

## **A STUDY OF STREET VENDING ACTIVITIES IN THE SOUTHEAST ZONE OF SURAT**

*Bhasker Vijaykumar Bhatt<sup>1</sup> & Ayushi Dineshchandra Jariwala<sup>2</sup>*

*<sup>1</sup>Assistant Professor, Faculty of Civil Engineering, Sarvajanik College of Engineering and Technology,  
Surat, Gujarat, India*

*<sup>2</sup>Research Scholar, Town & Country Planning II, Sarvajanik College of Engineering and Technology,  
Surat, Gujarat, India*

### **ABSTRACT**

*Street vending is pervasive across the globe, especially in developing nations. It is a significant activity related to the informal sector in urban areas. In India, the Largest concentration of street vendors in Mumbai has 0.25 million, followed by Kolkata is having 0.2 million street vendors. This informal activity offers employment opportunities and livelihoods for urban weak, but the urban local authorities consider it to be an illegal activity. As per National Policy on the Urban Street Vendor, 2004 and 2009, Model Street Vendors (Protection of Livelihoods and Regulation of Street Vending) Bill, 2009 - some initiatives are taken by the government. Other agencies, such as NASVI and SEWA, have played significant roles in encouraging suppliers to develop policies for street vendors. The paper discusses a survey conducted in the South-East administrative zone of Surat city administered by the municipal corporation. It was about understanding the perception and the extent of the street vending activity in the zone. The findings from the questionnaire-based survey are exciting and reveal many untold facts about the ground situation.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Street Vending, Surat Municipal Corporation, Town Vending Committee (TVC)*

---

### **Article History**

**Received: 14 Feb 2018 | Revised: 07 Mar 2018 | Accepted: 14 Mar 2018**

---

### **INTRODUCTION**

Modernist town planners tend to think that the unregulated land use, informal housing and the informal economy are problems that must be solved (Boonjubun, 2017). In India, due to industrialization, urban migration and decline of the formal segment, street vending and hawking have become one of the principal means to make a living for the urban poor in India (Bandyopadhyay, 2009). Nowadays, street vending is a significant source of employment for many urban deficient because it requires low skills and small financial inputs.

Today, modern street vending plays a vital role in the urban economy, as a source of jobs, revenue and 'value added' to the economy. Street vending provides a flexible link in commercial supply chains, gives vitality to urban streets and provides affordable goods and services for many urban residents. Yet, street vending exacerbates congestion at busy sites.

Street vending is an urban phenomenon both in the developing and developed countries. Street vending is not documented as a legal activity as per most of all the governments across the world, and government officers see these vending activities as inflammation in the development of the city. It has been found that the contribution of the informal sector to GDP is 29% in Latin America and 41% for Asia (Indira, 2014).

Several laws and municipal regulations are consistently concocted to control road vendors as a way for city governments across the world to fight urban space battles with street vendors. Whenever eviction drives are conducted their goods are impounded or wrecked. It is necessary to manage street vendors into unions that allow vendors to continue their activities to address the urban challenge. The government of India published a national policy on street vendors in 2009 and the informal workforce in India is estimated to be about 370 million workers nearly 93% of the total workforce (Indira, 2014).

### **Types of Hawkers**

A street vendor is broadly defined as a person who offers goods for sale to the public at large without having a permanent built up structure from which to sell (National Association of Street Vendors of India – NASVI, 2014).

By type of business, vendors are categorized as

- **Pottery:** Vendors who usually sell their commodities sitting on the ground for an extended period.
- **Larry:** Vendors who basically mobile vendors are selling items like vegetables, fruits and so on.
- **Mobile:** In terms of mobility vendors can be classified as Mobile that moves from one place to another on the same day; Generally, younger men and women are involved in this type; Mobile vendors deal with both semi and non-perishable products; Vendors sell to other hawkers or small shops and consumers; Mobile vendors are small-scale wholesalers.
- **Semi-Static Units:** The vendors erect a structure which is removed at the end of the day.
- **Static Units:** Static which is more like a stall or Gumti that is used for selling commodities or providing services and fixed in a particular location.

### **SURAT CITY PROFILE**

Surat is an Indian port city previously known as Suryapur. Surat is located in the western part of India in Gujarat state, along the river Tapi. The population of Surat is as per census 2011 around 4.47 million; density is 136.80 ppha. Surat has seven zones and 38 electoral wards. The sex ratio of the Surat is 756 females per 1,000 males. The literacy rate of the Surat is 87.89% in which the literacy rate of male is 91.22%, and female is 83.44%.

As an economic base, in Surat, various industries like textile manufacturing, trade, diamond cutting and polishing industries, Zari works, chemical industries and petrochemical and natural gas-based industries are there. Mumbai – Ahmedabad corridor passes through Surat city. National Highway 8 passes within 16 km of the SMC boundary and is one of the busiest interstate trunk routes in the country. As per Census 2011, Surat is the 8th number most populated city in India. Surat city is the economic capital of Gujarat state located in the western part of India in Gujarat state along with river Tapi. Surat is a second largest city in Gujarat state. Surat is the eighth largest city and the ninth largest metropolitan area of India. Expansion of Surat's municipal limit in the year 2006 saw around four lakh persons added to the

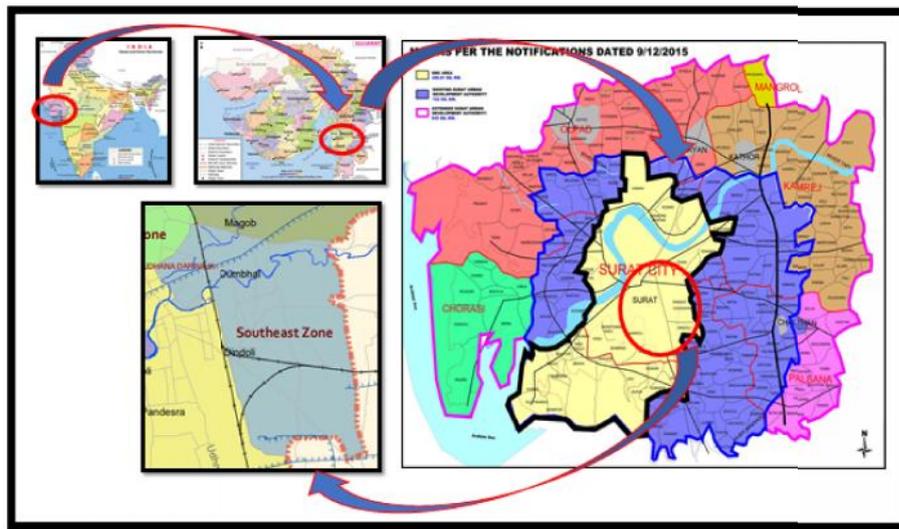
city's population. The city has 47% migrants from other districts of Gujarat and an equal number of migrants from other states of India. The city's demographic profile will get another boost with Surat-Navsari twin city project and development of Outer Ring Road taking place. It is positioned as the fourth quickest developing urban city in the entire world.

**Table 1: Population of Surat City (Persons in Millions)**

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Estimated Population</b>	4.47	4.67	4.88	5.10	5.33	5.57	5.82	6.08	6.35	6.64	6.94

(Source: Surat Municipal Corporation, 2017)

Surat is a city in the Indian state of Gujarat. It is the administrative capital of the Surat district. The city is located 284 km South of the state capital, Gandhinagar; 265 South of Ahmedabad; and 289 km north of Mumbai.



(Source: (Maps of India, 2017))

**Figure 1: Location of Study Area**

**STREET VENDORS POPULATION**

Vendors are often regarded as a public nuisance. They are accused of depriving pedestrians of their space, causing traffic jams and having links with anti-social activities.

**Table 2: Street Vendors Population in India**

Country/State/City	Total Population	No. of Street Vendors
India	1.324 billion	10 million
Delhi	18.98 million	4,50,000
Mumbai	18.41 million	2,50,000
Ahmedabad	5.571 million	1,00,000
Kolkata	4.497 million	1,50,000
Surat	4.462 million	40,000

(Source: (National Association of Street Vendors of India – NASVI, 2014))

The SMC range will be partitioned into seven zones; via Central, North, South, East, West, South-West and South-East. The most extreme slums are in the zone, which has the commercial enterprises. This zone is South-East, where 30,051 households are living in slums. There is a total of 322 slums in the SMC limit out of which 71 slums are located in central or state Government land, 106 slums are on private land, and 145 slums are situated on public land. It means that a third of the slums is on private lands and another 22% are on the state government lands where the

problems of giving land tenure would be higher than giving tenure to the slums on SMC lands. The poor represent an essential element of the urban labor force and contribute substantially to total productivity and labor market competitiveness (Mahadevia & Shah, 2010). Due to the high presence of slum areas in South East Zone, slum dwellers mostly start street vending as a source of livelihood because it requires less skill, low investment and easiness. Because of street vending, urban life in the South-East Zone is deteriorating. As per the municipal officers, SMC is trying to develop some areas, roads and construct various projects, but these all attempts may get failed due to the street vending activities. Hawkers start selling their goods on new roads or BRTS passage. Henceforth, to prevent the vending problem, regulation of street vending is necessary.

**Table 3: Zone Wise Slum Detail in Surat City**

Zone	Area (in Sq. km.)	Total Population	Slum Population	Total No of Households	Slum Households
Central	8.18	4,08,760	49,323	1,53,638	9,889
South West	111.912	3,47,447	33,982	1,14,734	7,502
South	61.764	6,95,028	76,025	2,51,079	17,887
<b>South East</b>	<b>19.492</b>	<b>7,48,304</b>	<b>1,47,050</b>	<b>2,21,643</b>	<b>30,051</b>
East	37.525	11,37,138	90,992	3,13,105	21,334
North	36.363	7,05,163	58,293	2,01,978	13,541
West	51.279	4,24,986	25,993	1,30,068	5,665

(Source: Surat Municipal Corporation (SMC))

In all the cities covered, street trade is extensive and a source of employment and income for many urban dwellers. However, in most of the countries, it is unaccounted and unrecognized in national economic statistics. In the past, the street trade, which is seen as an underground activity, which affects the formal economy of the nation. In this sense, there have been conflicts with the city authorities regarding licensing, site of operation, taxation, working conditions, and sanitation. Street vendors are not evenly spread across the city, but concentrated in specific locations. This type of concentration would then cause traffic accidents and increase the levels of vehicle-generated air pollution (Reyes, 2013).

To release traffic congestion on the road, Surat Municipal Corporation has tried some way like 'Zero daban route' or 'Zero tolerance zone' or 'Zero encroachment route' on some road. On the zero dabanroute, street vending is not allowing, and if lorries or pathari collected in eviction activity by SMC, it would be returned after 21 days by taking affidavit or some proof. If the same thing is happening the second time, the department of vending may not return seized things to its vendors.

## **STREET VENDORS ORGANIZATIONS**

Some cities are working with street vendors' organizations to formulate innovative policies, programs and practices. Membership-based organizations help street vendors navigate their relationship with the authorities, build solidarity, and solve problems with other vendors. Several such organizations have developed innovative ways to work with cities to keep the streets clean and safe while gaining a secure livelihood for vendors. Some of the examples are discussed in subsections mentioned herewith:

### **SEWA (Self Employed Women's Association)**

Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) is a trade union registered in 1972 in India.

**Table 4: SEWA (All - India Membership of the Year 2016)**

State	Members
Gujarat	6,99,194
Bihar	86,000
Murshidabad	12,000
Delhi	26,000
Madhya Pradesh	3,50,490
Uttar Pradesh	1,00,450
Kerala	18,000
Dehradun	15,000
Rajasthan	25,200
Maharashtra	710
Assam	746
Meghalaya	530
Nagaland	1,960
Jammu and Kashmir	315
Odisha	3,826
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,39,621</b>

(Source: (Self Employed Women's Association, 2016))

It is the organization of poor, self-employed women workers who earn a living through their own labor or small businesses. Around 60% of the informal sector workforce comprises of women. SEWA members are workers who have no fixed employee-employer relationship and depend on their own labor for survival.

#### **NASVI (National Association of Street Vendors of India)**

NASVI is an organization working for the protection of the means of support of thousands of street vendors across the country. NASVI was registered in 2003 under the Societies Registration Act of 1860.

Regarding recognition among street vendors, the membership of NASVI is increasing day by day. In the year 2014, NASVI has 7,07,695 members from 1,054 organizations from the states of Assam, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Delhi, Gujarat, Goa, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Manipur, Maharashtra, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tamilnadu, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Uttaranchal, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Punjab, and Meghalaya, Telangana, Himachal Pradesh, and Jammu and Kashmir. (National Association of Street Vendors of India – NASVI, 2014).

In the year 2004 to 2005, the implementation of the national policy was an impetus for the organization and is reflected in the high membership. Similarly, there has been a significant boost in membership after enactment of Act in 2014. The boost has also happened in the increase in membership of our affiliates across India (National Association of Street Vendors of India – NASVI, 2014).

#### **WIEGO (Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing)**

WIEGO (Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing) are a global network engrossed in securing livelihoods for the working poor, especially women, in the informal economy. Informal workers need voice, visibility, and validity. WIEGO creates change by building capacity among informal worker organizations, expanding the knowledge base and influencing local, national and international policies. Informal workers are primarily categorized into four sectors – domestic workers, home workers, waste pickers and street vendors. Generally, informal workers wish to accomplish and have the below-listed aspects.

- Economic rights;
- Legal identity and social recognition as workers;
- Social rights & social protection;
- Voice and bargaining power; and,
- Organization

WIEGO seeks to increase the **voice** through stronger organizations of the working poor in the informal economy and by promoting their representation in policy-making and rule-setting processes. It provides **visibility** by helping to develop and improve the official labor force and other economic statistics on informal employment and the informal economy.

## METHODOLOGY

The study carried out street vendors survey on eighteen the Zero Vending Routes. It is essential to include street vendors in the survey. For the survey, the sample size is very important and essential to get a proper result. For deciding the sample size, a formula used is of Hogg and Tannis 2009.

$$n = \frac{m}{1 + \frac{m-1}{N}}$$

n, m, and N = the sample size of the limited, unlimited, and available population, respectively m is denoted by,

$$m = \frac{z^2 \times p \times (1 - p)}{\epsilon^2}$$

p = the value of the population proportion that is being estimated = 0.5

= the sampling error of the point estimate = 0.05

Confidence Interval (%)	Z Value
99	2.576
98	2.327
95	1.96
90	1.645

N stands for the available population. In this case, the available population of street vendors is 1,512. Take confidence interval as 95% so the value of Z obtained from the table is 1.96. by the equation, the value of m is to be 384.16. from the equation of n, the sample size is for 307.

### Street Vendor's Survey

The survey directed to street vendors would help with collecting data on the **basic vendor profile, their access to services, awareness of rules, regulations and organization** and their **trade pattern**. It was administered to a representative sample of all the street vendors in the area. Approximately 307 street vendors were surveyed in South East Zone. Their responses were recorded and tabulated. Questions about the age, sex, education, residence and area of work helped establish their profile. Questions were framed to identify unions. The focus was also laid on the public amenities to which vendors already have access to and in the absence of such amenities, their expectations in that field were recorded.

The trade pattern of the vendors was also recorded, which would help in regulating them. Questions that aimed to highlight the awareness (or the lack of it) of existing rules and regulations regarding street vendors at the corporation level were also incorporate into the questionnaire.

## DATA ANALYSIS

Considering the nature of the trade of street vending, as well as the characteristics of a developing area, the different segments of the survey were designed with the aim of discovering how best to manage street vendors.

### Basic Profile of Street Vendors

The survey revealed that 81% of the 307 respondents are within the 18-50 years’ age-bracket. The number of female street vendors found is 26% against 74% male. It is seen that most of the female vendors are illiterate and had fewer skills. There are many organizations who include female vendors to upgrade their level so if female vendors join the organization they will get benefits from the organization.

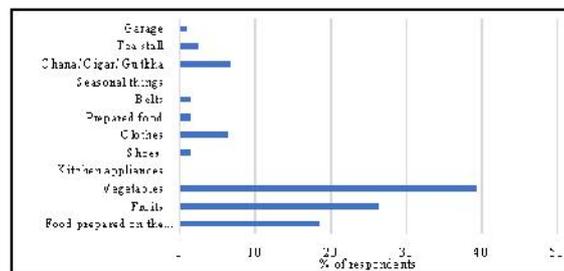


Figure 2: Types of Services

### Education

Of the respondents, 79.5% had reported on their ability to read and write. This is a contributing factor to their joining this trade as a street vendor, as many street vendors commented since alternate employment is hard to come by under the circumstances. Half of the respondents studied in primary, secondary and higher secondary, but because of unemployment and economic weakness, they are forcefully joining the vending activity to earn livelihoods.

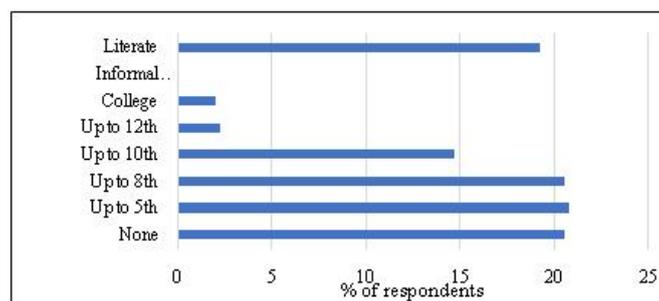
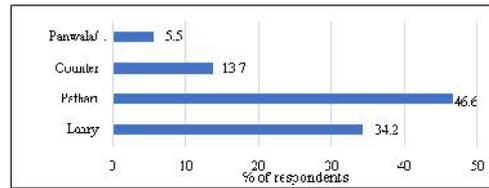


Figure 3: Education of Respondents

### Mode of Vending

There are different modes of vending through which vendors sell their goods and amenities like Larry, Pathari, Counter, Gallas. 47% of the vendors use Pathari as a model of vending. It was observed that the majority of the street vendors sell fruits, vegetables and food, while the rest are involved in other things like clothes, belts, seasonal things, garage, and like that. Furthermore, 60% of these street vendors have been here for longer than five years.

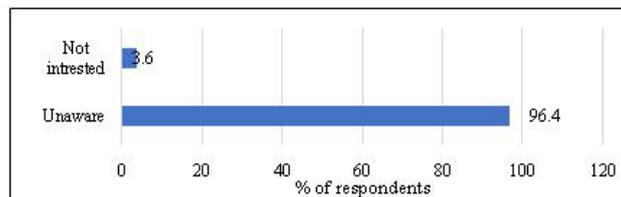


**Figure 4: Mode of Vending**

**Awareness of Unions**

Unions play an important role in providing internal support for this vending community. The union is a means of obtaining financial aid, as well as organizing legal support and procuring rights.

The street vendors in Surat city are not organized into unions as of now. This is because street vendors are not aware of the unions. However, this also implies that the vendors do not have an organized means of legalizing and formalizing themselves. Of the total respondents, not a single vendor was part of any unions.

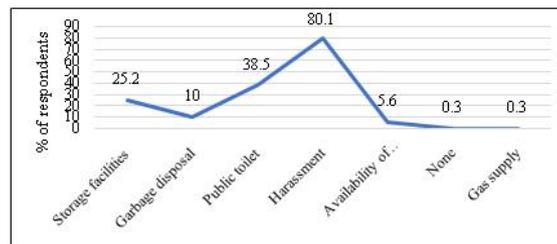


**Figure 5: Reason for Not Joining Unions**

Almost all the street vendors are unlicensed in the South-East zone of Surat city. This is a key reason for their unawareness of the Implementation regulations regarding certain stipulations to which the licensed street vendors must adhere. These regulations pertain to the measurements of the stall and general hygiene of the stall. The regulations generally prevent questioning of their trade by the police.

**Problem They Faced/ Nature of Harassment**

Street vending activity is accounted as illegal activity so that street vendors may face so many problems like harassment, water availability, gas supply, storage space, public toilet and so on.



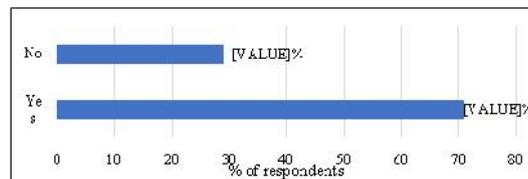
**Figure 6: Problem Faced by Respondents**

From the respondents, Majority of the vendors faces Harassment problem because whenever eviction is conducted, the stalls, fruits, vegetables, food and all things get wrecked. Only 0.3% of the respondents say that they have no problem doing this activity.

**Willingness to Relocate**

The survey showed that nearly 80% of the respondents would return to their original area of vending if they were to be evicted. In keeping with the Corporation’s attempt to move street vendors to hawking complexes and hawking zones,

the results were interesting. The survey revealed that 71% of the respondents are ready to move either hawking complex or hawking area. 57% responded enthusiastically to moving to a regulated hawking complex.



**Figure 7: Willingness to Relocate**

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

Surat is a city of migrants because it is an industrial city and that too fast growing one. Due to urbanization and industrialization, the people start migrating from rural to the urban area in search of jobs. But migrants had not proper skills and sufficient education to gain effective jobs. So, they start street vending for the livelihood and also it requires less finance and skill. Street vendors use public space for their work and sell goods and services at affordable prices. The government counts, street vending activity as a nuisance because it may create traffic problems, obstruction to pedestrians and spread unhygienic condition in the city.

In Surat city, there are only 40,000 street vendors registered as per the National Association of Street Vendors of India – NASVI, 2014 but in reality, the number is more than that. In Surat Municipal Corporation, there is no provision of the Town Vending Committee. As per the Street Vendors (Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vending) Act, 2014, there must be the provision of the Town Vending Committee for the regulation of street vending activities and to manage as well as solve the problems of street vendors. The available data of street vending is only until the year 2003. After the year 2003, no data has been recorded. SMC decided various 'Zero encroachment route' considering some specific criteria. In the South-East zone, around 18 roads are zero encroachment route on which no vending is permitted.

The street vendor survey threw into sharp relief the unorganized nature of the existing street vendors. This is mainly because of the yet unstable inflow of street vendors in this fast-developing area. The respondents encountered have faced eviction on a large scale. This study reveals that the best way for the planners to address this issue is to formalize the street vendors by issuing licenses. This will go a long way in giving these workers' space within the legal framework, as well as easing the regulation of street vendors for the government itself. Finally, it is necessary to recognize their rights as citizens and provide basic amenities for them to carry on a livelihood that significantly contributes to the working of the Indian economy.

Street vending organization plays a vital role in managing street vendors. The street vendor relocation policies should be designed in such a way that the city government and the street vendor organization can both participate in. The city government may set the principal rules, and the vendor organization becomes the mechanism that implements and monitors these rules. This organization-oriented approach may represent an alternative way to solve the relocation problems. With the help of strong vendor organizations, the city government may be able to design street vendor relocation plans that are more of the local conditions and that are more likely to succeed.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors are grateful to SMC officer *Er. C. Y. Bhatt* (Deputy Commissioner), *Er. Deepam Patel* (Assistant engineer), *Er. N. V. Trivedi* (Deputy engineer) and *Er. Pratik Patel* (Assistant engineer), *Er. Ketan Kapadia* (Officer-in-charge Shops & establishment branch), *Er. Alpesh Chaudhari* (Assistant engineer), *Er. Gaurang Desai* (Assistant Town Planner) of Surat Municipal Corporation. The authors are also thankful to *Dr Vaishali Mungurwadi*, Principal and *Prof. (Dr.) Pratima A. Patel*, head, Faculty of Civil Engineering, Sarvajanic College of Engineering and Technology. Especial thanks are express to *all faculty members and friends* associated with Town and Country Planning department of the Sarvajanic College of Engineering and Technology.

## REFERENCES

1. *Bandyopadhyay, R. (2009, 04 25). Hawkers' Movement in Kolkata, 1975-2007. West Bengal.*
2. *Boonjubun, C. (2017, 06). Conflicts over streets: The eviction of Bangkok street vendors. Finland.*
3. *Indira, D. (2014). A study on the organizing of street hawking business. International Journal of Management and Commerce Innovations, 9.*
4. *Mahadevia, D., & Shah, P. (2010). Welfare Extension by Local State and Social Protection: Surat. Ahmedabad: An NRC for Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation, Government of India.*
5. *Reyes, R. M. (2013). Crime, Street Vendors and the Historical Downtown in Post Giuliani Mexico City. International Journal of Criminology and Sociology.*
6. *National Association of Street Vendors of India – NASVI. (2014). Retrieved from <http://nasvinet.org/newsite/category/about-us/>*