

RELOCATION OF STREET VENDORS

A Case study of Bangkok

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Abstract

Street vending has become a tradition of Bangkokians livelihood in urban self-employment from centuries. They have been occupying the pedestrian space since decades making people feel uneasy to walk freely and surrounding dirty in the public space. The study examines the attitude of local people buying street food and their reasons behind it. The study is based on both the primary and secondary data. The primary data has been collected from the local people in the Bangkok city. The secondary data has been collected from different newspaper, journals, websites, researches, etc. Based on the results of secondary information and survey of the local people in Bangkok, this paper provides conclusions and recommendations on relocating the street vendors and making new policies for them.

Key words: Bangkok, pedestrian, policies, relocation, street vendors, street vending

Introduction

Street vendors are self-employed people who sell goods by the street, either on stall or mobile vending and doesn't have a permanent built up structure. Street vending is regarded as an illegal or informal sector of economy in most of the countries in the world but only without license, with license they are given particular area and time of the day where they can sell their goods. Bangkok has become a source of livelihood to thousands of vendors. Large number of population in Bangkok relies on the street vendors to sustain their livelihood. Street vending in Bangkok city has become a culture of its own, it attracts hundreds of tourists every year from all around the world. They come to experience the exotic and at the same time cheap street.

Putting those all things aside on the contrary at times illegally occupy space making it uncomfortable for pedestrians or vehicles to move freely. Roads are public property and the most needed transformational infrastructure which allows people to move freely from one place to other and if the street vendors make it uncomfortable then it is certain they won't be welcomed. Regardless of the fact that street vending is an important source of livelihood to urban poor. Vendors occupy public places and roads, which can create social problems like pick pocketing, theft, etc. noted that vendors are seen by policymakers as the cause of many problems such as pedestrian and traffic obstruction, and making the city dirty. Due to the chaotic footpaths people have to walk on the street which more likely may cause accidents and traffic jams. Moreover, the unhygienic quality of food and sanitation is also one of the biggest problems of food being sold on the street which can be the cause of a lot of diseases. They are not concerned about the cleanliness environment where they are selling their goods but only concern about their business. Street vendors of food and drink pose major public health problems because their merchandise may be more exposed to the sun, to air pollution, and to contamination by passers-by. The vendors who cook food and sell throw the waste on the floor which make the surrounding environment dirty and their food polluted. If these are not controlled than the Bangkok might get more numbers of street vendor degrading the environment will increase. If the street vendors are not managed in time than it will hinder the modernization of the city because the modernized cities should to be clean and people have standardized living system. Based on this scenario, it is important to find ways of integrating street vending in the planning of cities, especially movement routes, in order to avoid issues regarding health, cleanliness etc.

General objectives

The study examines the attitude of local people buying street food and their reasons behind it

Specific Objectives

1. To study international experience of cities like Singapore, New York and Seoul, resettling or redirection street vendor in their country.
2. To know and analyze the opinion of local people in Tha Prachan and Baglamphu on relocation of street vending from their street.
3. To analyze the level of satisfaction of buying in street by the surveyed population.

4. To give recommendation from the survey of local people in Bangkok city.

Literature review

Redirection and resettlement of street vendors in various countries

The purpose of the literature review is to study the how and in what way did the different developed and developing countries around the world redirect and relocate the street vendors. Interest and experience of street vendor's regulation of international cities was considered

Based on the reports Singapore, is the only country where all the street vendors are registered and licensed. They have allocated all the street vendors or hawkers in food centers around the country. With all the allocations the government have made ensure cleanliness and food safety by giving license to all the hawkers The hawkers department plays an active and crucial role in ensuring that the vendors keep their environment clean and does not make the pedestrians uneasy The purpose of licensing was to ensure cleanliness and food safety in food retail outlets and prevent food-borne diseases). The NEA is responsible for formulating policies, regulations and managing the hawker centers. Its policy aimed to ensure hawkers provided affordable food for the community, while maintaining high standards of public hygiene and cost-effective operations of the centre (NEA, 2012b). In New York City, the street vendors are obliged to have street vendor license and a permit for street unit from the Department of health and issued by a Commissioner. Before applying for a Food Vending License one must take and pass a course on food handling. There are various other rules that vendors need to follow such as: minimum sidewalk width, minimum distance from bus shelter or phone booth, maximum table dimensions, maximum height of display materials, wearing licenses visibly at all times. The vendors are supervised and controlled by various department of the city they are: Department of Consumer Affairs, Department of Health, Department of Transportation and the Police Department (Benson, 2006, Kyoko K, 2014) . According to the policy in Seoul, must have a license with regular health inspections to open up a street cart (T.K., 2014). First and foremost act (passed by the National Assembly) is concerned, the basic act is the Framework Act on Food Safety established in 2008, with the purpose to ensure that people's healthy and safe dietary life by clarifying the rights and obligations of people and responsibilities held by the State and local government (Kim Jae-heun, 2018).

Research Methodology

Research Design

My research design is descriptive and the study is qualitative. My research area is Tha Prachan and Baglamphu area to study their behavior on buying the street food and their outlook on the relocation of street vendors. It was held in the month of December 2018 from 19 to 25. The survey questioner consist of total 18 objective and subjective questions and were translated in to both Thai and English.

Table 1

Random Percentage Distribution

Profile Factors	Particulars	f	%
Gender	Male	11	23.00
	Female	19	77.00
Income	1,000฿-5,000฿	2	7.00
	5,000฿-10,000	5	6.00
	10,000฿-20,000฿	14	45.00
	20,000฿-30,000	5	16.00
	30,000฿-50,000฿	3	16.00
	50.000฿-70,000฿	2	6.00
Education	1-3	7	6.00
	1-6	2	23.00
	4-6	10	32.00
	Bachelor	12	39.00
Relocation	agree	11	19.00
	disagree	19	81.00

Table 2

Percentage of sample according to their attitudes

Profile Factor	Particular	F	%
Attitude	Convenient	10	39
	Near	6	24
	Cheap	8	32
	Customizable	4	5

Conclusion

According to my survey the people who buy street food mostly have low education, low incomes and small family size. Street food is cheaper than cooking at home so people who have low monthly income buy it from the street vendors. Bangkok city people usually work seven hours per day. So, after working for long hours people are usually very exhausted from working for whole day so rather than going to the grocery shop or some vegetable market to buy necessary stuff for cooking, doing the extra work and going through the trouble of cooking from scratch they buy stuff that they find on their way home which is a lot easier than cooking their meals at home. Moreover, we can say that people find it easy and convenient to buy from the street vender and it is making their life easy as well so, the majority of people don't want the street vendors to be relocated.

Discussion and Recommendation

A governmental food court should be established where the vendors would have free electricity and water access is also free so the price of the food that is sold in the court will not change and will remain affordable for people with low income. A policy on street vending license should be amended for people who wants to continue selling on the street. Venders should show their license plate throughout the vending time. And for the street vending in Bangkok down town there should be a condition applied which strictly regards the vendors to get a license which will be different and more expensive than in other areas. A new policy should be made and implemented for the mobile vendors, who use carts. They should register their vending carts and should get license too.

A policy should be made that requires street vendors to leave a formidable amount of space for pedestrians to walk comfortably.

Street vendors should be aware about the preservation and conservation of the city environment through training so that they would be conscious about it.

Before opening the shop and giving license vendors should take training for a certain peroid of time about handling the food and hygiene, so that they have ideas about operating a hygienic food shop in the given area.

Acknowledge

As requirement of this semester I conducted my research on the relocation of street vendors. I would like to thank my university for this opportunity.

I extend my deep sense of gratitude and sincere thanks to my advisor Dr. Denis Ushakov for helping me choose the topic and providing me with his guidance and support to enhance my knowledge in this field. I am really grateful for his valuable time and his co-operation.

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