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# Socio-Economic status and Working Profile among Newspapers Vendors & Sellers in Malda district of West Bengal: A Micro level Analysis

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### ABSTRACT

Newspaper hawkers and vendors, newsagent, news dealer, newsboy or newsie is street vendors who selling the newspaper and magazines in a shop or trains and buses or distribution newspaper as a home services. Newspaper is known is Fourth Pillar of democracy. This paper is an attempt to examine the socio-economic condition and working profile among the newspaper vendors and sellers, to assessing the health condition among the newspaper vendors and sellers and to give valuable suggestion for improving their standard of living. The entire study is based on both primary and secondary sources of data. Malda district of West Bengal has been selected as the study area, which is known as Gateway of North Bengal. The result of the study shows that 41.90 per cent of the sampled Newspaper Vendors & Sellers are earning INR 6001-10000 per month from this profession, 36.19 per cent of the sampled Newspaper Vendors & Sellers are selling newspaper at trains and bus in the study area, 39.04 per cent of the Newspaper Vendors & Sellers are belong to age group between 38 – 55 Years in Malda district of West Bengal. The socio-economic condition of the newspaper vendors and sellers is pathetic and their standard of living is not satisfactory. They are work very hard from early dawn and get INR 2 for selling each newspaper.

**Keywords:** Newspaper, Standard of Living, Poverty, Income, Health, Education,

### Introduction:

**“No matter how many good morning messages you read, real good morning starts with reading newspaper”.**

**“Past is Waste Paper, present is Newspaper, future is Question paper, So read and write carefully, otherwise your life will be tissue paper”.**  
**A.P.J. Abdul Kalam**

Newspaper has been one of the first mediums of mass media. Newspaper is known is Fourth Pillar of democracy. Newspaper is the first and foremost thing everyone looks for every morning. Newspaper brings us each and every news and views to us from every corner of the world. Newspaper brings information about businessmen, politics, religion, society, economy, film, industries, movies, food, social issues, unemployed issues, sports, games, international news, kids, science, education, technologies, cultures, traditions, arts, classical dance, social issues, arts of living, meditation, yoga, health, war, fashion etc. It helps us in widening our knowledge skill and technical awareness. It covers regional, national and international news. There are five main section of a newspaper are national / international news, sports, entertainment / amusement, classified advertisement and neighborhood news. Newspaper is the powerhouse of information. Newspaper has been one of the first mediums of mass media. The first newspaper to be printed in India was called Gazette Bengal. It was published by an Englishman, James Augustus Hicky in 1780. Johann Carolus invented the first newspaper in Strasburg, Germany.

In the modern era of 21<sup>st</sup> century newspaper has been spread to the whole country. Its is a good habit to read newspaper on daily basis. Newspaper is most important thing used by everyone (rich or poor people) of any religion, caste or creed. There are many types of newspaper and magazines according to their brand and subscription. It is easily available in the market in almost all languages. Newspaper makes us confident and helps in improving our personality. The only drawback of newspaper is that they need to be physically transported from printing press to the readers, before the news gets older.

A newspaper hawkers and vendors, newsagent, news dealer, newsboy or newsie is street vendors who selling the newspaper and magazines. These individual are responsible for delivering newspaper to the subscriber homes or designated locations on regular basis, often in the early morning. The newspaper is very perishable items whose utility ends by afternoon and it has to be distributed under sever time constraints. Hawkers, vendors and book stall owners are the last link of the supply chain before reaches readers. Newspaper Carrier day is celebrated on 15th October, as it is the birth anniversary of former president Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam, who also started of as a newspaper vendor.

**Table 1. 1: Top 10 Newspaper Sellers in India, 2022**

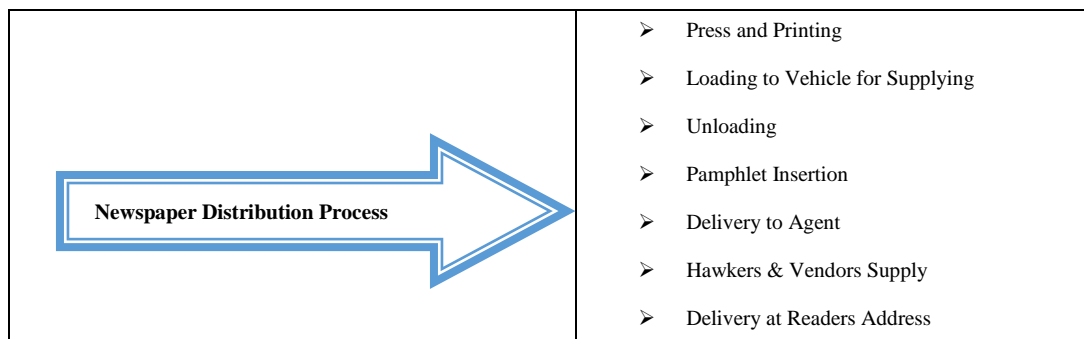
Serial Number	Newspaper
1.	Times of India
2.	Hindustan Times
3.	The Hindu
4.	The Telegraph
5.	Deccan Chronicle
6.	Mumbai Mirror
7.	The Economic Times
8.	Indian Express
9.	Dainik Jagran
10.	The Pioneer

Source: Ginger Media Group, 2022

**Table 1. 2: Top 10 Newspaper Sellers in West Bengal, 2022**

Serial Number	Newspaper
1.	Anandabazar Patrika
2.	Bartaman Patrika
3.	Uttar Banga Sambad
4.	Ei Samoy
5.	Sangbad Pratidin
6.	Ganashakti
7.	Telegraph
8.	The Statesman
9.	Times of India
10.	Kolam Patrika

Source: RDX Advertising, 2022



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### Review of Literature:

The review highlights the distinction areas covered by the many researchers and academicians which may be helpful to understand the issues relating to the present study and it also helps to find out the research gap. The basic sources of literature review of my study areas are- published research papers, articles in the journal of national and international repute, books, Government reports, Research agencies reports etc.

**Dr. S. Cecily (2022)** examined that in this electronic era, people love reading, newspaper at places of their choices, be it at home, office or library. The sale of newspaper is not full time job and the agents and subagents do this for a commission. Their study reveals that print media in India have witnessed a significant surge in revenue, making it the largest global market for industry. **Patkar, Shiwant and Mishra (2021)** observed that newspaper distribution hawkers are performed very arduous and hardworking jobs. Their study reveals that each vendor had approximately 600-700 papers to sort every morning. Now a day's all works of newspaper printing are performed by digitally platform.

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### Statement of Problems:

Men, Young and old are busy bundling the newspaper loads with a cycle to finish their job before the Malda district peoples awakening. Newspaper sellers the faceless soldiers who beat all odds, heavy rain, excessive heat and chilling cold they are deliver newspaper at your door step with any delay. The socio-economic condition of the newspaper vendors and sellers is pathetic and their standard of living is not satisfactory. They are work very hard from early dawn and get INR 2 for selling each newspaper. So, the researchers are much taken to consideration of this particular study. The findings of the study will be very much useful to Ministry of Labour and Employment, Government of India and NGO's working for the development of this unorganized sector.

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### Objectives of Study:

Keeping in the view of the quality of life, health status and social well-being among the newspaper vendors and hawkers people in Malda district of West Bengal in particular, the following objectives have been taken into consideration:

1. To assess the socio-economic condition, income level and social well- being of newspaper vendors and sellers people in Malda district of West Bengal.
2. To examine the health status and major problems faced by the newspaper vendors and hawkers in the study area.
3. To enrich the quality of the database and research materials related to newspaper vendors and sellers people and put forward some suitable suggestions to improve the quality of life, health condition and social well- being of newspaper vendors and sellers in Malda district of West Bengal.

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### Database and Research Methodology:

The entire research work is based on both primary and secondary sources of data. This research work is an analytical, descriptive and empirical type. For the collection of primary data a total 155 respondents has been selected based on purposive random sampling and face to face interview was conducted based on well structured questionnaire with regard to objectives in mind. The survey was conducted during the month of October 2023 to December 2023. The household survey has been conducted at different villages of 15 community development block of Malda district of West Bengal.

The secondary data has been collected from District Statistical Handbook, Malda Collectorate, Ministry of Labour and Employment, Government of India, Books, Research Paper, Journals, Newspaper, Researchagate, Google Scholar etc. After the collection of data for showing the result Simple Percentage Method, and Computer Cartography has been used.

### *A Geographical Profile of the study area:*

Malda district of West Bengal has been selected as research study area. Malda district is entirely located in North Bengal, it is also known as “**Gateway of North Bengal**”. It lies in North Bengal on lower Indo-Gangetic plain. The latitudinal range of Malda lies between 24°40'20" North and 25°32'08" North, and the longitudinal range is 87°45'50" East and 88°28'10" East. For administrative purpose the district has been divided into 15 Community Development Block and two sub-division namely Malda Sadar and Chanchal Sadar. The district is very much famous for Mango Production, Litchi production, Jute Production and Sericulture activity (Raw Silk production), school educational sectors. Majority of the male population of this district are migrants labour, agricultural labour and Hawkers due none availability of any large scale, medium scale industries, majority of female population in rural are engaged in bidi making household industries. According to 2011 Census of India still 86.14 per cent population are belong to rural area.

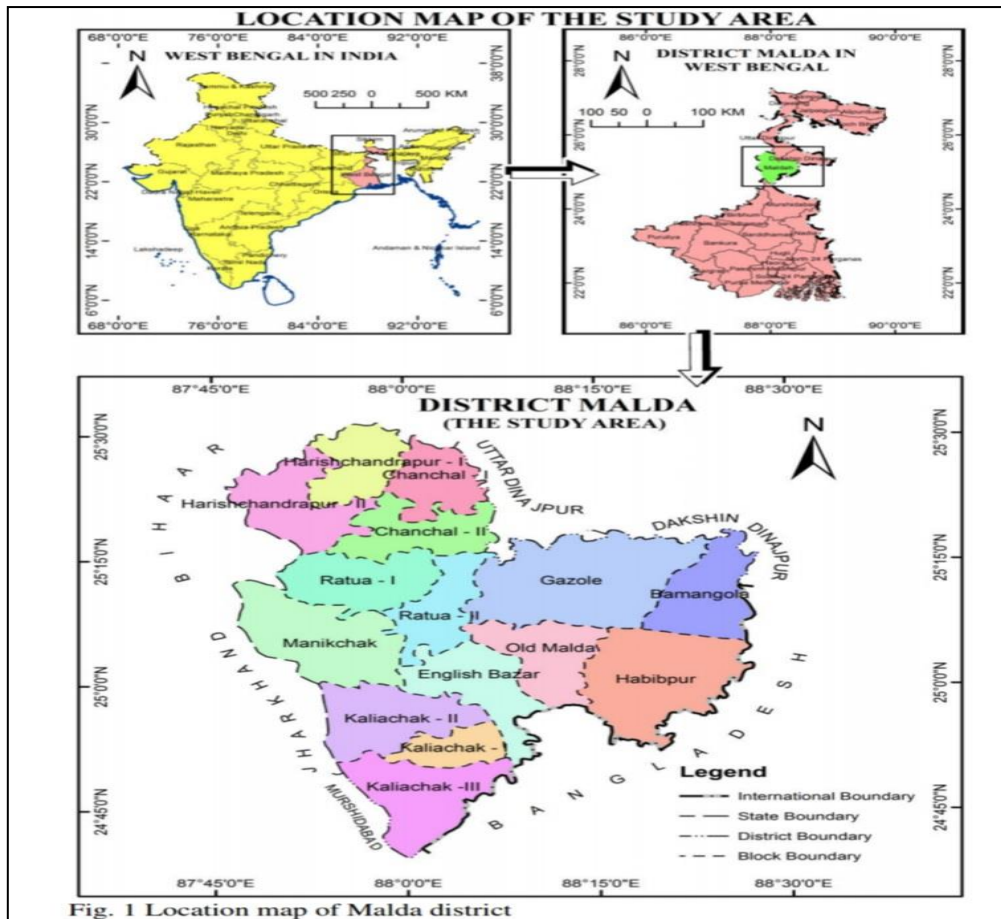


Fig. 1 Location map of Malda district

## Result and Analysis:

Table 1. 3: Age-Group of Sampled Newspaper Vendors &amp; Sellers in Malda district, West Bengal

Sl. No.	Age-Group	Total Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1.	14 - 28 Years	16	15.23
2.	29 - 38 Years	35	33.33
3.	38 – 55 Years	41	39.04
4.	Above 56 Years	13	12.38
<b>Total</b>		<b>105</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source: Field Survey Data, 2023

Table 1. 4: Education Qualification of Sampled Newspaper Vendors &amp; Sellers in Malda district, West Bengal

Sl. No.	Education Qualification	Total Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1.	Illiterates	24	22.85
2.	Primary level	17	16.19
3.	10 <sup>th</sup> level	31	29.52
4.	12 <sup>th</sup> level	12	11.42
5.	Graduation and Above	21	20.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>105</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source: Field Survey Data, 2023

Table 1. 5: Income Level of Sampled Newspaper Vendors &amp; Sellers in Malda district, West Bengal

Sl. No.	Income Level (Monthly)	Total Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1.	INR 1-3000	18	17.14
2.	INR 3001- 6000	20	19.04
3.	INR 6001-10000	44	41.90
4.	Above 10000	23	21.90
<b>Total</b>		<b>105</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source: Field Survey Data, 2023

Table 1. 6: Pattern of Selling Sampled Newspaper Vendors &amp; Sellers in Malda district, West Bengal

Sl. No.	Pattern of Selling Newspaper	Total Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1.	Sitting at one place	17	16.19
2.	Bicycle	29	27.61
3.	Shops	21	20.00
4.	Buses and Trains	38	36.19
<b>Total</b>		<b>105</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source: Field Survey Data, 2023

Table 1. 7: Number of selling of Newspaper per day among Sampled Newspaper Vendors &amp; Sellers in Malda district, West Bengal

Sl. No.	Number of selling of Newspaper per day	Total Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1.	1- 200	12	11.42
2.	201-400	47	44.76
3.	401-500	30	28.57
4.	Above 500	16	15.23
<b>Total</b>		<b>105</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source: Field Survey Data, 2023

Table 1. 8: Health Condition among Sampled Newspaper Vendors &amp; Sellers in Malda district, West Bengal

Sl. No.	Affected Diseases	Total Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1.	Skin diseases and Dust Allergies	32	30.47
2.	Typhoid Fever	26	24.76
3.	Cough and Cold	18	17.14
4.	Backache and Hand pain	09	8.57
5.	Tiredness	19	18.09
<b>Total</b>		<b>105</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source: Field Survey Data, 2023

Table 1. 9: SWOC Analysis among Sampled Newspaper Vendors &amp; Sellers in Malda district, West Bengal

<b>SWOC Analysis</b>	
<b>Strengths</b>	Regular Employment Status, Flexible timing of work, local area jobs
<b>Weakness</b>	Lower Income, Risk in Health, Low standard of livings, Poverty, Lack of Training centers to train the skilled labour

<b>Opportunities</b>	No experience required, Easy to find the job
<b>Challenges</b>	Competition with others vendors, Suffered from respiratory symptoms and Diseases

### Major Findings of the study:

1. It is evident from the field survey that 41.90 per cent of the sampled Newspaper Vendors & Sellers are earning INR 6001-10000 per month from this profession in Malda district of West Bengal.
2. It is evident from the field survey that 36.19 per cent of the sampled Newspaper Vendors & Sellers are selling newspaper at trains and bus in the study area.
3. During the field survey researcher observed that 39.04 per cent of the Newspaper Vendors & Sellers are belong to age group between 38 – 55 Years in Malda district of West Bengal.

### Conclusion and Suggestion:

In this age of social media, television, newspaper is still one of the most important parts of prints media. Deletion of vulgar ads and controversial articles removes to above-mentioned demerits of the newspaper to a great extent. Thus, an active reader cannot be mislead and deceived by journalism. The newspaper industry in India is facing many challenges including declining circulation and advertising revenues, growth of digital media and competition from television and radio. The time of India is the largest newspaper in India by circulation. The problems faced by Newspaper Vendors & Sellers in Malda district of West Bengal are multifaceted and require urgent attention. Poverty, low literacy levels, unemployment, supplementing family income, etc. are the major reasons for taking up this profession among Newspaper Vendors & Sellers in Malda district of West Bengal. The majority of the Newspaper Vendors & Sellers workers suffer from health-related problems. One of the special features of Newspaper Vendors & Sellers is that they may be one of the most vulnerable and marginalized communities in Indian society. Thus, there is an urgent need for social concern to frame measures to improve the living and socio-economic and good working conditions among Newspaper Vendors & Sellers for inclusive growth in Malda district of West Bengal.

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