

**Impact of Covid-19 Lockdown on the Street Vendors of Urban
Areas of Nagaon district of Assam**



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Chapter 1

Introduction

Rapid urbanization during the recent times is causing increase of poverty especially in the urban areas of developing countries. In most cities of India and other developing countries, these urban poor survive by working in the informal sector. Poverty and lack of gainful employment in the rural areas and in the smaller towns drive a large number of people to cities for work and livelihood. These people generally possess low skill and lack the level of education required for the better paid jobs in the organized or formal sector. Moreover jobs in formal sector are shrinking due to saturation. Hence even those having the requisite skill are unable to find proper employment. For these people work in the informal sector is the only means of survival. This has created rapid growth of informal sector in urban areas especially the capital cities.

The informal sector has formed an important part of economy in many countries, especially in developing countries, and plays a major role in employment creation, production and income generation. The informal sector encompasses largely unrecognized, unrecorded and unregulated small scale activities including; small enterprises, household enterprises, self-employed sectors such as street vendors, cleaners, shoe-shiners, hawkers etc. The informal sector has experienced rapid growth in developing countries and is generally believed that the rapid growth of the sector has been influenced by increasing unemployment in developing countries. One of the ILO research concludes that the size and contribution of the informal economy to trade is significant having the informal economy's share of total trade employment as 96 percent in India, 93 percent Indonesia and 73 percent in the Philippines (Bhowmik, 2005).

Street vendors constitute an important segment of the urban population. Moreover street vendors are an integral component of urban economies around the world. Street vendors are those who are unable to get regular jobs in the remunerative formal sector on account of their low level of education and skills. Street vendors are self employed, informal poor retail traders in urban labour market. National Policy for Urban Street Vendors (NPUSV, 2004) defined “ a street vendor is one who offers goods and services for sale to the public without having a permanent built up structure but with a temporary static structure or mobile stall or head load”

A street vendor can be considered as a micro-entrepreneur who earns their livelihood through their own meagre financial resources by selling products and services on the streets. In all Indian cities, street vendors provide a low cost, decentralized and highly efficient system of distribution of a wide variety of goods of daily needs ranging from fruit and vegetables to clothes, utensils and many others. They reach the consumers at convenient locations, without whom people would have to travel large distances to procure these goods. Street vending is not only a source of self-employment to the poor in cities and towns but also a means to provide ‘affordable’ as well as ‘convenient’ services to a majority of the urban population.

Street vendors comprise one of the most marginalized sections of the urban poor. With small amounts of capital, street vendors often work in shaky and insecure situations as their work places are urban public spaces, pavements, streets and markets. Indian cities have experienced rapid increase of street vendors, but government attitudes are not positive towards the specific needs of this bottom segment of the society. Street vendors do not pay taxes; thereby they are considered unlawful entities and targeted by municipal corporation officials and police as illegal traders. Municipal corporation conduct eviction drives to clear the pavements as a result of

which most of the vending goods are destroyed and confiscated. Confiscation of goods entails heavy fines for recovery.

The outbreak of corona virus disease-2019 (COVID-19) has severely affected national and global economies. Various enterprises are facing different issues with a certain degree of losses. Particularly, enterprises are facing a variety of problems such as a decrease in demand, supply chain disruptions, cancelation of export orders, raw material shortage, and transportation disruptions, among others. Nevertheless, it is quite clear that enterprises around the globe are experiencing the significant impact of COVID-19 outbreak on their businesses. We argue that major victims of COVID-19 outbreak are the micro, small & medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) and informal sector because MSMEs, in comparison to large enterprises, usually do not possess sufficient resources, especially financial and managerial, and are not prepared for such disruptions likely to go longer than expected (Bartik et al., 2020; Prasad et al., 2015). Additionally, these firms are highly dependent on their routine business transactions and a small number of customers (Williams & Schaefer, 2013). Hence, many MSMEs are running out of stock, some hardly continue to operate, and some will be running out of stock soon.

The sudden decision of the Government of India to impose a nationwide lockdown on 24 March 2020, with just a four-hour notice followed by a near complete shutdown of all economic activities imparted a devastating impact on the labour market. As a result, the unemployment rate had increased manifold. According to the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy's (CMIE) Consumer Pyramids Household Survey (CPHS), unemployment rates in April and May were over 23% in India, which was three times higher from the value last year (Vyas 2020). The cessation of all economic activities would result in a prolonged dip in informal sector workers. The International Labour Organization (ILO 2020) report has indicated that as a result of

COVID-19, an estimated 400 million informal sector workers are at risk of abject poverty in India. Women are likely to bear the brunt of job losses the most because much of their work is invisible, and they are more likely to work in informal work arrangements. Moreover, the significant and widening gender gaps in workforce participation rates, employment and wages that existed before the lockdown were expected to intensify during the post-lockdown period.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on street vendors in Assam started even before the imposition of lockdown because weekly markets were closed one week before the lockdown and vendors were not allowed to operate. Women street vendors suffered most because they lack access to assets and savings. Further, Women Street vendors with small children found it difficult to reach their vending locations without any transportation and the eviction drives during the lockout period. At the very beginning the nationwide Lock down which was declared from 22nd March to 31st August was dealt on by these street vendors in a nocturnal manner but what seemed it to be for a short period of time tends to surpasses days gradually bringing into halt all the economic activities. Though it seemed to be a state of economy revival during the post lockdown phase but it depicted a state where the nation witnessed chaos for performing business activities in a deliberate manner. The street vendors had to face many hardships for earning their livelihoods efficiently and hence they have to grapple any opportunity which came in hand to make a better situation out of it. In this backdrop, the present study aims to focus on impact of nationwide lockdown on street vendors of Nagaon district of Assam and the adverse effect on the livelihoods of this section of people.

Brief Description about the Study Area

The present study is conducted in the Nagaon district of Assam. The old Nagaon district with its headquarter at Puranigudam was known as Khargarijan in the past. The recent research activities

show that the whole of Nagaon district consisted of different independent kingdoms ruled by different rulers such as the king of Kamrupa, the Jaintias, the Kacharis, the Bara-Bhuyans , the Koches, the Ahoms etc. (District Census Hnadbook, 2011).

During the early period of British rule Nagaon district was first administered with Kamrup and Darrang districts. But in 1835 it was formed into a separate district with headquarters of Puranigudam. The headquarters was shifted to Rangagora in 1835. But in 1839 the headquarters was again transferred to Nagaon due to the unhealthy nature of the place. Nagaon district played very important role in the Quit India Movement. Some of the important episodes of the Nagaon district: during the struggle for independence mention may be made of Gandhi's visit to Nagaon in 1921, organization of Santi Sena, dislocation of railway lines in 1942, Bebejia firing, Jangalbalahu firing, Barpujia firing, Barhampur firing etc. In this firing many persons lost their lives for the cause of independence. The people of Nagaon continued to play a vital role in the freedom movement till India achieved independence on August 15th, 1947.

Presently the district shares the common boundaries with Golaghat & karbi anglong district on the east; Morigaon district on the west; Hojai & Dima Hasao District on the south and Bharmaputra River and Sonitpur District on the North.

Nagaon district has two Sub Divisions namely Kaliabor and Nagaon. Again Nagaon district possesses seven revenue circles with thirteen development blocks. The development blocks are Khagorijan, Pakhimoria, Dolonghat, Raha, Batadraba, Juria, Ruphihut, Bajiagaon, Pachim Kaliabor, Kaliabor, Lowkhowa, Barhampur and Kathiatoli. Goalpara district occupies 169 Panchayats, 2 municipal boards and 2 town committees. The total geographical area of the district is 2287 square kilometers (District Census Handbook).

According to 2011 census the total population of Nagaon district was 1892550 of which 1,439,112 were male and 1,384,656 were female. The population density of the district is 711 and sex ratio is 962. The child sex ratio of the district is 964. The district has a literacy rate of 72.37 percent which is slightly higher than the state average of 72.19 percent (census of India). According to 2011 Indian Census, the Muslims form a slight majority in the district with 55.36%, with Hindus accounting for 43.4%, followed by 0.95% Christians. Small populations of Sikhs, Buddhists and Jains also reside in the district. According to the 2011 census, 62.84% of the population speaks Assamese, followed by 28.61% Bengali, 3.9% Hindi and 0.79% Bodo speakers. 3.86% of the population speaks other minority languages. Agriculture is the backbone of the district and of Assam state. Rice is the principal crop and is the staple food. Fisheries are another major economy of Nagaon.

Objectives:

1. To study the impact of Covid-19 lockdown on the street vendors of urban areas of Nagaon district.

Methodology

The study conducted to understand the effects of Covid 19 lockdown on the street vendors and their livelihoods. The study is mainly based on primary data. However, some amounts of secondary data are also used in the study. Information was collected through schedules from street vendors from the designated areas of Nagaon. The survey was conducted in the month of September, 2020 when unlock phases were undertaken by the Government in order to collect the relevant information from the street vendors for the study.

Population of the study: The population of the study basically comprises of all the street vendors residing and having a place of business in the urban areas of Nagaon district of Assam.

Mode of sampling: The researcher has applied non-probability (Convenient sampling) technique to select the sample size from the undefined population size. Convenient sampling technique was adopted to collect the requisite information from 45 respondents from 4 different places of the Nagaon.

Distribution of Sample Size of Street Vendors

Name of the Place	Number of Vendors
Nagaon Town	15
Puranigudam	13
Jakhalabandha	10
Kampur	7
Total Sample Size	45

Limitations of the Study:

The study sorted to cover the response of the street vendors in relation to their ways of tackling Covid 19 and the subsequent lockdown phase annexed with it in a deliberate manner. The sample size was selected based upon the street vending sites of Nagaon district. In spite of the study so conducted to be error free there were some shortcomings in the study.

1. The places selected for conduction of the survey was limited to only four specific areas of Nagaon district.

2. The study does not reveal the state of street vendors who have already left the profession as a result of Covid 19 Lock down situation.
3. The study is limited to street vendors who specifically sell goods meant for consumption purpose. It does not encompass street vendors who were engaged in different product line apart from consumption related goods.
4. The study does not take into account the people who became jobless due to Covid 19 situation and had to take up street vending activity for earning livelihood.

Further Scope of the Study:

This study emphasized on the street vendors of a few urban areas of Nagaon District of Assam. It focuses on the responses of the street vendors in relation to their adaptability for earning livelihoods during lockdown and post lockdown phases. The study can be further extended to other areas of economy in order to obtain relevant information through market classification and also encompass vendors which have been failed to be included in the categorization.

Topical Organization of the Study

The present study has been organized into five chapters. The chapterization scheme is mentioned below –

Chapter – 1 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the role of informal sector specifically the street vendors on the economy of developing countries along with the effect of Covid 19 lockdown on them in general. After that brief description about the study is provided followed by the objectives of the study; methodology of the study; limitation and future scope of the study

Chapter – 2 Review of Literature

This chapter reviews the exiting literature relating to Covid 19 pandemic and its impact on the economy.

Chapter – 3 Socio Economic Characteristics of the Sample Population

This chapter analyses the different demographic and socio economic characteristics like religion, sex ratio, educational status, caste, level of income, housing condition etc. of the sample vendors in details.

Chapter – 4 Impact of Covid-19 lockdown on the Sample Street Vendors

The chapter analysis the impact of Covid 19 lockdown on the sample street vendors of urban areas of Nogaon district of Assam.

Chapter - 5 Summary and Conclusion

This is the last chapter of the study which includes the major findings of the previous chapters. It also includes certain suggestions which have been made on the basis of the findings.

Chapter 2

Review of Literature

The review of literature not only helps us to understand the different aspects of an issue but also helps us in recognizing the methodological and conceptual issues relevant to the study. Review of literature will make it possible for the researcher to collect information and subject them to sound reasoning and provide meaningful interpretation. Further it helps in identifying the research gap too.

This chapter focuses on the review of different research literatures relating to informal sector, street vending and impact of covid 19 on the informal sector carried out at state, national and international levels by both individual scholars and institutions. Here literature survey has been divided into three parts – firstly, review of literature on informal sector; Secondly, review of studies made by researchers on street vending and thirdly, some review of literatures have been done on studies relating to the impact of covid 19 lockdown.

1. Informal Sector:

In the third world countries, the informal sector was initially observed and studied, followed by an increased interest in developed countries (Gerxhani, 2004). The concept of informal sector was first introduced by Keith Hart (1970) in his article ‘Informal income opportunities and urban employment in Ghana’ where he defined informal sector as unregulated economic enterprises. He considered the informal sector as almost similar to all categories of self-employed individuals. Although Hart’s original definition of informal sector is limited to the concept of self-employed, the introduction of the concept of informal sector made it possible to initiate activities that were ignored in the theoretical models of development earlier (Swaminathan,

1991). After the work done by Hart, the precise research on informal sector was done by International Labor Office (ILO, 1972) in a report on employment in Kenya. Here informal sector is characterized by the avoidance of government taxes and regulation. That report defined informal-sector activities as those characterized by “(a) ease of entry; (b) reliance on indigenous resources; (c) family ownership of enterprises; (d) small scale of operation; (e) labour-intensive and adapted technology; (f) skills acquired outside the formal school system; and (g) unregulated and competitive markets”.

The National Sample Survey organization (NSSO) also conducted a separate informal sector survey in 1999-2000 and defined informal sector as “all nonagricultural enterprises, excluding those covered under the ASI, with type of ownership as either proprietary or partnership were treated as informal nonagricultural enterprises for the purpose of the survey.”

The National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganized Sector (NCEUS) in 2007 defined informal sector workers as “Informal workers consists of those working in the informal sector or households, excluding regular workers with social security benefits provided by the employers and the workers in the formal 11 sector without any employment and social security benefits provided by the employers.”

Sparks and Barnett, (2010) opined that Informal sector should really be seen as a vibrant, entrepreneurial part of the economy which can stimulate economic growth and job creation. Informal sector represents the dominant share of many sectors across the continent, especially in manufacturing, commerce, finance and mining. He opined that trade-related activities, including street vending, is the most common form of activity in Africa’s informal sector.

Sakthivel and Joddar (2006: cited in Bhuyan.Z. 2012) reported that India’s workforce comprises nearly 92 percent in the unorganized segment with the entire farm sector falling under the

informal category. Estimates suggest that in the nonfarm sectors, the share of informal sector gradually declines. Naik (2009) in his study mentioned that the estimated number of the informal sector workers in 2004 to 2005 was 394.9 million in India, which contributed 86.3 per cent of total workers. In rural areas, the share of the informal sector recorded 79.8 per cent with the share of male workers stood at 62.8 per cent compared to 37.2 per cent female workers. Around 60.6 per cent of informal workers were from Agricultural sector followed by Services (21.3%), Manufacturing (11.7%), Construction (6.0%) and Mining (0.4%). Within Services sector, the highest share of the informal workers was in trade activity (47.2%). The percentage share of the informal sector workers in the poor states was more than developed states which were highest in Bihar (93.6%) followed by Uttar Pradesh (92.2%), Rajasthan (91.2%) and Orissa (90.1%). There was positive and significant correlation between informal sector employment and the incidence of poverty in the states.

2. Street Vending:

Street vendors are identified as self-employed workers in the informal sector who offer their labour to sell goods and services on the street without having any permanent built-up structure (National Policy on Urban Street Vendors [NPUSV], 2006, p. 11). Various studies have already confirmed the fact that street vendors play a very dynamic role in the urban economy, providing necessary items, which are largely both durable and cost-effective, to average income-earning households at cheap and affordable rates.

Lyons, M. and S. Snoxell (2005 cited in Ndhlovu. P.K. 2011) opined that street vending is one of the most visible activities in the informal economy and is found everywhere in the world, both in developed and developing countries. Various studies have already confirmed the fact that street

vendors comprise one of the most marginalized sections of the urban poor. Street vending is usually correlated with low and insecure income.

Timalsina (2011) opined that rural migrants, having low level of education and skills, are forced to involve in the informal economy for their scanty livelihood. Street vending activities has become an easy access to the migrants' vendors. Those vendors see street vending as an opportunity for work and employment in the urban areas and take street vending as an earning opportunity and an opportunity to provide livelihoods to dependent family members.

Bhatt (2013) opined that there is substantial increase in the number of street vendors in the major cities around the world, especially in the developing countries of Asia, Latin America and Africa. As per ILO report 2002 street vendors account for 14.6 percent of total non-agricultural employment in south Africa, 9 percent in Guatemala, 8 percent in Kenya, 6 percent in Tunisia and 1-5 percent in Brazil, Costa Rica and Mexico. Bhatt mentioned that, Street vendors represent about 3 percent of total non-agricultural employment in India.

3. Impact of Covid 19 Pandemic:

Chakraborty (2020) in his article entitled "Covid 19 and Women Informal Sector Workers in India" examined the precarious nature of employment of women informal workers by using data from the Periodic Labour Force Survey (2018–19). It was found that the unequal gendered division of domestic chores existed even before the onset of the pandemic, but the COVID-19-induced lockdowns have further worsened the situation. In terms of paid employment, women tend to work in risky, hazardous and stigmatized jobs as front-line health workers, waste-pickers, domestic workers, but do not receive the minimum wages as specified by the government.

Roy et. al. (2020) in their study “Impact of Covid-19 crisis on Indian MSME sector: A study on remedial measures” found that manufacturers of both non-essential goods as well as essential goods suffered loss close to 50% during the pandemic. Furthermore, small businesses in India experienced a drastic contraction in business due to a negative growth rate of net sales. It was discussed that the strategy of providing facilities of credit would enable business entrepreneurs to adopt the latest technology such as e-commerce.

Kaur (2020) in his article entitled “Impact of Covid 19 on Indian Economy” mentioned that lockdowns have put negative impact on all the economies and all the production activities came to start still. Supply chain was stopped. Indian economy is no more an exception.

Deka (2020) in his study emphasis the need to understand problems of the street vendors of Guwahati city and the ways to tackle such disruptions which shall led to the better cause of the economy. The study has given an outlook to the street vendors’ life that has faced immense hardships and trouble to tackle the situation of an unplanned nationwide on-going Pandemic "Covid 19"situation. The state of business activity for street vendors to suitably adjust has undergone a vast change be it in relation to the decision to continue with their street vending activity and if the decision is to continue then their adjustments to the vending protocols to effectively run the business. In spite of the various problems persistent with the street vending activity and the new challenges that have been brought forward, most of the street vendors have shown their positive outlook to continue as a street vendor offering their services to the masses and successfully run their livelihood with an expectation that authorities which regulate the street vending activity would provide financial support and extend their contribution towards building the capabilities of the street vendors.

Tripathy et al (2021) in their study mentioned that Covid-19 pandemic lockdown has threatened MEs sector and any kick-start will essentially encounter with a number of insurmountable problems like, fund crunch, scattered and fleeting workforce, the communication barriers, supply-chain deadlock, stalling of import and export avenues and so on. Based on secondary sources of data, the authors tried to explore the role of MSMEs in the development of Indian economy; to examine the magnitude of loss sustained in different sectors due to the outbreak covid-19 pandemic; and to provide some useful suggestions in order to mitigate the problems.

Chapter 3

Socio Economic Characteristics of the Sample Street Vendors

Socio-economic status basically refers to economic and sociological combined total measures of an individual's or a family's social and economic position based on income, education, occupation, wealth etc. Mueller and Paral (1981) have defined socio-economic status as the relative position of a family or an individual within hierarchical social structure, based on their access to prestige, power and wealth. In this chapter, an in-depth study has been made to get an understanding of socio-economic pattern of street vendors in urban areas of Nagaon district of Assam. Here, the socio economic characteristics of the vendors based on primary data are explained. The respondents (N=45) were surveyed in which information regarding age, gender, religion, language, marital status, education level, household size etc have been collected in order to analyze the pattern of socio economic characteristics of the street vendors. The empirical findings along with the respective analysis are presented in the chapter.

Gender Composition of Street Vendors:

Gender composition is an important component of population analysis. Most of the analysis is based on gender composition of the population. Almost all population characteristics vary significantly with gender. There is preponderance of men in street vending activity in Nagaon district. It can be clearly stated from table 3.1 that only 2.22 percent of vendors are females and the remaining 97.78 percent are males.

Table 3.1

Distribution of Sample Street Vendors on the Basis of Gender

Gender	Number of Street Vendors	Percentage
Male	44	97.78
Female	1	2.22

Source: Field Survey

Age Structure of the Street Vendors:

Age structure is one of the most important measures of population characteristics. Population characteristics vary widely with age in different patterns. Table 3.2 provides the distribution of street vendors across various age categories. Age structure of the street vendors in Nagaon district shows that most of vendors lie between ages of 30 to 39. Almost one-thirds of the vendors lie within the age group of 30 to 39 years. The table 3.2 below shows that 17.77 percent and 15.55 percent of the vendors have ages between 40 to 49 and 50 to 59 respectively. Only 4.44 percent of the vendors have age below 20 years. Whereas 13.33 percent of the vendors have age above 60 years.

Table 3.2

Age Distribution of Sample Street Vendors

Age	Frequency	Percentage
Up to 19 Years	2	4.44
20 to 29 Years	9	20

30 to 39 Years	13	28.88
40 to 49 Years	8	17.77
50 to 59 Years	7	15.55
60 Years and More	6	13.33

Source: Field Survey

Marital Status:

Marital status is an important determining factor of employment in informal sector, particularly in street vending. Table 3.3 indicates that majority of the vendors are married (86.67 percent) and only 13.33 percent of the vendors are unmarried.

Table 3.3

Marital Status of the Sample Street Vendors

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
Married	39	86.67
Unmarried	6	13.33

Source: Field Survey

The higher proportion of married vendors in street vending activity is indicative of the situation that street vending activity is comparatively more convenient to the married vendors of both the sexes to sustain the family due to its flexibility of time.

Religious Composition of the street vendors:

Religious composition of a working population is another important measure of social characteristics. Religious composition of population varies widely across space and nature of work.

Table 3.3

Percentage distribution of religious composition of the street vendors

Religion	Frequency	Percentage
Hindu	19	42.22
Muslim	26	57.78

Source: Field Survey

If we look into the distribution of street vendors by religion in the study area, it is found that major proportion of street vendors in Nagaon are Muslim which constitutes 57.78 percent of the vendors followed by Hindus (42.22 percent).

Caste Composition of the street vendors:

Caste is a form of social stratification characterized by endogamy, hereditary transmission of a style of life which often includes an occupation, ritual status in a hierarchy, and customary social interaction and exclusion based on cultural notions of purity and pollution (Lagasse, Paul, ed, 2007). It is found from the field survey that most of the street vendors belong to the General category i.e. 77.77 percent, followed by OBC i.e. 13.33 percent and SC i.e. 8.88 percent.

Table 3.4

Caste Composition of the street vendors

Caste	Frequency	Percentage
General	35	77.77
OBC	6	13.33
SC	4	8.88

Source: Field Survey

Level of Education of the Street Vendors:

For the attainment of higher levels of productivity, it is important to study the extent to which education and employment are matched. Moreover education level of the population is related with vulnerabilities and insecurities in street vending (Thesis).

Table 3.5

Education	Frequency	Percentage
Up to Class 4	7	15.55
5 to 7	17	37.78
7 to 10	12	26.67
HS	6	13.33
Graduate	3	6.67

Source: Field Survey

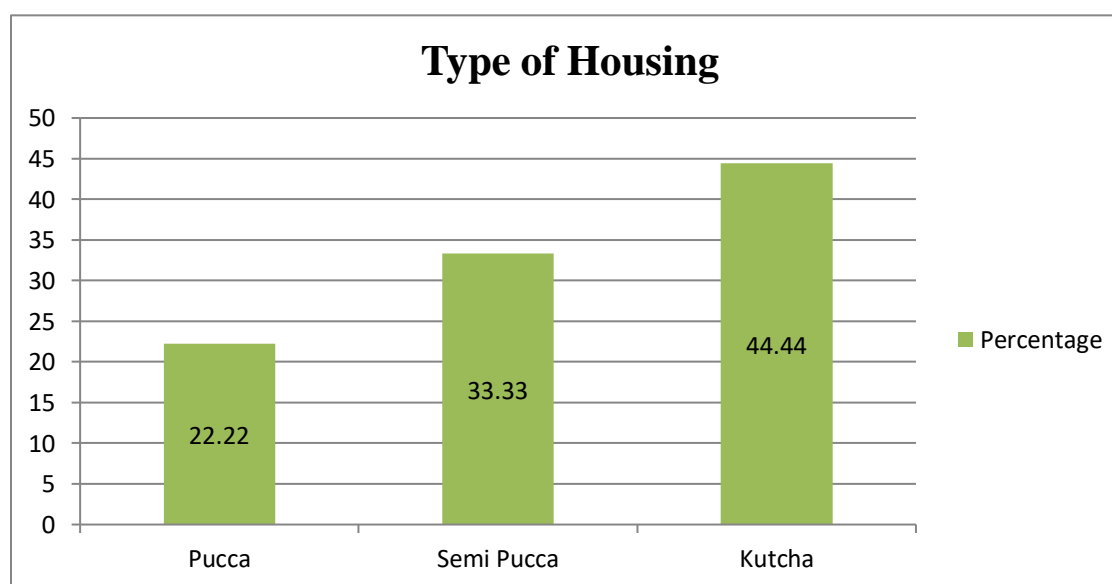
The educational standard of the surveyed street vendors is depicted in table 3.5. From the table it can be inferred that maximum proportion (37.78 percent) of the street vendors has education level between class 5 to 7. Very few street vendors reported to have reached the higher

secondary and graduate level. On the other hand 15.55 percent of the vendors have education up to class 4.

Type of Housing:

The Figure 3.1 reveals that percentage of sample street vendors having pucca houses is only 22.22; again percentage of sample street vendors having semi pucca houses is 33.33 and percentage of households having kutcha houses is 44.44. However, it is found that only 60 percent street vendors have their own houses on the other hand, the remaining 40 percent doesn't have their own houses.

Figure 3.1



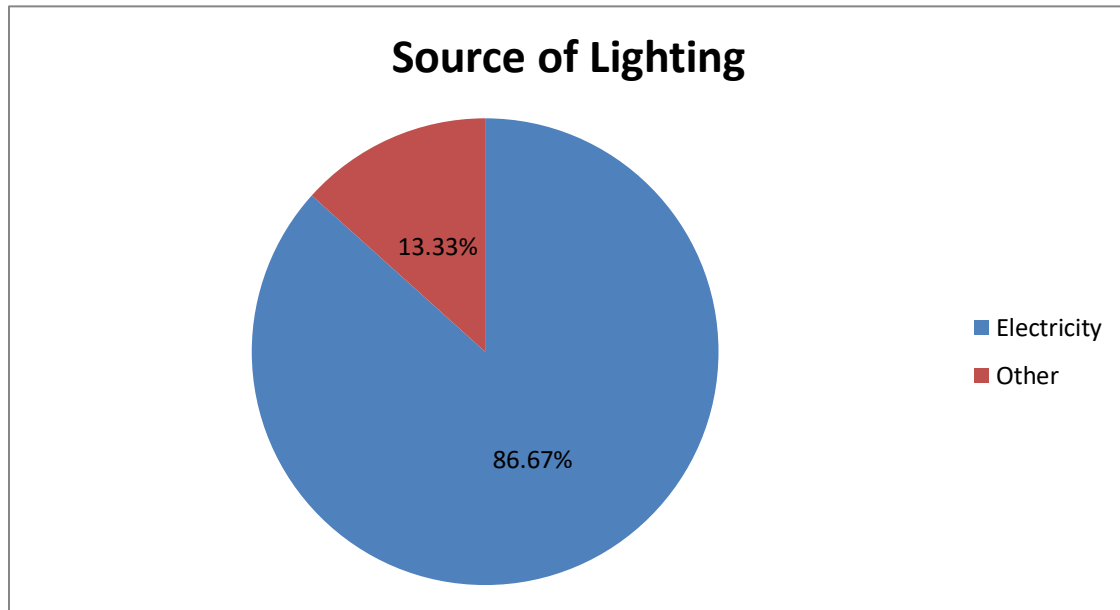
Source: Field Survey

Source of Lighting

Use of electricity is a very important socio economic variable and sometime it is used as an indicator of socio economic progress. The figure 3.2 shows the source of lighting of the sample street vendors. It can be seen from the below figure that most of the samples use electricity.

86.67 percent i.e. 39 street vendors use electricity as the main source of lighting. On the other hand, only 13.33 percent i.e. 6 street vendors use other source as the main source of lighting.

Figure 3.2



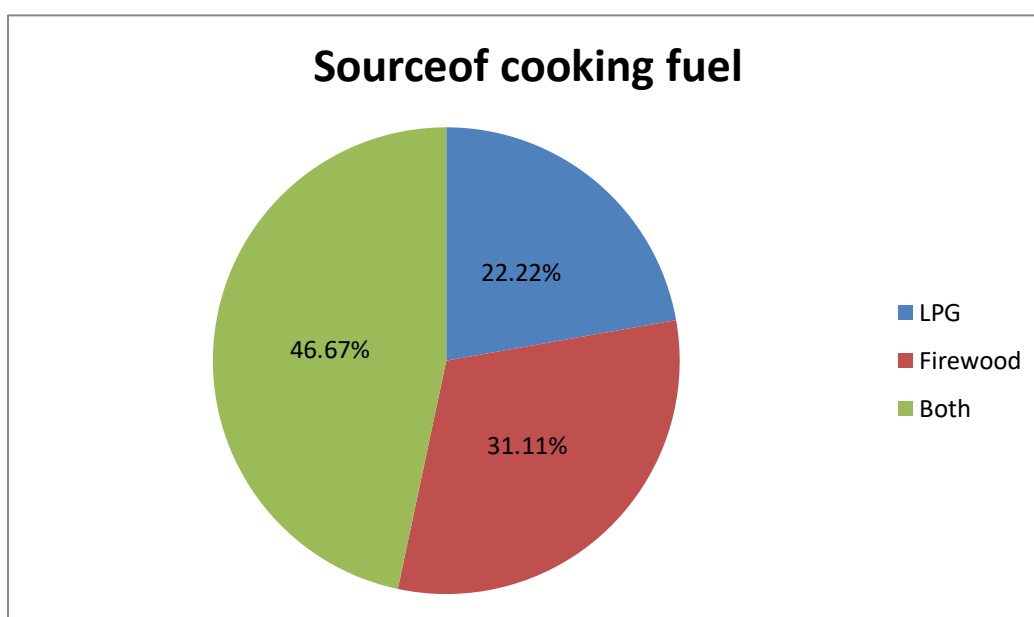
Source: Field Survey

Use of Cooking Fuel

Another important socio-economic indicator is the source of cooking fuel as the use of any cooking fuel can cause risk of health of women and children in the form of air pollution. So it is necessary to use such kinds of cooking fuels that emit less smoke and not pollute the air. The distribution of the sample street vendors' households on the basis use of different cooking fuels is represented in Figure 3.3. It can be seen from the figure that 22.22 percent of the sample households use L.P.G as fuel for cooking. On the other hand, 31.11 percent households use

firewood for their cooking purposes. Again, 46.67 percent sample households use both L.P.G and firewood as cooking fuel. Thus we can say that most of the people are still using firewood as a source of cooking energy.

Figure 3.3



Source: Field Survey

Source of Drinking Water

Survey data show that all the sample street vendors i.e. 100 percent vendors (45 households) use Tube Well as the main source of drinking water.

Toilet Facility

From the figure 3.4 it can be seen that only 51.11 percent households have sanitary toilet. On the other hand, the remaining households i.e. 48.88 percent households have pit toilet.

Table 3.6

Distribution of the Sample Street Vendors on the basis of Toilet

Type of Toilet	Frequency	Percentage
Pit Toilet/ Kutchha Toilet	22	48.88
Pucca/ Scientific Toilet	23	51.11

Source: Field Survey

Type of Products vended:

Street vendors have different product line to commence their activities while some are engaged as vegetable vendors, a sample of the vendors sold poultry products, and fruits. Vendors selling fast food products were also regarded for the survey. The below chart shows the categorization of the street vendors' product line they are engaged in where 20 percent sold fruits, 20 percent sold vegetables, 22.22 percent sold fast food and 6.67 percent sold poultry.

Table 3.7

Types of Products

Products	Frequency	Percentage
Vegetable	9	20
Fruits	9	20
Cloth	1	2.22
Fast food	10	22.22
Fish/Meat	3	6.67
Others	13	28.89

Source: Field Survey

Nature of Job: The below table reveals that most of the sample street vendors i.e. 86.67 percent have taken street vending as full time job and their main source of income. On the other hand, the remaining 13.33 percent have taken street vending as part time.

Table 3.8
Nature of Job

Nature of Job	Frequency	Percentage
Full Time	39	86.67
Part time	6	13.33

Source: Field Survey

Conclusion

Socio-Economic factors have huge impact on the livelihood status of the people. In the present chapter it is observed that socio economic status of the sample street vendors is not adequate in most of the aspects like education, housing condition, sanitation, cooking fuel etc.

Chapter – 4

Covid 19 Lockdown and Its Impact on the Street Vendors of Urban Areas of Nagaon District of Assam

The outbreak of Covid 19 pandemic has created a mass disruption in the economic activities. The series of lockdown to control the pandemic situation had adverse impact on the livelihood of the street vendors as stated by cent percent of the respondents who were considered for the present study.

Table 4.1

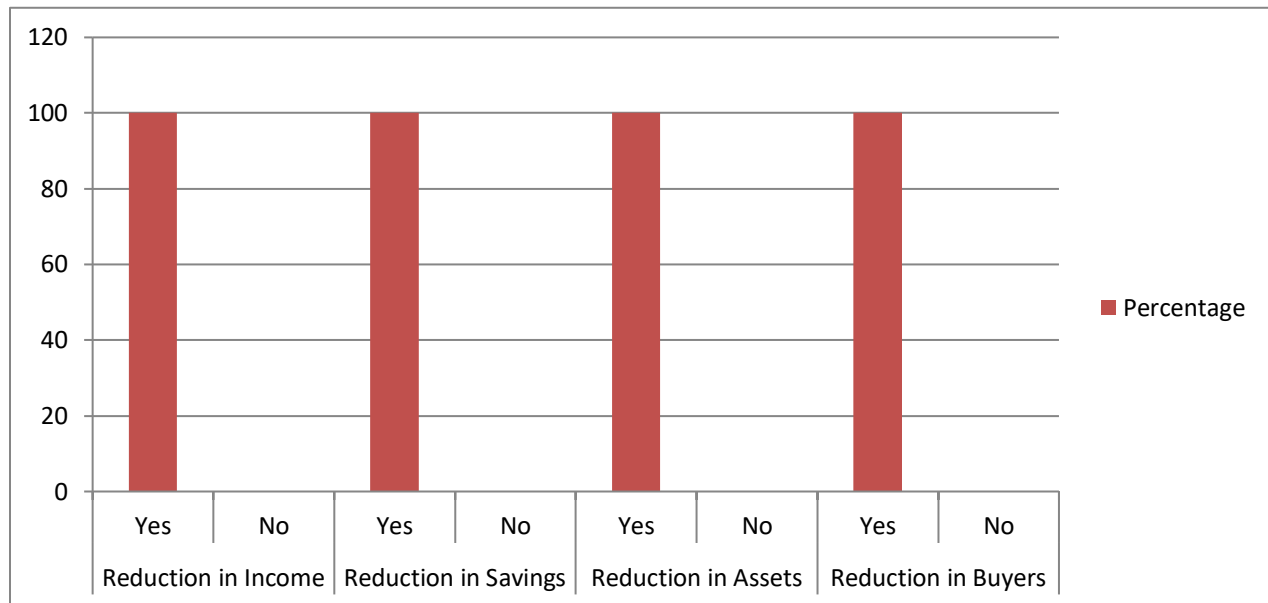
Effect During Lockdown

Particulars	Number of Respondents		Percentage of Respondents
Reduction in Income	Yes	45	100
	No	0	0
Reduction in Savings	Yes	45	100
	No	0	0
Reduction in Assets	Yes	45	100
	No	0	0
Reduction in Buyers	Yes	45	100
	No	0	0

Source: Field Survey

Figure 4.1

Effect During Lockdown



Source: Field Survey

From the above table and figure it can be seen that 100 percent sample street vendors reported that there was loss of Income which was resulted from the complete shutdown of Business there by increasing their level of debt and reduction in the savings to avail the basic necessities of life. Again 100 percent street vendors reported that there was a reduction in the number of per day buyers and loss of Assets post covid lockdown.

Effects on the Debt status: As there was loss of Income which was resulted from the complete shutdown of business activities thereby increasing their level of debt and reduction in the savings to avail the basic necessities of life. In the study area it was found 26.67 percent sample street vendors have taken loan during lockdown and after lockdown also in order to meet the basic needs for survival.

Table 4.2

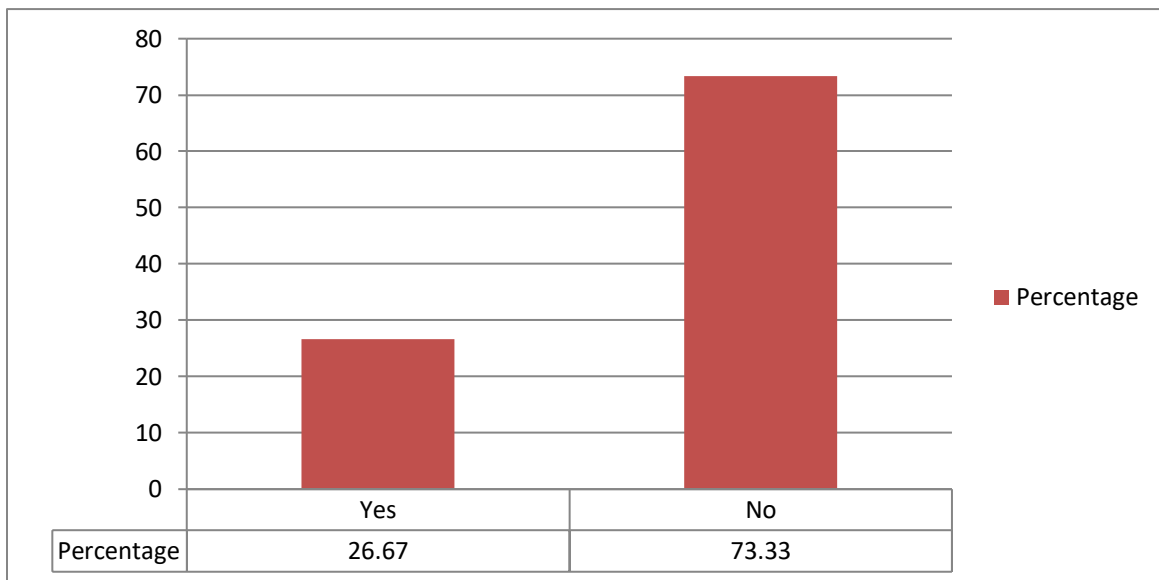
Status of Loan

Loan Taken	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	12	26.67
No	33	73.33

Source: Field Survey

Figure 4.2

Status of Loan



Source: Field Survey

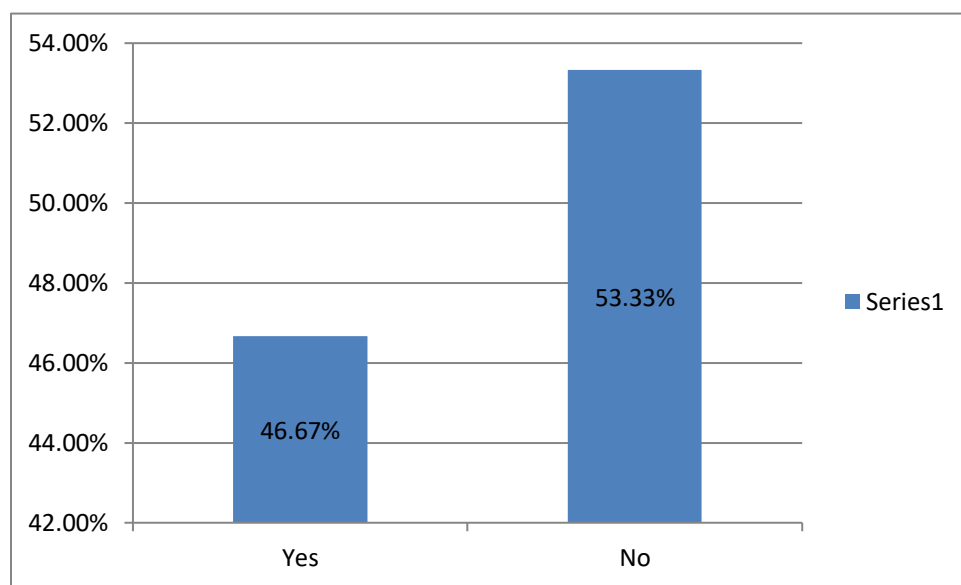
Access to Wholesale Market:

Wholesale is the activity of buying and selling of goods in large quantities and therefore at cheaper prices, usually retailers who then sell them to the public. During lockdown a disruption was created as the retailers found difficulties in accessing the wholesale market. In the

study areas 21 sample street vendors i.e. 46.67 percent street vendors had reported that they found difficulties to access wholesale market during the lockdown. On the other hand, the remaining 53.33 percent sample street vendors had reported that they didn't find any difficulties during the time of lockdown.

Figure 4.3

Difficulties in Accessing Wholesale Market



Source: Field Survey

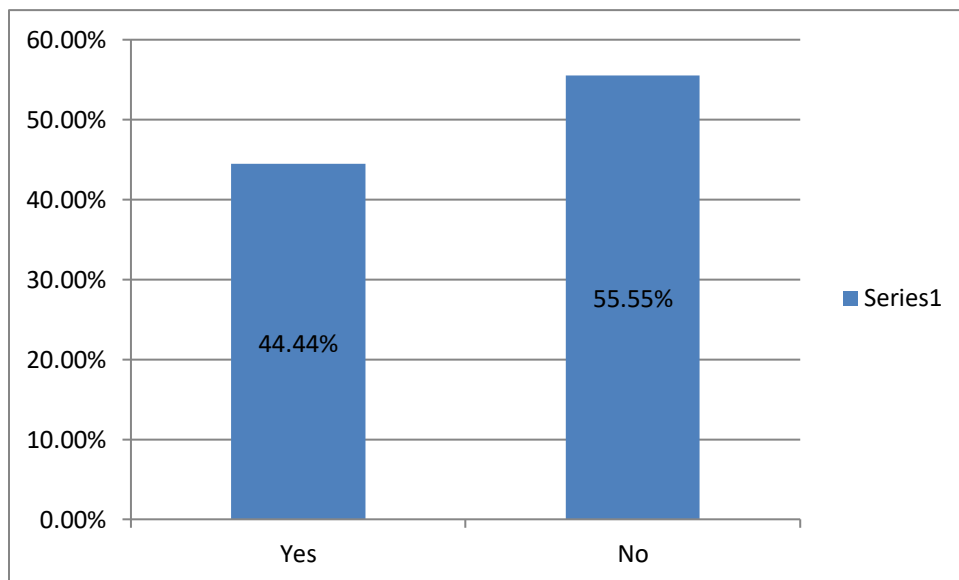
Cost of Doing Business:

The cost of doing business is any expense a business incurs while in the process of conducting business. A cost of doing business could be a direct cost, like raw materials, or an indirect cost, like building security. Regardless of type, such costs must be considered carefully by managers, business owners, and anyone involved in running a company, since the amount of such costs will play a large role in determining if a company is profitable or not. In the study area 20 sample street vendors i.e. 44.44 percent have reported that there was an increase in the cost of doing

business during the time of lockdown. On the other hand, the remaining 55.55 percent have reported that there was not any increase in cost of doing business.

Figure 4.4

Increase in the Cost of Doing Business



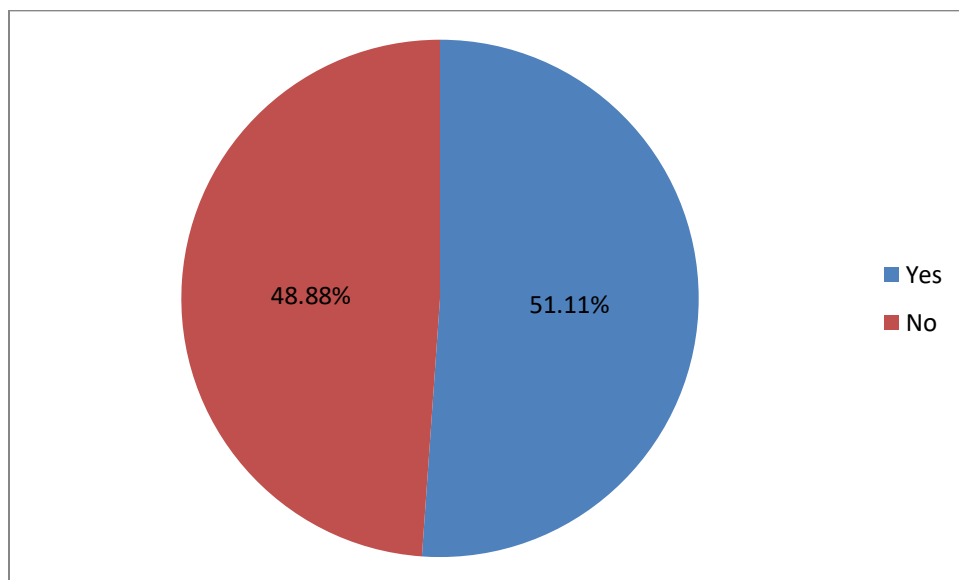
Source: Field Survey

Hunger Issue during Lockdown:

India faces a challenging trade-off between Covid-19 and hunger. The lockdown caused severe economic damage, which in-turn threatens to worsen the hunger situation due to lower earnings and higher unemployment among vulnerable sections of the population. Although a lockdown was probably necessary, the focus on preventing hunger deaths was at par with the focus on preventing Covid-19 related deaths. In the study area an attempt has been made to estimate the hunger issue faced by the sample street vendors. In the study area 51.11 percent respondents have reported that they faced hunger issues during the time of covid 19 lockdown while the remaining 48.88 percent reported that they have not faced any hunger issue during the time of lockdown.

Figure 4.5

Faced any Hunger Issues During Lockdown



Source: Field Survey

Conclusion:

The Covid 19 situation has taken into grasp every single aspect of an economy. The outcome of the lockdown imposed due to the pandemic situation is worse than it can be interpreted. Many street vendors had to shut down their business for which their financial stability was severely hampered and they faced losses in income which subsequently increases their debts so as to meet the basic necessities of life. Scarcity of foods stocks was one of the immediate effects of lockdown on the entire section of street vendors considered for study. The greater section of the street vendors who faced extreme hardship during the time of lockdown were the one who took street vending as a full time profession since they were in a situation where their only source of earning livelihood was greatly hampered.

CHAPTER - 5

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This chapter reviews the major findings of the present research and suggests certain policy measures. Section 5.1 reviews the major results obtained in the previous chapters. Again section 5.2 provides the policy suggestions.

5.1 Summary of the Major Findings –

Chapter wise major findings of the study are outlined below –

The first chapter is an introductory one. This chapter summarizes the role of informal sector specifically the street vendors on the economy of developing countries along with the effect of Covid 19 lockdown on them in general. After that brief description about the study is provided followed by the objectives of the study; methodology of the study; limitation and future scope of the study. The second chapter reviews the exiting literature relating to Covid 19 pandemic and its impact on the economy.

The third chapter is related to the socio economic and demographic features of the sample street vendors. The major findings of this chapter are –

1. There is preponderance of men in street vending activity in Nagaon district. It can be clearly stated from table 3.1 that only 2.22 percent of vendors are females and the remaining 97.78 percent are males.
2. Age structure of the street vendors in Nagaon district shows that most of vendors lie between ages of 30 to 39. Almost one-thirds of the vendors lie within the age group of 30

to 39 years. The table 3.2 below shows that 17.77 percent and 15.55 percent of the vendors have ages between 40 to 49 and 50 to 59 respectively. Only 4.44 percent of the vendors have age below 20 years. Whereas 13.33 percent of the vendors have age above 60 years.

3. It is found that majority of the vendors are married (86.67 percent) and only 13.33 percent of the vendors are unmarried.
4. It is found that major proportion of street vendors in Nagaon are Muslim which constitutes 57.78 percent of the vendors followed by Hindus (57.78 percent).
5. It is found from the field survey that most of the street vendors belong to the General category i.e. 77.77 percent, followed by OBC i.e. 13.33 percent and SC i.e. 8.88 percent.
6. Maximum proportion (37.78 percent) of the street vendors has education level between class 5 to 7. Very few street vendors reported to have reached the higher secondary and graduate level. On the other hand 15.55 percent of the vendors have education up to class 4.
7. Percentage of sample street vendors having pucca houses is only 22.22; again percentage of sample street vendors having semi pucca houses is 33.33 and percentage of households having kutcha houses is 44.44. However, it is found that only 60 percent street vendors have their own houses on the other hand, the remaining 40 percent doesn't have their own houses.
8. 86.67 percent i.e. 39 street vendors use electricity as the main source of lighting. On the other hand, only 13.33 percent i.e. 6 street vendors use other source as the main source of lighting.

9. Survey data show that all the sample street vendors i.e. 100 percent vendors (45 households) use Tube Well as the main source of drinking water.
10. Most of the sample street vendors i.e. 86.67 percent have taken street vending as full time job and their main source of income. On the other hand, the remaining 13.33 percent have taken street vending as part time.

The forth chapter analysis the impact of Covid 19 lockdown on the sample street vendors of urban areas of Nogaon district of Assam.

1. It is found that 100 percent sample street vendors reported that there was loss of Income which was resulted from the complete shutdown of Business there by increasing their level of debt and reduction in the savings to avail the basic necessities of life. Again 100 percent street vendors reported that there was a reduction in the number of per day buyers and loss of Assets post covid lockdown.
2. In the study area it was found 26.67 percent sample street vendors have taken loan during lockdown and after lockdown also in order to meet the basic needs for survival.
3. In the study areas 21 sample street vendors i.e. 46.67 percent street vendors had reported that they found difficulties to access wholesale market during the lockdown. On the other hand, the remaining 53.33 percent sample street vendors had reported that they didn't find any difficulties during the time of lockdown.
4. In the study area 20 sample street vendors i.e. 44.44 percent have reported that there was an increase in the cost of doing business during the time of lockdown. On the other hand, the remaining 55.55 percent have reported that there was not any increase in cost of doing business.

5. It is found that 51.11 percent respondents have reported that they faced hunger issues during the time of covid 19 lockdown while the remaining 48.88 percent reported that they have not faced any hunger issue during the time of lockdown.

Recommendation:

The Covid 19 Pandemic has almost hampered all the sections of the economy. The sudden outbreak of the situation which took the whole world into its grasp also had a negative effect on the street vendors and so most of them who use to have a regular source of income were cut off from their livelihood. There had been times during the lockdown period where the street vendors were deprived from the basic necessities of life. Although the service industry has resumed in the economy, in the post lockdown phase, still some restrictions are imposed by the Government hence it is most important for the Government to lay concerns over the matter and impose restrictions in a deliberate and conscious manner. Also financial support is most important by the Government Institutions to such street vendors as they had to bear a huge amount of losses resulting in increased debts. Social security in relation to these street vendors is also a matter of concern to be looked after in order to help the street vendors to effectively perform their vending activities. Restrictions by the Municipal Organizations should also be minimized to help the street vendors in their cause and normalcy should be brought in the market with caution in a full-fledged manner.

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