors’ health and cleanliness of the surroundings depend upon the toilet facilities. Women vendors often suffer from urinary track infections. Pregnant vendors and aged vendors suffer most of this unsatisfactory situation. They don’t drink much water to control their urge to use toilet. This leads lots of other health related problems.

33% of male are using public toilets near to their vending place. 19.25% female vendors are using toilet facilities near to their vending place. 14.25% of male vendors do not have any

toilet facility near to their vending place so they use side roads as many Indian poor middle class men do (see figure 29). The GHMC should concentrate more to avoid this bad habit.

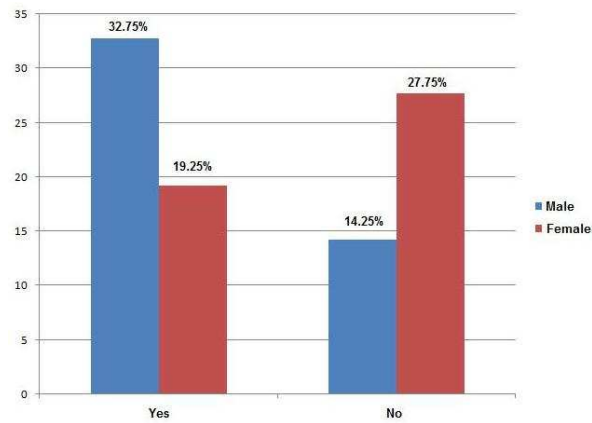


Figure 29: Accessibility of public toilets

Discussion and Recommendations

When we are discussing street vendors and their services in the larger framework of energy efficiency and sustainability we have to agree that the mobile petty food vendors, small kirana shop keepers, road side *chat walas*, *juice walas* are definitely not those who are threatening the environment. They are not destroying forests, ozone layers, not even encroaching government land, destroying agriculture, making profits out of food selling in plastic bags. They are trying to do the living with dignity, and not expecting much from the state government department. They are struggling to make their share of service by feeding the urban poor and helping thousands of those who enjoy street food within their budget.

If we are imagining streets without street food vendors, and then where else we will go to eat our food. The so-called 'Eat Street' on Necklace Roads is privately owned by big industrialists or political leaders; the lower middle classes cannot afford to buy their snack from there.

In the Koti area there were book stalls, which are now replaced in one of the subways. This could be a solution for some of the street food vendors, too. Then the heavy traffic could move smoothly, accidents could be avoided.

Some years back, the Gandhi hospital shifted from Secunderabad to Musheerabad. One could transfer this open place to vendors, so that the inconvenience to busses and pedestrians would be solved and the business of the vendors will get improved.

Street food vendor at least are contributing to the urban food security and they should be protected, promoted and encouraged.

In the study we have come across with many street vendors, interviews women, visited markets, Rytu bazaars, fruit markets, vegetable vendors, chat vendors. When we started our study we also approached the so-called stakeholders. Initiatives at the national level are very successful. Organizations like Nasvi and Sewa have unionized many street vendors. The international workshop initiated by Sannihita in Hyderabad in February 2009 discussed the issue for the first time.

In the words of street vendors it has to mentioned that

- “we are not in a respectable position in Hyderabad,
- we are involved in the vending for day and night for the convenience of our customers, but there is no livelihood security for us but a lot of pressure and stress,
- Traffic police, GHMC and health inspectors harassing us in the name of modernizing Hyderabad,
- once in a fortnight we pay Rs. 200-300 bribe to protect our livelihoods.”

Recommendations to civil society organizations

- Government official, activists and union leaders must start regular consultations to coordinate advocacy programs;
- GHMC should identify open public places and give them to vendors;
- Women's organizations should come together to develop a perspective action plan to conduct action oriented research to collect a complete data, information to address issues of health, education and livelihood, to support women vending leaders and to facilitate self designing plans and programmes;
- NGOs should evolve a comprehensive planning to do documentation of issues of food vendors and street vendors, reporting mechanisms for example, documentary films, journals, newsletters;

Recommendations to GHMC

- Conduct a survey to identify the main issues of street vendors by covering all types of vendors (mobile, semi-mobile, static, footpath vendors) and prepare a status report on this issue;
- involve voluntary organizations, traffic police, local leaders, elected representatives, for example ward members, to conduct the survey and to form local area committees to deal with day to day problems;
- coordinate with the town planning department, electricity department, metro water board, roads and building (PWD) to include vending spaces in the ongoing master planning process;
- make comprehensive, flexible plans to implement the national policy on street vendors;
- introduce on the job training seminar for street vendors on issues of capacity building, marketing skills, business development, and hygienic issues;
- support women vendors associations to initiate crèches and play schools;
- encourage vendor unions to start micro-credit systems;
- encourage street food vendors' community as a service providing agency in the food policy process;

Conclusion

We have attempted to do a study on women street food vendors in Hyderabad that covered issues of vendors at a very broad level. Vendor problems are addressed through a cause and effect analysis. We have suggested solutions to problems like savings, loans, usage of extra food and maintenance of hygiene. Our personal interactions with single vendors and group discussions in different areas of the city have made us understand that the issues are many and they are closely linked to each other. We attempted to analyze the results to find solutions rather than merely state the problems. While analyzing the results we focused on the women sphere keeping the cause and effects of the problems in mind.

We were empathetic to the problems of the vendors, we took their daily life into consideration as the base to make our argument in favour of the vendors, we were critical of development programmes that ignore the problems of the majority of people. We strongly believe that instead of spending millions of rupees on construction flyovers and making way to thousands and thousands of new automobiles that waste fuel and pollute our environment, the natural resources should be saved and regional/local systems of energy-efficient urban food provision should be protected and promoted as well.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Case Studies

Case Study 1: In her own words “I am a white card holder. Ration is not sufficient to feed my family. My husband’s earnings also contribute to the family needs. My day starts before sunrise and ends by 11 pm. I have to prepare all the items ready to cook in the morning. My residence is near to my business place, in the morning I will prepare the items and hand them over to my husband. Till 8 am he looks after the business, after sending my children to school I will takeover the business, my husband will go to his job. Daily I face 70 to 80 customers. Most of my customers are riksha drivers. Price increase of commodities forced me to sell for higher rates than six months ago. We prefer vegetarian food. Once in a fortnight I prepare non-vegetarian food which is very expensive for me.”

Case Study 2: Sasikala is a high qualified woman. She is a post-graduate and education degree holder. For some time she worked as teacher. After giving birth to a child she was retained at home. At that time she did not find a sibling to her child. She decided to start a business which is convenient to her circumstances. After a lengthy discussion with her near and dear she started a food center at her rented house only. It took 6 months to pick up the business. Sasikala’s husband helped her to raise money for her business. She started with Rs. 10,000. Now her daily turnover is between Rs. 5,000 to 7,000. Daily she gets Rs. 700 to 800 as profit. She employs three persons. About her business in her own words: “My food center is near to an IT company, most of my customers are IT employees. Daily 20 to 30 employees are my regular customers. Because of economic recession many of them lost their jobs and left to some other place in search for a better livelihood. IT customer used to spend Rs. 100 to 150 daily in the food center. Some times I suggested them in a friendly manner that they should look after their money and not spend too much money. It’s better to save something for the future. I feel that global financial depression affects my business negatively. Three months ago my customers spend their money freely. Now they think twice before they spend. Once in a week I will get commodities from the nearest wholesale market. I prepare the food very carefully and avoid wastage. Food remains will be given to the beggars and the other poor people in the street. Festivals and holidays are problematic for me. At that time I cannot estimate the food preparation. Most of the customers prefer *roti* and *sabji* (bread and vegetables). Nowadays many people are very conscious about their health and hygiene. I try to maintain hygiene and home atmosphere in my food center. I supply municipality drinking water. Municipality and health department only care about fees and taxes not about anything else. I feel license, security to the business and unionization will help us to improve our livelihoods. I don’t want to go for big establishment. I like to be near to the

poor and the middle class people who are the contributors of stable economy in the country.”

Case Study 3: Mr. Satyanarayana is a vegetable vendor in the Nallakunta Sivam Vegetable Market. There vendors are not facing many problems, because the residents of the middle class residential colony protect the street vendors from Municipality and police. The markets exists since 35 years, nearly 70 vendors are running their business. All varieties of vegetables are available there. Close by, four megamalls have started their business with many negative effects on the vendors. Nevertheless, Satyanarayana is very confident that the business will come back to normal and the megamalls will disappear very soon. He continued as follows: “Here we are maintaining very good human relations. We respect our customers. We care them and according to the wishes of the customers we provide the vegetables. We explain them the quality of our vegetable. We also sell on credit give them the opportunity to bargain. In the megamalls nobody is there to show the vegetables. Fixed price are there and the vegetables are packed in certain quantity. If the customer wants only limited quantity, what will he do? Poor people hesitate to enter megamalls. They feel shy to express their needs there. Megamalls hurt their feelings. With street vendors there is guarantee for the freshness of vegetables. In megamalls there is no guarantee for freshness. Nobody can say when the vegetables were harvested. Many of my customers are coming back to me only and share their experiences in the megamalls. They feel very comfortable with their street vendors.”

Appendix 2: Photographs

Picture 1: Food vendors and their pushcart



Picture 2: A constant threat to the health of children



Picture 3: Waiting for customers



Picture 4: The school attendance rate of street vendors' children is rather low



Picture 5 and 6: International workshop on street food vendors, Hyderabad, February 2009

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