

Socio-economical status of the child vendors: A sociological study in Farmgate and Tejgao industrial Areas

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Abstract: Child vendors are playing one of the leading roles in the informal sector in the economic structure of Bangladesh. In the city of Dhaka in Bangladesh, the footsteps of child vendors are the most noticeable. In addition, by providing various services to the consumers of Dhaka City, they collect their daily food expenses and household expenses. Not only are child vendors improving their finances, they are also making major changes to their family finances. This paper is an endeavor to depict the conditions of the street child vendors in Dhaka City. This paper highlighted the socio-demographic condition of child vendors and various aspects of their life. This research provides a detailed description about the nature of work, duration of work and living patterns of respondents. It also revealed that reasons behind not continuing their business and opinion about their livelihood problems.

Keywords: Vendor, Children, Socio-economic, Dhaka City.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Child vendor is an important issue in the current social system. In many developing countries, it is seen that due to the existing poverty in the society, the younger members of the family are being forced to participate in various activities. By engaging in these activities, they try to solve the short term of their poverty. But in this case, they are facing various challenges. Many families forcibly send their children to work in order to bring financial security to the family. They have to accept these in the face of the harsh reality. In many cases they cannot receive institutional education as they have to perform big responsibilities at an early age. Through its work every day the whole meal is done. Many times while working, they get involved in deviant behavior and criminal activities. Bhowmik(2006) has shown that at least 40 percent of the population is under 15 years of age and 50% is between 10 and 24 years of age. And this means that the dependency rate is much higher. He also discussed the sustainability of the vulnerable population of Dhaka. Street vendors have identified their work as an important sector of the informal economy through their innovative and flexibility. Khair(2005) showed that in Bangladesh, more than 30% people live with extreme poverty. In addition, many families are unable to fulfill their basic needs, so they do risky jobs with their children. And because of this, the interest of children in education gradually decreases. Finally, they have to accept that education is not a necessity of real life. Bhowmik(2005) examined vendors have always been considered an integral component of urban economics in the world. They provide affordable goods and services. It also provides social and economic life convenient and accessible retail options to the consumers of the city. He also identified street vending as occupation. In addition, many times child vendors have discussed the historical and cultural heritage of the cities. International Labor organization (2002) identified those who sell goods or services in the public place as vendors. It also includes many other important issues such as full gamut of goods and services, trade on wholesale or retail basis and public spaces including sidewalks, alleyways and medians. Vendors often have fixed stalls such as kiosks, semi fixed stalls-folding tables. Ahmed an Masud et al. (2011) state that lives and livelihoods on the streets of Dhaka city. They are trying to highlight the various problems and key factors that positively affect their sales revenue through their work.

Research Objectives

The research is to conduct to know the overall condition of child vendors in Dhaka City. On the basis of the general objective the study has been conducted in the light of following specific objectives:

- (1) To explore the nature of work and living arrangements of the respondent.
- (2) To identify the key factors behind being child vendors.
- (3) To propose a list of recommendations based on the respondents to improve their socio-economic life pattern.

II. METHODOLOGY

This research included research design, sampling, data collection methods, methods of data analysis. It needs quantitative approach to reach the purpose. The study has been conducted around the Farmgate and Tejjao industrial area the children, involved in vending profession in the age 6-18 are considered population and every child is considered as unit of analysis. The study has been conducted on total number of 60 samples. Purposive sampling method has been used to select sample. The data for this study has been collected from primary sources. Apre-test has been conducted in the study area. The questions are both open and close ended. Interview, observation techniques have been used to collect data. Data analysis consists of examining, categorizing, and tabulating to address the initial propositions of the study.

III. FINDINGS

Table-1 revealed that the distribution of respondents according to gender. As most of the child vendors o the study area are male, so 83% respondents are male and only 17% are female respondents. It is clear that male children choose this informal business in maximum areas. In this study, respondents are child vendors in the age 6-18 years. It is clear that 53% respondents are in the age of 6-10 years and 9% respondents are above 16 years. It is a matter of irony that children have come to this informal business at a tender age. It is clear in the table maximum respondents 40% have completed their primary education and only 5% respondents have passed SSC examination. Besides 25% respondents can write their names and 20% respondents have studied between classes6-10.

Table1. Personal and family information of the child vendors

	Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Gender distribution	Male	50	83.0
	Female	10	17.0
	Total	60	100.0

	Age of child vendors	Frequency	Percentage
Age distribution	Less than 6 years	5	8.0
	6-10	32	53.0
	11-15	18	30.0
	16 years above	5	9.0
	Total	60	100.0

	Level of education	Frequency	percentage
Educational attainment	Illiterate	6	10.0
	Literate(Only Signature)	15	25.0
	Primary education	24	40.0
	Class 6-10	12	20.0
	SSC and above	3	5.0
	Total	60	100.0

Source: Author, Field Survey, 2019-2020

Table-2 shows the living status of child vendors and also the causes of child vendors behind choosing this informal business. Bangladesh is a developing country where most of its population still lives below the poverty line. It is seen in the table that poverty is the main cause of being a child vendor. With this income, they support their family members. Besides, unemployment 15% and illiteracy 8% are other major causes of child vending in Dhaka City.

Table 2: To identify the living status of child vendors

	Causes	Frequency	Percentage
Causes behind being vendors	Poverty	42	70.0
	Unemployment	9	15.0
	Illiteracy	5	8.0
	Others	4	7.0
	Total	60	100.0

	Sources	Frequency	Percentage
Sources for being vendors	Family	30	50.0
	Friends	14	23.0
	Relatives	10	17.0
	Others	06	10.0
	Total	60	100.0

	Items	Frequency	Percentage
Vending items	Tea	18	30.0
	Cigarette	15	25.0
	Betel leaf	10	17.0
	Nut	11	18.0
	Others	06	10.0

	Sources	Frequency	Percentage
Sources of Capital	Family	40	67.0
	Friends	08	13.0
	Relatives	5	8.0
	Known person	3	5.0
	Others	4	7.0
	Total	60	100

Source: Author, Field Survey, 2019-2020.

	Reasons	Frequency	Percentage
Reasons behind not continuing their business	Hard working	22	37.0
	Poor income	19	32.0
	Problems of hoodlums	12	20.0
	Lack of social status	03	5.0
	Others	4	7.0
	Total	60	100.0

Table: Different types of problems

	Opinion	Frequency	Percentage
Getting proper sanitation facilities	Yes	33	55.0
	No	27	45.0
	Total	60	100.0

	Nature of Illness	Frequency	Percentage
Health Problems	Cough, Fever and Influenza	18	30.0
	Diarrhea	12	20.0
	Skin diseases	17	28.0
	Typhoid	04	7.0
	Others	09	15

Source: Author, Field Survey, 2019-2020.

About 30% respondents come to this occupation by their family needs. Family encourages them to earn money so that they can support their family expenses. On the other hand friends and relatives also give advice to choose this occupation. Child vendors get their capital for vending. It is noticeable that most of the child vendors 40% get their capital from their family as family encourages their children to engage in business. It is very important matter is that some maintain their business with their own income. There are many items for their vending. Tea, Cigarette, Nut, Coffee, Biscuit, Fruits, Followers are the main items. About 30% respondents sell tea whereas 25% sell cigarette. Even they are trying to sell cigarette in the banned areas.

Table-3 shows different problems of the vending. Different reasons behind not continuing this informal business by respondents. 37% respondents answered that it is a hardworking task and 32% respondents do not want to this business due to poor income. Child vendors are the poorest section of our society and many times they do not get sanitation facilities in their resident and job places. Only 33% get different types of sanitation facilities. Most of the respondents answered that they face the problems of lack of capital. It is also noted that some child vendors 8% face police problems. During natural disasters, they face many problems also. Maximum vendors are not careful about their health treatment. Table-3 shows that about 30% child vendors are affected by cough, fever and influenza. Besides sometimes they become victim typhoid. Also it shows that 9% respondents are affected by others health problems.

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The number of street children vendors in Bangladesh is increasing very fast. In urban areas, street vendors provide services in various ways. Their contribution to the development of quality of life should also be taken seriously. The government should support them by increasing the evening schooling programs, vocational programs and motivational programs. NGOs also create educational programs and part time employment opportunities for child vendors. And if they can grow by providing these opportunities, then they will also act as

a helper without hindering the development of our society and country. For the betterment of the Child street vendors a number of recommendations can be put forward:

1. Raise their health awareness through various public awareness programs.
2. Mental health treatment of children should be given more importance.
3. Expanding career-oriented education for them so that their life is easier.
4. The government should think of them more and formulate different policies so that they can get the respect they deserve for their work.
5. To increase interest in education with free teaching aids.
6. To ensure that they are not harassed socially.
7. To increase employment opportunities by creating their more opportunities in various fairs and functions.
8. To increase the awareness of various criminal activities and deviant behaviors in the society.

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