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# *City, Informality and Poverty: The Polarization of the Street Vendors in Dhaka City, Bangladesh*

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## **Abstract**

The neoliberal society is witnessing a radically unequal and explosively unstable urban world where urbanization is hardly connected with industrialization. The present society portrays a vast humanity warehoused in shantytowns and that is also exiled from the formal world economy but the victory of informality where the process of capital accumulation is dispossession. 'Dhaka' the capital of Bangladesh is regarded as the highest densely populated city of the world with 47,400 people living in sq km thus became the focus of my study area as thousands of people are involved and involving in the informal economy. In this research paper, the area of interest falls on '*Street vending*', the most common urban informal sector of the city. Literature reviewed from global, Asian and regional perspectives to have a greater view about informality with solid theoretical framework of Davis, Castells, Sassen, Harvey, Humphrey, Bayat and Soto. After the engagement of the street vending activities they face series of problems such as harassment, eviction, confiscation and sometimes forced to provide goods in undervalued prices and so on. The State mechanism in most of the cases is responsible to create all of these problems and in this regard police and municipal authority play the key role. Without finding any other sources of subsistence as well as their livelihood they are going through the process of vulnerabilities and sometimes with negotiation. This is the politics of informality. Being the right claim citizen, their rights are constantly violated by the state and associates which make them urban marginal group. Without starting the rehabilitation project for these large segment people it's not possible to stop informality. It's the duty of the government to fulfill their demand and include them in the main stream of the society to save them from marginal condition of living.

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Keywords: state, city, informality, poverty, street vendors, polarization, marginality, Neoliberalization, imperialism, Dhaka City.

## **1. Introduction**

In the age of globalization Neoliberalization has bestowed the world cities with a concentration of surplus population working in informal sectors. This surplus urban population engaged in informal economy is a specific characteristic of dependent urbanization occurring in the third world countries. Dependent urbanization incorporates over-urbanization and parasitic cities with low standard of living and high rates of unemployment. Nevertheless, the governments of third world countries run by the interests of the IMF and World Bank cannot create formal employment for these large segments of urban populations. It is the informal sector backed by economic liberalization that has given the unemployed urban population unprotected, unregulated and self-employed informal jobs for maintaining their survival in the era of post modernity. Dhaka city is also the urban center of lots of informal employments such as street vending, begging, personal services, and rickshaw pulling and so on. A large segment of the population coming towards the city to find the means of subsistence and after the failure of getting formal jobs; they started involving themselves in the informal sectors as a minimum means of subsistence.

## **2. The scenario and theorizing of cities, informality, poverty and polarization of the informal workers**

In the era of post-modernity, the hegemony of neoliberal economy dominates each city of the world. It would be impossible to list a city in the world where informality and poverty is not existed and the influence of neoliberal hegemony is absent. The lower segment of the people are the worst sufferers of this neo-liberal economy as most of them lack the skills to pit themselves with the newly emerging economies as thus without finding other options they are forced to involve themselves in the informal and flexi working activities. Davis (2006) aimed at presenting the origin and evolution of a structurally and biologically surplus population from old to new imperialism. He found the rapid growth of urban population devoid of industrial growth and the supply of informal jobs. Davis accounts economic liberalization for the rise of urban poverty in global slum resulting from the above situation. Sassen (1991) introduces us to the growing informal economic sector in New York, London and Tokyo under economic

restructuring of world economy. But she found differences in the informal sectors of these three countries which reveal that globalization is not articulated in the same way in every city. Castells (1978) discussed the history of the process of urbanization to highlight the present problematic of the development of societies. He found the notion of development interlinked with the notion of dependence. He presented the development of the dependent urbanization in underdeveloped regions due to social formation and mode of articulation. He also sorted over-urbanization and parasitic cities leading to the concentration of population in same space with a low standard of living and a high rate of unemployment. Humphrey and Hossain (2005) combined the themes of rapid urbanization in developing world, the informalization of work, the concentration of poverty in cities, urban sustainability and limits to urban governance. Their findings reveal that rapid urbanization especially through rural-urban migration is occurring without industrialization leading to a concentration of poverty and informalization of work in the city. Harvey (2009) revealed how the right is shaping in the city and city life falls in the hand of few political and economic elite. Harvey found that neoliberal policies using state apparatus disburse few resources in few upper and corporate capital class and snatch away individual liberty to access to urban resources. On the other hand, Soto (1989) found that in Peru 48% of the economically active population and 61.2% of work hours are devoted to informal activities which contributes 38.9% of the gross domestic product (GDP) recorded in the national accounts. Here 91,455 street vendors dominate the retail distribution of popular consumer goods in the capital and how they maintain a little over 314,000 relatives and dependents. According to the ILLD's estimates some 294,000 people are directly dependent on such trade, either as vendors or as their dependent relatives. A further 20,000 people are indirectly dependent on it as employees of those who supply the street vendors with goods. Soto (1989) have pointed out that in many countries, especially poor countries, a heavy burden of taxes, bribes, and bureaucratic hassles drives many producers into an informal sector.

Chukuezi (2011) finds that Street food vending offers easy access to inexpensive food as well as creates jobs for urban poor households. Although the vendors encounter problems like lack of security, harassment by government agents for tax payments, obstruction and registration, assistance is needed in the form of intervention to alleviate their problems and improve on their welfare. Almost 73% street vendors are harassed by government agents in Nigeria. '*Street Vendors in Asia: A Review*' by Bhowmik (2006) attempts to examine recent research done on street vendors in Asia with the aim of assessing the magnitude of street vending in different countries and the composition of the vendors. Further, it collates information on the extent of

unionization of the vendors and other organizations, such as non-government organizations (NGOs), self-help organizations (SHOs), advocacy groups, etc., that work for their welfare. Advani (1998) reveals that street vendors, artisans, masons, construction workers are among the self-employed people in India, as they belong to the informal or unorganised sector, they enjoy little or no legal benefits. They also do not have access to finance as easily as organised industry. Additionally, a number of laws are interpreted or applied in a manner that adversely affects their interests. Positive laws, benefits and schemes are not available to street vendors because they are unorganised or not recognised. Negatively, existing laws regulating trade and business, licensing of self-employed, law and order, public nuisance, obstruction etc. are all applied to the detriment of street vendors and their interest and right to carry on trade and business peacefully. In the Context of Bangladesh, Huq and Mallik (2009) attempt to gain insight into the business of street food vendors; highlight the problem areas and identify some key factors that positively affect their sales revenue. It has been found that business experience, and initial capital is two key factors that positively affect sales revenue. Formal education, however, does not have any significant impact on business performance. The paper also concludes that lack of security and problems in the supply of raw materials are two major problems as perceived by the vendors. Aktaruzzaman and Deguchi (2010) aimed to clarify the real urban street environmental situation in Dhaka City reflected by street vendors. They create problems in urban areas to produce street garbage and crowd the footpath. Local authorities evict them as a solution but at the same time, a large number of urban dwellers become jobless which creates a new problem in urban areas.

In the context of Dhaka, Hossain (2005 in his study *Poverty, Household Strategies and Coping with Urban Life: Examining "Livelihood Framework" in Dhaka City, Bangladesh*) also found that most of the slum population (52%) was involved in low-paid self-employment due to scarcity of formal sector job to employ the unskilled or semi-skilled urban poor. The urban poor are mostly employed in self-managed low-paid jobs in the informal urban sectors like rickshaw pulling (29.4%), street vending and selling (22.8%), construction of work (6.4%), driving and transport work (4.6%), factory work (5.2%), personal servicing (7.6%). Ahmed and Hossain (2011) revealed that the street dwellers (driven by poverty and natural disasters) had to adopt a very precarious and humiliating life on the streets devoid of all basic amenities of life, under constant threat of eviction and harassment by the law-enforcing agencies and hoodlums. They were hard-working when considered in terms of working hours, but without proportionate return due to their involvement in low paying informal sector which is also irregular. They failed to improve their lot even after five or more years of street-living. According to them housing,

food, and lack of jobs were the three most common problems for which they sought assistance.

It is in this context this paper aims to explore the problems and challenges faced by the informal sectors workers. It also highlights the vulnerabilities faced by the street vendors, their eviction and harassment record by the street mechanism and other local apparatus and finding out the causes of the involvement in informal sectors like street vending activities. Here the research questions that has been arises are, is there any vulnerability faced by the street vendors? Whether the informal sectors workers face any problems or not? And what sorts of problems they face regarding harassment, eviction, and monitorial transition? Data used for this paper were collected from different poor disbursements of Dhaka city located in Nielkhet, Gulistan, Farmgate, Kawran Bazar and New market. Settlements from these areas were selected due to the greater concentration of the poor informal workers in these areas. A total number of 400 respondents were selected for interviewing with a semi-structured questionnaire which covers the issues of households, residence, employment vulnerabilities and marginality of the poor people.

The cities of the world are taking new shapes constantly with the passages of time. The traditional features of cities are no longer to exist as the cities that we are seeing now are mostly dominated with newer forms of economies and modern facilities. The living standard and the functions of cities altered in a greater extent. Now cities are reshaping around the work place of the informal-flexi workers, poverty is taking new shapes in the cities, and the process of polarization of the lower segment of the people takes new dimension in the neoliberal cities. Scholars have studied some of the issues of economic restructuring, transformation of work, social polarization, and marginal condition of the workers. Like Harvey (2009) purports that neoliberal policies integrate the interests of the state and the corporate class. They use money power and state apparatus to disburse urban resources in the hand of the few upper and corporate capital class. Thus, the right to the city falls in the hand of the private or quasi-private interests to shape the process of urbanization. The right to the city in the hand of the political and economic elite contributes to the urban informalization by absorbing surplus population created by the process of urbanization. He states that, 'Urbanization has always been, therefore, a class phenomenon, since surpluses are extracted from somewhere and from somebody, while the control over their disbursement typically lies in a few hands' (2009: 24).

Davis (2006) postulated that new imperialism created a mass of humanity structurally and biologically redundant to global accumulation and the corporate matrix. This structurally and biologically surplus population

incorporates the urban informalities living in urban slums of the developing countries. These developing countries are termed as 'Failed Nation' by Davis. They are failed as they have no capacity to run and regulate their own countries. Rather they are governed by IMF and World Bank. Davis (2006) quoted UN Habitat (2006) report which said that, the collapse of formal urban employment in the developing world and the rise of the informal sector is seen as a direct function of liberalization.... Urban poverty has been increasing in most countries subject to structural adjustment programs, most of which are deliberately anti-urban in nature

Davis (2006) divided the urban informal into two categories namely, Urban informal engaged in multinational production system (e.g. part time, overtime workers) and Urban informal engaged in peripheral economies (street vending, begging, crime, personal services). He also asserts that, 'instead of being a focus for economic growth and prosperity, the third world cities have become a dumping ground for a surplus population working in unskilled, unprotected and low wage informal service industries and trade' (2006: 174).

Soto (1989) argued that in order to survive, the migrants became informals. If they were to live, trade, manufacture, transport, or even consume, the cities new inhabitants had to do so illegally. Such illegality was not antisocial in intent, like trafficking in drugs, theft, or abduction, but was designed to achieve such essentially legal objectives as building a house, providing a service, or developing a business. Once the vendor has invaded the location and established a pitch these agreements can develop into a strong alliance of interests, when affected residents and the authorities must dealt with. As a result, the threat of eviction always hangs over street vendors, especially when there is traffic.

The lifelong struggles of floating social clusters-migrants, refigures, the unemployed, the under employed squatters, street vendors, street children and other marginalized groups whose growth has been accelerated by the process of economic globalization as is viewed by Bayat (2004). Moreover, all of them tend to challenge the notions of order, the modern city and urban governance espoused by the third world political elites. The survival strategy model implies that although the poor are powerless, they do not sit around waiting for the fate to determine their lives. Rather they are active in their own way to ensure their survival. Thus, to counter unemployment or price increase they of resort to engaged different informal activities like theft, street begging, street vending, prostitution, or the reorientation of consumption patterns.



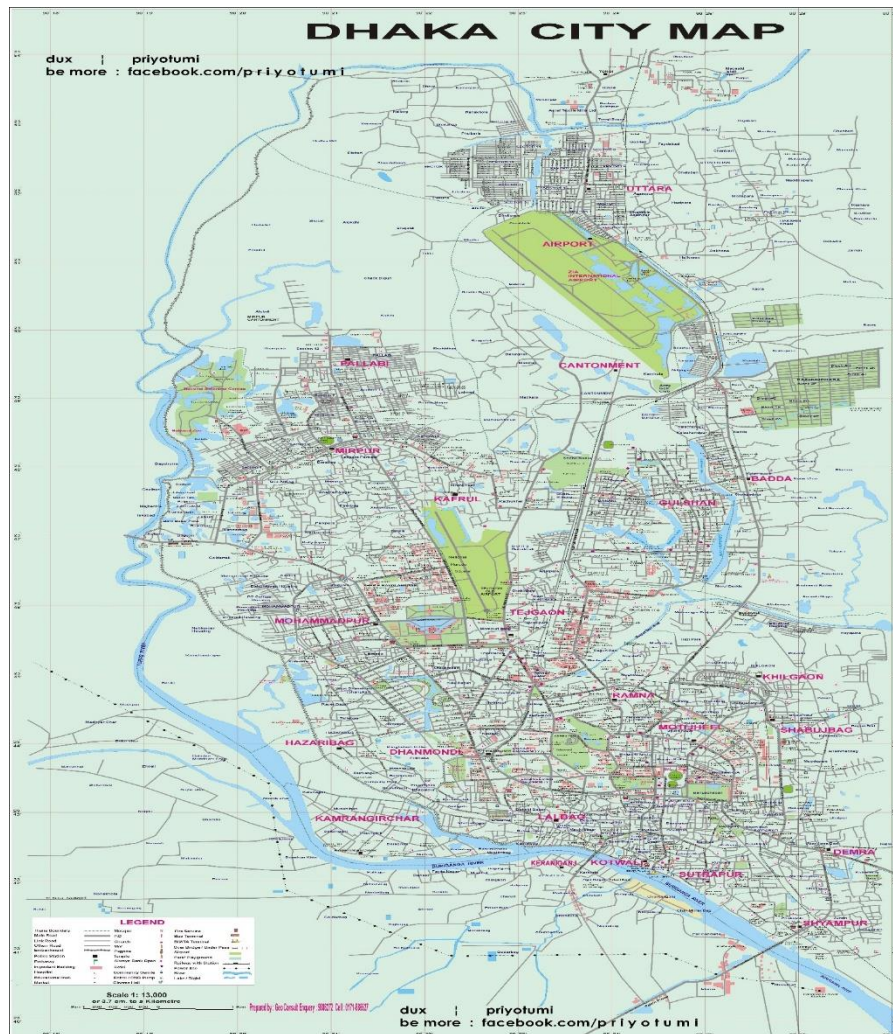
### **3. Methodology oh the research**

The research was conducted following mixed methodology (qualitative and quantitative) since it has greater reliability and validity regarding finding out the facts specially when we are going to talk about the social facts. All the street vendors of Dhaka city are the universe of this study. Street vendors like peddlers, vendors and small stall holders occupying their informal street vending businesses in the five respective study areas of Dhaka South and North City Corporation including, Nielkhet, Gulistan, Farmgate New market and, Kawran Bazar were the study population. Here to conduct this research purposive sampling procedure has been followed as a means of sampling procedure. As there is no statistical data regarding the actual number of street vendors in Dhaka city it was very difficult to identify the specific sample size for the study. According to the equation of sample size estimation 380 street vendors were interviewed for the survey with semi-structured questionnaire and 20 respondents from the five study areas 4 from each has been chosen as case study for this study. Since the main objective of the research is to find out the process of the polarization and the vulnerabilities of the street vendors thus the interviewer was very much cautious while revealing information from the respondents in a natural setting about the story of their eviction, harassment specially from the state authorities and goons and the respondents were assured about the disclosure of identity and safety of their spoken harsh reality.

### **4. The polarization of street vendors in Dhaka city**

Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh is one of the largest, fastest growing megacities and most densely populated city in the world with 47,400 people living sq km (WEF, 2018) Almost 31% of the population of Dhaka lives below the line of poverty with a monthly income of US \$ 38 per month (UNDP, 2014) with 89% working in informal sector (ADB, 2012). Dhaka has the largest number of child laborers with 750000+ and nearly half of boys and girls aged 10-14 is performing income generation works (Davis, 2006). Only in Dhaka city more that 3lac street vendors are engaged in informal vending activities (Etzold, 2013) and often subject to city clean up campaigns as the city corporation officials try to show the city as unique and aesthetically appealing city. Davis (2006) also opined that 'Dhaka is the Gods own city which runs automatically'. Thus, all these figures represent the scenario of informality in a greater extent.

FIGURE 1. Map of Dhaka City.



From: priyotumi.wordpress.com.

## 5. Demography, households and residence pattern

The people living in the poor settlements are to some extent different from other sections of urban dwellers in terms of their demographic features. Out of total 398 sample population almost half (46%) of the respondents belongs to the age category of 26-35 (Youth) whereas only 14% respondents

belong to the age category of 10-15 (Children). Being children, every time they are fighting to survive. Out of total respondents, 70% male and 30% female respondents were interviewed in the selected five study areas. The study further reveals that among the respondents 30% have secondary educational background, 24% complete primary education, 20% went school in their lifetime but did not complete primary level, other 16% respondents have no schooling history, and therefore they are illiterate. Among the respondents, 50% were married, 44% of them were unmarried and only 6% respondents are widowed during the time of interview.

The street vendors are the people who run their livelihood based on subsistence. It is not possible for them to live in a multistoried flat as their economic condition did not support them. As a result, they have to live in the lower rate and disadvantaged areas where all types of urban facilities are not available. And most of the respondents opined that they are currently living in the slum like ghettos by renting a room. Mr. Rahman (anonymous), the juice seller replied that, being a poor, it is not possible for him to live in the Ghulsan or Danmondi area (Rich neighborhood areas) because the rental price is high on those areas, so he is bound to live in slum like areas by renting a room with lower prices. Out of the total respondents, 86% are living in the rented house as they have no house of their own to live in this city, 6% of the respondents are living in the streets and only 6% respondents are staying in their own house another 2% respondents live in a garage. The study reveals that newly migrants are most vulnerable in the city in terms of housing and employment than their long-term counterparts.

## **6. Employment conditions: the facts**

The poor people migrated from rural areas to the city are mostly engaged in informal activities due to scarcity of the formal jobs. Moreover, they are lacking skills to get jobs in these formal sectors of the economy. They often engage themselves in the employments, which usually require small capital and need not require the higher level of skills. Less than half (44%) of the respondents is doing the street business for the last 5 years or less. And 20% of them just became the part of the street vending occupation whereas 30% respondents are experienced for more than 6 years and thus they know well about the hardship of doing business in the streets in a better way.

The street vendors who are occupying their business mostly in the streets of the busy areas on an average most of them have to make an agreement with the legal or illegal authority in the respective areas to continue their business on that specific areas. Abdul Kalam, 45 years old tea seller, mentioned that, to

run business in street of Dhaka city, they have to talk with the leader; otherwise, they do not permit them to run business in those areas. Out of the total respondents, 70% of them have to make agreement to run their business and the rest 30% have no agreement and have to run their business here and there in an unstable condition. Based on the information provided by the respondents it has been clear that usually they have to make agreement with government authority, political leaders, gangster and the respective owners of the place. Almost 35% of the respondents have to make an agreement with government authority including police, municipal or local authority and 43% respondents make agreement with the political leaders of the respective areas. Another 14% have agreement with the gangster and only 9% has agreement with others people like the owner of the place.

The street vendors engaged themselves in this profession on a full-time basis. They start their business from morning and continue until night. So, the opportunity to engage in other income generation activities is lower. But also, then some street vendors engaged in other income generating activities to get rid of their monotonous activities alongside with their continuous activities. Only 30% of the respondents interviewed argued that they engaged themselves with other income generating activities but a large portion (70%) of the respondents have to rely only on their present running business income.

## **7. Employment and livelihood vulnerabilities**

The vulnerability to employment is expressed through the difficulties they experience at workplace. Most of the respondents mentioned that it is tough to maintain their family and themselves in this city with their present income. Whatever they earned are not enough and that's why sometimes they have to borrow money from their Mahajan (owner) and relatives for which they have to pay higher rate of interest, which brings another misery for them. Goni (anonymous), 57 years old, vegetables sellers in the Gulistan area mentioned that, whatever they earned is not enough to feed themselves and their family in a well manner. The study reveals that, the average monthly income of the respondents is US \$85 whereas the average monthly expenditure of them is US \$90. Thus, they have the deficit of US \$5 and the hardship is increasing day by day since the cost of living is upward due to the price hike of the everyday necessary things. Therefore, with the passage of time they are becoming polarized with their lower level of income, which do not allow them to live in a peaceful way.

The street vendors have the history of harassment in their lifetimes as they are running their business in the streets. Majeda (anonymous), 34 years old the tea stall holder at Nilkhet area told that, there is no opportunity for the poorer to run their life by doing something in the put path due to the torture of the legal authority. The study contends that major portion (54%) of the respondent faces the problem of harassment while running their business and another 46% respondents argued that they are not the victims of the harassment in the last month but they have the history of harassment in their working history. Babul 46 years old sugarcane seller working in the Newmarket area mentioned that, the police and the authority of City Corporation vandalized their shop by kicking, sneezing goods and sometimes they beat them. The research revealed that in 59% of cases the Police harass the respondents. Among them, 30% by the municipal or local authorities and the rest 12% are harassed by terrorist, goons and others. In the type of harassment confiscation is the most prevalent with 29% of cases. The incidence of raid goods falls on 26% of cases. In addition, 22% of the respondents were the victims of beating. The incidents of seize goods happened in 18.5% cases.

In the question of the solution of harassment, Kalam (anonymous), 39 years old nut seller mentioned that, somebody like more powerful than them are required to stop these inhuman activities and they are just fed up with those illegal activities like harassment and they need relief from this badly. In 19% of cases, the street vendors try to negotiate without money and 56% of cases they imply the use of money to negotiate with the creator of harassment. In addition, 22.2% absorb thereat and other 3.7% use other methods as a method of negotiation.

Most of the respondents face the problem of eviction while occupying their business in the streets. Mr.Rahman (anonymous), a 25 years old vegetables seller in the Newmarket area mentioned that, if they don't provide money they were ordered to go back home and they are bound to obey that order. The research reveals that in most of the cases 72%, the vendors face the problem of eviction. And a little portion of the street vendors don't evict while running their business in the street and most of them are the peddlers. The police evict almost half of the street vendors; in 28% of the cases, the municipal or local authority takes the role to evict the street vendors. The rest 17% of the street vendors are evicted by others including the local goons, the owner of the place and the terrorist.

Generally, the street vendors have to rely on the business they are occupying but once they are evicted then their miseries know no law. Joynal Abedin (anonymous), 30 years old plastic seller occupying in the Gulistan area mentioned that, police didn't do anything wrong with him because he has a

relative of political leader, but also then he has to paid them sometimes. Around 39% of the cases, during eviction period the vendors have to do nothing without sitting idle at home, as they have no work to do besides this and run their livelihood by spending their so-called saved capital. In addition, 28% respondents start their business again in the same place after some while when the authority leaves the place. Another 14% respondents continued their business shifting the place on that eviction period. Only 5.56% respondents engaged themselves in another income generating activities to run their livelihood during that eviction period.

In the question of by whom your goods are snatched or taken in an undervalued price, Jalal Mia (anonymous), 55 years old wear seller occupying his business in the New market area mentioned that, police are the real goons, besides them the young political leader and some student's leader of college and universities take the goods without money or under devalued prices. Majority (64%) of the respondent interviewed faces the problem of providing goods and commodities in free of cost or in the minimal cheap rate and 36% of them do not face the problem of snatching goods in free or cheap rate as they opined. In 47% of cases, the vendors have to provide goods in free or low price to the police and 22% to the terrorist. Local leader has their share on 16%. Sometimes customers (10%) also forced the vendors to provide goods in undervalued price or free.

Confiscation is one of the main employment related vulnerabilities for the informal sector workers. On an average, the state vendors have to pay 50BDT in a day to occupy business in the streets. Sometimes they have to paid weekly by calculating 7 days. Rahman, 25 years old vegetables seller, mentioned that to occupying business they have to pay US \$.5 at morning, US \$.5 at the afternoon and another US \$1 at night. Moumita, 35 years old divorced vegetables seller in the Farmgate area told that, if she will not provide money to the police, they ordered them to go home by saying you don't need to continue your business without providing money.

In the question of how much you have to paid the money of confiscation and to whom, Abbas (anonymous), 26 years old tea seller, running business in Farmgate area mentioned that, he cannot answer as if he revealed the truth then he will not be allowed to run the business, *police will beat him and may take him to the jail*. Raju another street vendor from the Nilkhet area respond the answer of the question by mentioning that, *you will see the people coming with rifle in their shoulder and they will collect money from them*. Another respondent, Jamal (anonymous) the mobile parts seller from Gulistan area argued that, it is not necessary that police will come every time to collect money sometimes the line man collects money on behalf of police. When he was asked about the benefit of that lineman, Jamal replied, *without profit nobody do anything in this world*. When

Polash (Anonymous), 30 years old juice seller in the Farmgate area were asked, why he provide the money to police, he replied they are bound to provide the money, if they do not provide the money of confiscation then they will not allow them to run the business in that areas and then they will have to stay unfed as they have no alternative source of income.

The street vendors are the right claim citizen of the state, it is the duty of the government to fulfill their demand, and through this they should include in the main stream of the society. When the respondents were asked about the demand of them to the government, Helal (anonymous), 38 years old small tea stall holder occupying in the Farmgate area mentioned that, it is not important whether they have demand or not, the reality is that they will not get anything. According to his view, the authority does not consider them as human, their life has no meaning to the authority, the things what the authority will do is nothing but the betterment of themselves. The finding of the research shows that around 80% of the street vendors have demands from the government. And those (20%) who have no demand to the government mentioned that, they have no demand to the government because the government and the authority do not have time to consider their demands at all. In the question of the types of demand of the street vendors towards government, 55 years old fruits seller, Jabbar who run his business in footpath with a van from here and there of the Dhaka city mentioned that, in this age it is not possible to go here and there frequently after being evicted so if a permanent place has been managed to occupy business then it will be useful for him. Another respondent demands the solution of confiscation by the police and others. A wide range of demands actually rose from the respondent towards the government with the urge of the fixed place in the pinnacle (50%) along with assistance in capital (20%). Among the respondents 13% of them demand security of their life from the government and the solution of harassment, extortion and security solution.

## **8. The process of polarization of the informal workers**

Informal activity is a direct function of economic liberalization backed by the postmodern society. In search of job a large segment of the population is coming out in the urban areas leaving the rural one to lead a meaningful life. But after their arrival in a new environment they face the problem of scarcity of formal job in the urban areas as a result the masses involved themselves in the informal activities for the question of survival. And this phenomenon strongly supported and reflects in the UN statement were quoted by Davis (2006), where he mentioned that ‘The collapse of formal urban employment

in the developing world and the rise of the informal sector are seen as a direct function of liberalization'.

The rise of informal sector in the era of neoliberalism is strongly supported by the work of Sassen (1991). According to her, there has been a pronounced increase in casual employment and in the informalization of work. The masses involved in the informal activities are continuously deprived from the enjoyment of their rights like rights of security of their life, housing, subsistence, treatment and so on. They are continuously harassed and evicted by the powerful authority of the state like the police and the municipal or local authority while occupying their business in the streets. And all of these phenomena reflected in the discussion of Harvey (2009), he purports that neoliberal policies integrate the interests of the state and the corporate classes. They use money power and state apparatus to disburse urban resources in the hand of the few upper and corporate capital class. Thus, the right to the city falls in the hand of the private or quasi-private interests to shape the process of urbanization. The right to the city in the hand of the political and economic elite contributes to the urban informalization by absorbing surplus population created by the process of urbanization. Once the vendor has invaded the location and established a pitch these agreements can develop into a strong alliance of interests, when affected residents and the authorities must dealt with. As a result, the threat of eviction always hangs over street vendors, especially when there is traffic. If we focus our attention on the source of the harassment and eviction of the street vendors then we will find a solid answer about the role of powerful over the marginal group of the people.

#### **9. Sacrifice of state's capacity and the marginalization of the urban poor**

State has lost its capacity to create formal jobs and housing facilities due to the devolution of power of government to NGO's run by the interests of major international aid agencies. As a result, the people without finding formal jobs choose the informal activities as the means of their livelihood. Castells (1978) viewed that the over-urbanization creates unemployment problem and extreme poverty. In this situation the failure of state's capacity to produce formal jobs leads to the development of informal sector. The Davis (2006) argument in 'Planet of Slums' also supports this reality facts. As he argued that 'Instead of being a focus for economic growth and prosperity, the third world cities have become a dumping ground for a surplus population working in unskilled, unprotected and low wage informal service, industries and trade' is a replication of the involvement of a large number of people in the informal



sectors due to the sacrifice of state capacities to create formal employment opportunities. Dhaka's informal sectors reveals that most of the urban poor are involved in informal employment like street selling and other petty retailing, repairs and personal services, crafts and other manufacturing, construction and transport work. Although manufacturing jobs have increased, the influx of urban poor does not match with their demand. Soto (1989) argued that in order to survive the migrants became informal. If they were to live, trade, manufacture, transport, or even consume, the cities new inhabitants had to do so illegally. Such illegality was not antisocial in intent, like trafficking in drugs, theft, or abduction, but was designed to achieve such essentially legal objectives as building a house, providing a service, or developing a business.

#### **10. Eviction of the street vendors; the establishment of rights of the capitalist and the polarization of the urban informal**

Street vendors including both peddlers and small stall holders are evicted in anytime during their working hour. Almost 72% of the vendors face the problem of eviction. Most of the cases the street vendors are evicted by the police, and the municipal or local authority. During the eviction period the respondents opine that they spend their capital to earn the livelihood in the interim period. This is to some extent similar to the argument stated in the *Right to the City* by Harvey (2003). The eviction of the workers is occurred to establish the right of capitalist class such as eviction of the bag sellers from the parking lot of New-market to accommodate the cars of the rich people. And it also purports the mobilization of surplus from the working class to the capitalist class as such during the eviction period the speed of capital for subsistence (buying foods).

The street vendors face multidimensional vulnerabilities while occupying their business in the street. Most of the time their income falls below their expenditure cost. With the problem of harassment and eviction, they also face the problem of confiscation. Almost 56% street vendors provide money to police and 23% to local-municipal authority to run their business happily in the streets. In 46.88% of cases the vendors have to provide goods in free or low price to the police. In a word they face greater problem from the state mechanism like police and the municipal of local authority.

### **11. The right claim citizen of the state and the survival strategy of the informal workers**

As a legal citizen of the state, it is the right of the group of people who are surviving with informal activities to get services from the government. They are the right claim citizen of the state. It is their right to get the security of their life, security of running their business without the problem of harassment, eviction and confiscation. As state is failed to create formal job for its inhabitants so it's the duty of the state to provide support what are they doing for their livelihood and should fulfill their demand. A wide range of demands have been raised from the respondent towards the government with the demand of the fixation of place in the pinnacle (50%) along with assistance in capital (20%). 13% demand security of their life from the government and the solution of harassment, extortion and security solution respectively.

First of all, the people having migration status did not choose informal activities as a survival strategy of their livelihood as is opined by the prominent urban scholars Bayat (2004). And again, after the involvement of the informal activities they face multidimensional vulnerabilities created both from the governmental sector and nongovernmental sectors and thus they use different techniques to cope with all of those problems. For example, whenever the informal street vendors are harassed or evicted, they negotiate with the authority either legally or illegally by providing money or without money and sometimes they shift their business in a new place as a survival technique and thus they run their business. Sometimes they are successful and sometimes they are not to adapt with the emerging problems and if failed then their misery knows no law.

### **12. Concluding remarks**

Street vending is one of the most common informal sectors in the city of Dhaka. People engaged in Street Vending in Dhaka city face problems with confiscation, harassment, eviction, weather difficulties, housing and services. The first and foremost problem is that they are running the business without governmental agreement and that the weakening problem for them which makes them more vulnerable. The problems of harassment and eviction such as giving subscription to police reduce their little earning and induce their sufferings largely. Their problematic circumstances deteriorate when the problem of eviction massacre their means of living for the time being. By this time, they manage their livelihood somehow by the so-called surplus from

their earning. Further, their livelihood initiative exacerbates when weather difficulties and political instability specifically in the day of blockade stop their three meals a day. However, the street vendors are very much expert and efficient to run their business and cope with their numerous problems. Their demand to the government urges to establish fixed place for them, reduce the problem of harassment, ensure capital support for them, and provide cooperation to stabilize their business. In fine, it can be concluded by saying that the street vendors are the urban marginal group of people as they lead miserable life and scarcity of living place and other governmental services in their residing areas are rare. They are the surplus humanity of the urban areas who are continuously absorbing threat and face vulnerabilities from the state mechanism and other powerful authorities. Street vending is the result of the failure of the neoliberal state to create formal employment opportunities for the emerging population. Proper urban governance and planning in this regard can ensure the solid and sustainable livelihood for this greater segment of the population.

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