The term unorganised / informal has been discussed much during the last decade for desire of a commonly satisfactory definition. Various questions relating to the concept and definition of unorganised / informal sector were discussed in the Fifteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians held in January 1993 (ICLS-1993) at Geneva and a Resolution (Resolution-II) concerning statistics of employment in the unorganised / informal sector was adopted at the end of the conference. Later, the System by United Nation as also endorsed these resolutions with regard to the concept of unorganised / informal sector as per the resolution adopted at Fifteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS-1993) is briefly presented below.

(a). unorganised / informal sector may be characterized as consisting of units engaged in the production of goods or services with the primary objective of generating employment and incomes to the persons concerned. These units typically operate at low level of organisation, with little or no division between mostly on casual employment, kinship, or personal or social relations rather than contractual arrangements with formal guarantees.
(b). The production units in unorganised / informal sector have characteristics features of household enterprises. The owners of these production units have to raise the necessary finance at their own risk and are personally liable, without limit, for any debts or obligation incurred in the production indistinguishable from household expenditure. The capital goods may be used indistinguishably for the business and household purpose. The fixed and other assets used do not belong to the production units as such but to their owners.

(c). Activities performed by production units of the unorganised / informal sector are not necessarily performed with the deliberate intention of evading the payment of taxes or social security contributions, or infringing labour or other legislations or administrative provisions. Accordingly, the concept of informal sector activities should be distinguished from the concept of activities of the hidden or underground economy.

UNORGANISED / INFORMAL SECTOR IN THE INDIAN CONTEXT

The expert group, constituted by the Department of Statistics, Government of India, for defining the informal sector in its meeting held on November 5, 1998 felt that ‘Informal Own Account Enterprises’ and ‘Enterprises of the Informal Employers’ as
mentioned in the resolution adopted at the Fifteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS-1993) are conceptually close to that defined in the Indian Statistical System’ i.e. ‘Own Account Enterprises’ and ‘Establishments’ with at least one hired worker. This definition which is enterprise work out the value added by industry groups also felt that the work force in the unorganised / informal sector could be better measured through the household surveys by taking in to account the principal and subsidiary activities of each member of the household. In India, the term informal sector has not been used in the official statistics or in the National Accounts Statistics (NAS). The term used in the Indian NAS are ‘organised’ and ‘unorganised’ sectors. The organized sector comprises of enterprises for which the statistics are available regularly from the budget documents or reports, annual reports in the case of Public Sector and through Annual Survey of Industries in case of registered manufacturing. On the other hand, the unorganised refers to those which do not maintain any regular accounts.
Table 1.1
Share of Organised and Unorganised Workforce in India, 2005-2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Organised Workforce</th>
<th>Unorganised Workforce</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Workforce (in percentage)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural India</td>
<td>6.39</td>
<td>3.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban India</td>
<td>24.23</td>
<td>19.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All-India</td>
<td>10.91</td>
<td>5.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Farm Workforce (in percentage)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural India</td>
<td>16.15</td>
<td>9.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural India</td>
<td>25.66</td>
<td>23.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All-India</td>
<td>21.14</td>
<td>15.91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


ABOUT STREET VENDORS

Street vending in India falls in unorganized sector category. Street vending has been a profession since time immemorial, with street vendors an integral part of our urban history and culture. Shopping and marketing, in a traditional Indian sense, has primarily been informal. Social interaction is integral to Indian markets in
contrast to the mechanized and the sterile concept of shopping favoured by modern market and super market structures.

Vendors exhibit remarkable entrepreneurial skills. Purchasing of commodities is no easy task with constant market fluctuations. Besides, middlemen have a major say in the wholesale markets. Commodities have to be in sync with both consumer tastes and paying capacity. As most vendors deal in perishables, the goods have to be sold at the right time.

It is believed that the largest concentration of vendors is in the age group 16-35 years. It indicates that vending involves enormous physical labour. A vendor starts early in the morning with the day’s purchase. The marketing place in invariably far from his residence. Bringing large sacks of vegetables and fruits and loading them in a rickshaw cart is a tedious job.

Urbanisation is the most significant all India phenomena of our times. The city has today become an engine of growth, the main job provider. Twenty nine per cent of the people of the country generate 60% of the GDP. However, our cities remain ill-prepared to address the problems of poverty. Planning and governance continues to be the preserve of the politician-mafia-bureaucrat nexus. Whatever policy that does exist is poorly implemented.
There is unabated official and social hostility towards the unorganized sector, even though the formal sector has ceased to grow, having reached saturation point. As the cost of creating jobs in the unorganized sector is very low, it needs to be integrated into the context of the overall macro-economy.

Every social system must cater to the needs of its members to enable them to survive; it must have effective means of allocating and distributing resources. The vendors provide a wide array of goods and commodities to the urban populace at reasonable prices and convenient locations. The type of goods they sell makes an interesting study – from daily needs like vegetables, fruits, fish, meat and snacks to occasional needs like flowers and readymade garments. A survey conducted by the Indian Institute of Health and Hygiene in 1997 counted 300 types of eatables sold by the hawkers of Calcutta. It would be hard to find an urban Indian who doesn’t purchase something from a vendor. The middle and lower class consumer specifically prefers to purchase from them, though even well-off citizens purchase many commodities given reasonable prices.

Indian social institutions show an uncanny ability to adjust and adapt to changing societal conditions. Indian agriculture is organized around the family mode of production, with the entire
family engaged in various stages of agricultural production, i.e., sowing, harvesting and so on. The same system has crept into urban areas; it is not uncommon to find the entire family involved in the micro-enterprise. Thus, on a roadside tea stall, while the husband looks after customers, the wife prepares tea and snacks, and children wash utensils. The same is true for vegetable and fish vendors where the husband purchases commodities while the wife sells.

Nevertheless, the planners remain oblivious to the role of vendors who are victimised, harassed, marginalized and pushed from one area to another. Rolling stones gather no mass; so it is with the street vendors. Pushed to the city in search of employment, they take to vending as self employment for it is an easier option, perhaps the most promising avenue for the poor. Many vendors are erstwhile workers, who after the closure of mills and factories took to vending. Some are victims of displacement caused by developmental projects. Sometimes they are survivors of natural disasters. Often they are simply looking for work.

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 the 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 vendors have to deal with multiple authorities – the Municipal Corporation, Police, Regional Development Authorities, District Administration, Local Panchayats and so on. This leads to exploitation and extortion. In many cases the positive steps taken by one authority are nullified by the actions of others.

The Municipal Corporation laws, based as they are on 19th century British practice, are outdated and detrimental to the peaceful conduct of business by vendors. Harassment stems from an absence of official recognition of the rights of street selling and vendors’ lack of political and economic power. Instead of regulating vendors, Municipal Corporations treat them as a nuisance and an irritant; their policies and actions are aimed more at removing and harassing them rather than at regulation.
The most frightening experience for the vendors is, however, the regular eviction carried out by the District or Municipal Administration. They fear the very sight of the eviction team which is known locally by different names.

**STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

By witnessing the characteristics of the vending workforce in unorganised sector their living conditions are poor and they spend their life in open air here there is a hot sun or rain. The highest Indian Constitutional Document provides equality to all human beings with dignity, but it is not seen in the case of these workforce. This is very painful to those who are loving the humanity and its values. Apart from their hard working they are harassed by police, local rowdies and politicians and they pay them from their low income. They face a threat from the giant Indian and Multinational Companies in the name of globalization. Many retail outlets are coming to compete with this poor helpless workforce. So studying socio economic status and suggesting measures to improve their status is so significant and the researcher sees this as the most significant researchable problem.

**SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

Tiruchirappalli town is taken by the researcher to conduct the study. Tiruchirappalli is the age old town situated on the banks of
river Cauvery and it is the central part of the state of Tamil Nadu. All the roads and rail links to the Southern part of Tamil Nadu from the capital Chennai passes via Tiruchirappalli only. Researcher feels comfort and convenience of choosing this area as the study area which caters the need of the researcher.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH**

The broad objective of the study is to know the socio economic facets of the unorganized street vendors working at Tiruchirappalli town and the specific objectives are as follows.

1. To examine the socio, economic aspects of the street vendors.
2. To study their nature of business, income, expenditure and savings.
3. To estimate the well being index of the street vendors.
4. To study the awareness among the street vendors on government schemes.
5. To study the human rights status enjoyed by the street vendors.
6. To come out and suggest meaningful suggestions to the policy makers to upgrade the status of street vendors.
PERIOD OF THE STUDY

The study is done since January 2006 and the primary data is collected during April and May 2009.

HYPOTHESES

The following hypotheses are formulated on the basis of the above mentioned objectives.

1. There is a significant variation in income and significant relation in expenditure of the street vendors on the basis of their nature of the business.

2. The awareness level of the respondents is very low about the Government schemes on smart card and free medical insurance.

3. The education level and savings are relatively very low among the street vendors.

4. The street vendors are harassed by the Officials, Police and Politicians.

TOOLS USED

The primary data are collected from the respondents have been classified and tabulated for the purpose of analysis and the data have been scrutinized by using Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) with appropriate coding for the drawing of inferences. To elucidate the outcome of the study the researcher has
used frequency tables, bar diagram, pie-diagrams, chi-square method and Well Being Index.

**Chi-square Test**

This test is to assess the significance of the difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies, obtained from hypothetical measure; it is denoted as $\chi^2$, which is a statistical measure, developed by Fisher.

**Formula**

$$\psi^2 = \sum_{i=1}^{i} \frac{(O_i-E_i)^2}{E_i}$$

Where, $O_i$ = observed frequency  
$\Sigma_i$ = expected frequency, $i = 1, 2, 3, \ldots$.

**WELL BEING INDEX**

In India, TATA strategic Management Group (TSMG) is using the Well-Being-Index (WBI) as a tool to measure the quality of life. WBI is measured on the basis of eight parameters namely Home amenities, Transport, Kitchen facility, Hygiene, Education, Entertainment, Communication and Health care. *(Source: The Hindu, 27.06.2010, Trichirappalli Edition, p.7)*
LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. The reliability of the primary data is very much depends on the respondent’s attitude to such study and how she/he has taken to answer the questions raised by the researcher.

2. The sampling is done based on the available street vendors physically verified by the researcher where there is no availability of proper records. The street vendors don’t have a permanent place or shop to sell their products. They are virtually pushed to the every nook and corner of the town. Their constant mobility makes the data collection a difficult process.

CHAPTER SCHEME

Chapter I  \(\rightarrow\) INTRODUCTION

Chapter II  \(\rightarrow\) REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Chapter III  \(\rightarrow\) METHODOLOGY AND PROFILE OF THE STUDY AREA

Chapter IV  \(\rightarrow\) ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

Chapter V  \(\rightarrow\) FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

Appendix :  \(\rightarrow\) i. BIBLIOGRAPHY

\(\rightarrow\) ii. INTERVIEW SCHEDULE