

MAKING DO IN THE CITY OF COLOMBO;
THE CASE OF PAVEMENT HAWKERS

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This paper is concerned with the men and women who sell a variety of consumer goods such as vegetables, fruits, coconut, king coconut etc on the pavements in the city.

The methodology of the study has been the collection of information from 50 persons in Colombo, pertaining to the life histories of the activists and the organisation of the trade.

It was found that hawkers in Colombo do not form a uniform category in the urban social formation. There is significant internal differentiation along the lines of income and expenditure, life style and so on. While some eke out only a below subsistence living from it, some others receive a considerably high income.

Formal/informal dualism and marxists' notion of the petty commodity production sector are examined for their validity in explaining the position of pavement hawkers in Colombo.