



Amelioration of Food Insecurity by Enhancing of the Quality Control and Socio-Economics aspects of Street Vended Foodstuffs in Delhi

Sandeep Kumar Sharma¹, Mamta Chhabra Sharma² and Santosh Kumar Yadav³

¹Department of Chemistry, Rajdhani College, University of Delhi, New Delhi-110015, India

²Department of Chemistry, Aditi Mahavidhyalaya, University of Delhi, Delhi-110039, India

³Department of Mathematics, Aditi Mahavidhyalaya, University of Delhi, Delhi-110007, India

(Corresponding author: Mamta Chhabra Sharma)

(Received 15 April, 2017 accepted 10 June 2017)

(Published by Research Trend, Website: www.researchtrend.net)

ABSTRACT: Industrialization, Urbanization and relocation have considerably altered the ways of living and eating. Due to long periods of absence from home and hence non-availability of home cooked foodstuff, the easily available street foods in the cities and small towns prove to be of great relief. After long hours of travelling, there is little time to cook leading to massive requirement for inexpensive, convenient food near schools and work places. Improvement in quality of Street foods can contribute significantly to aspect of food security and nutrition if healthy food is accessible and affordable to most people. Through this there is generation livelihood to many people. Women can take up such innovative startups. Poverty, as majorly the people dependent on street foods belong to low income groups, is another indicator for food security and malnutrition amongst urban population which were thought as rural snags. However, advent of informal food sector can cause health issues if there is improper preparation and handling of the stuff. The objective of this communication is to understand the socio-economic aspect and quality restraints of street foods in urban locations of Delhi.

Keywords: Street vended food; Industrialization; Urbanization; Food security; socio-economic aspects; nutrition

I. INTRODUCTION

As a consequence of rapidly increasing industrialization and urbanization, there are better job opportunities in urban areas, urban areas attract a large proportion of population for employment settlement of this section in outer areas of big cities. Due to modernization and lesser time, demand for fast food and street food is growing day by day. The deliciousness, affordability and easy availability of street foods make it extremely prevalent among all age groups of the society. There is a complete lack of awareness about the hygiene and health issues involved [1,2].

A. Informal and unorganized sector of Street food vendors

In accordance with National Policy on Urban Street Vendors, 2004, a Street Vendor is broadly defined as a person who offers goods for sale to the public without having a permanent built up structure but with a temporary static structure or mobile stall (or head load). Street vendors may be stationary by occupying space on the pavements or other public/private areas, or may be mobile in the sense that they move from place to place carrying their wares on push carts or in cycles or baskets on their heads, or may sell their wares in moving trains, bus etc. (National policy on urban street vendors, 2004) [3].

The Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) of the United Nations defines Street Foods as *ready-to-eat foods and beverages prepared and/or sold by vendors and hawkers especially in streets and other similar public place* (FAO,1988) [4]. In the category of street vended foods there are diverse items as meat, fish, fruits, vegetables, grains, cereals, frozen produce and beverages. Categories of preparation included foods without any preparation, ready to eat food and food cooked on site. Diverse ready to eat food items are available in India. These usually include cut fruits, omelets, Stuffed Paranthas, Puri Alloo, Bread Pakoras, and lighter snacks like tea, biscuits etc. Street Food Vending in urban areas especially in metropolitan cities like Delhi has become an integral part of the urban lives and ethos. [5]. According to Government sources, there are estimated 1 crore total number of street vendors in the country which are approximately 2 per cent of the population of a metropolis. Vending services diverse from mobile carts to fixed stalls and food centers. Street food vendors make a very large contribution to the national economy in a very unorganized way. Street food vending is a means of livelihood. However, this sector is much unorganized. For decades, together this has occupied an uncertain place in the fields of development studies including urban development studies and business studies.

From a structuralist view point, these workers have no apt status, being neither capitalist nor urbanized working class. In terms of the development debate, therefore, this sector tends to have been viewed as an intermediary stage between rural peasantry and urban employment. Part of this sector is hidden from official scrutiny. There is an urgent need to bring this informal sector workers into the framework of the law to empower and enable these workers to benefit from the protection of the state and its institutions.

A new dimension has been added to the concept of traditional street food in developed/ developing countries. Food streets/ food centres are emerging as new tourist attractions. In majority of tourist destinations abroad there are food streets offering exotic local foods.

With proper handling street foods can contribute significantly to food security and nutrition by being physically and economically accessible to most people. It is an activity that can provide employment to many, while providing nutritious, inexpensive and tasty food to millions of working women, men and children. In these proposed studies, researcher wish to address all these three aspects of contamination, food security and generation of livelihood through street vended food stuff.

B. Challenges of Street food vending

Despite of the fact that street food is good in taste and easily availability, street food vendors are often poor, uneducated and lack hygiene practices and hence street foods are supposed to be a major public health risk (WHO, 2010) [6]. According to WHO (1989), *food handling personnel play important role in ensuring food safety throughout the chain of food production and storage. Mishandling and disregard of hygienic measures on the part of the street vendors may enable pathogenic bacteria to come into contact with and in some cases survive and multiply in sufficient numbers to cause illness in the consumer* [7].

The issue of cleanliness and related public health of vending locations have always been a matter of concern. Organizational developments have been very limited as compared to other sectors, with restricted access to potable water, washrooms, refrigeration and washing and facilities for the waste generated. The main reason behind such challenges of controlling the majority of street food vending operations is their multiplicity, movement and provisional nature. Much work has been done by Mishra, (2007), Sheth, (2005) in this direction [8, 9].

Leftover foods are not handled properly in majority of cases. Such unhealthy conditions may attract insects and rats thereby increasing the chances of food contamination and consequently multiplying the risk of food borne hazards (Mensah, *et al* 2002) [10]. There is complete lack of awareness amongst consumers about

their role in the prevention of food borne diseases Byrd-Bredbenner *et al* (2007) [11]. Further here is a complete lack of general realistic knowledge about the microbiological status or the exact and accurate epidemiological significance of many street vended foods. Street vendors lack awareness about basic food safety measures.

Policy issues

Street food vendors must be Regulated and Governed through acts. Vendors should be provided with identity cards. And assistance should be provided for their registration. There should be availability and reliability of data, financial provisions, monitoring and quality for street vendors. The site of the vending unit should be at a place duly approved by the local authorities and not blocking traffic or pedestrians or near unhygienic locations. Considering important aspects of public health, sanitation and food safety, there is a need for training of vendors on the basic principles of sanitation, manufacturing quality and safety besides consumer rights and education. This would enable them enable them to voluntarily adopt the hygienic habits to improve the quality of food served.

Supply of electricity and installation of modern electrical equipments/fittings, Upgradation/Installation of Water supply and drainage system, Waste Disposal system, Public utilities etc are other aspects to be looked into. Vendors should have frequent health checkups and be covered under insurance. Grant upto 25% towards meeting the cost of a scientifically designed safe & hygienic food cart/kiosk should be made available. Promotional Activities like Food Festivals should be encouraged. Some acts including FOOD SAFETY STANDARDS ACT – 2011 is already there. Its implementation is the need of the hour as already the time has lapsed. FSSA Act very clearly describes Food Contamination, Food Safety and Hygiene for street food vendors. This included:

- Clean vending premises
- Food handling, storage & service standards
- Safe food from infections

But in the Act there is an omission of the will to pursue a rightful need of promotion of safe food. Though regulation was the focus it avoided street vendors licensing questions. There has been no mention of promotion of standards health and social protection concerns of millions of unorganized workers in the Food processing industries. (NASVI_presentation) [7].

REFERENCES

- [1]. Bhowmick, S. K. (2005). Street Vendors in Asia: A Review. *Economic and Political Weekly*: 2256-2265.
- [2]. Pannu, P., Kataria, D., Aggarwal, S. (2016). Consumer Perspective towards Safety of Street Food, *DU Journal of Undergraduate Research and Innovation* Volume 2, Issue 2 pp 80-90.

- [3]. *National Policy on Urban Street Vendors*, (2004). Department of Urban Employment & Poverty Alleviation, Ministry of Urban Development & Poverty Alleviation, Government of India, 2004.
- [4]. Food and Agricultural Organization. *Street Foods*. Report of an FAO expert consultation, Indonesia, 5-9 December 1988.
- [5]. Thakur, C.P., Mehra, R., Narula, C., Mahapatra, S., Kalita, T.J.; (2013). Food Safety and Hygiene Practices Among Street Food Vendors in Delhi, India, *International Journal of Current Research*, Vol. 5, Issue, 11, pp. 3531-3534.
- [6]. Basic Steps to Improve Safety of Street Vended Food, WHO, 2010. (http://www.who.int/foodsafety/fs_management/No_03_StreetFood_Jun10_en.pdf, accessed on 21st May, 2017).
- [7]. Health surveillance and management procedures for food handling personnel, WHO technical report series, 785, WHO, Geneva, 1989.
- [8]. Mishra, S. (2007). Safety aspects of street foods: A case study of city of Varanasi. *Indian Journal of Preventive Social Medicine*, volume 38 No. 1 & 2.
- [9]. Sheth, M., Gurudasani, R., Mudbidri, R. (2005). Identification of Hazards in Street Foods of Vadodara, India. *Indian j of Nutr Dietet*; 42: 266-78.
- [10]. Mensah, P., Yeboah D., Darko, O. and Ablorde, A. (2002). Street foods in Accra, Ghana: how safe are they? *Bulletin of the World Health Organization*, 80: (546-554).
- [11]. Byrd-Bredbenner, C., Maurer, J., Wheatley, V., Schaffner, D., Bruhn, C., and Blalock, L. (2007). Food safety self-reported behaviors and cognitions of young adults: results of a national study. *Journal of Food Protection*, 70: (1917-1926).