

Thesis Title	Functions And Contributions Of Informal Economic Activities In Bangkok Inner City : The Case Of Hawkers And Street Vendors In Patumwan Bangrak Rajdhevi And Phyathai Districts
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Level Of Study	Master Of Urban And Regional Planning In Urban And Environment Planning King Mongkut's Institute Of Technology Ladkrabang
Year	1998

ABSTRACT

This research aimed to examine the roles and functions of street vendors and hawkers which were congregated in four commercial districts of Bangkok, namely: Patumwan, Bangrak, Rajdhevi and Phyathai Districts. The objectives of the study were three folds. First, it intended to investigate the hawkers' and vendors' socioeconomic settings. Second, it explored their behavior, activities, and attitudes toward the Bangkok community at large. And third, it examined their roles and impact, as a segment of Bangkok's informal economy, upon the urban community.

Both quantitative and qualitative methods by means of structured interview and field observations were applied in the data collecting and analyzing processes. Respondents of the survey included street vendors / hawkers, their clienteles / patrons, and their immediate next door householders / retail owners. Data acquired via questionnaire were demographic, behavioral, and attitudinal. SPSS for Windows statistical program was applied to derive analytical and empirical conclusions. In addition, a planned field observation, field mapping, and literature research were deployed to obtain information necessary for a point of reference on the study area's physical settings, its number and pattern of dispersion, and the pattern of land use in the

four study areas. These data were also utilized to cross-check with those derived from structured interview for consistency.

The study found that a high proportion of venders / hawkers were migrants from outer provinces and had an average education of merely primary school. Interestingly, their daily income and expenditure were marginally balanced. Their main reasons of choosing to locate their stall at the present locale were its proximity to their residence and the advantages of the prime business zone. A high number of them expressed their unsatisfactory on their working location and would like to see the improvement of regulation and clear allocation policies.

The study also found that patrons of venders / hawkers comprised a wide range of attributes, such as education level and occupations. The lower income group had a higher frequency of purchasing from venders than did the higher income group. Proximity to the workplace, located along the traveling routes, convenience, and affordability were prime reasons for service utilization. Major annoyance caused by venders / hawkers included sidewalk blockages, messiness, and chaos. A high percentage of patrons expressed their willingness to retain the existence of street venders / hawkers, while wanting to see the improvement on vending regulations and a provision of more organized selling location.

The owners of retail shop and households in front of whose property venders /hawkers located their stalls also expressed their consent on having someone selling their product close by. Their major concern was largely dirtiness and messiness caused by venders.

Conclusion can be drawn from the study that street vending / hawking was a channel by which excessive migrant labor would be absorbed and merchandise in an affordable price could be distributed effectively in large cities. It was also a mechanism to provide employment for the uneducated and the under-privileged. Low income dwellers in the city, on the other hand, could gain benefit from this form of economic activities for a greater chance of survival in large cities. Suggestions of possible policies

orientation to the betterment of street vending / hawking were also derived at the concluding section of the study.