



An Economic Study Of Petty Shops In Kamalanagar, CADC

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Abstract – Petty shops constitute an important part of the informal economy in semi-urban and rural regions of India. In Kamalanagar under the Chakma Autonomous District Council (CADC), petty shops play a significant role in providing essential commodities, generating self-employment, and supporting local trade networks. This study examines the socio-economic profile of petty shop owners, sources of capital, income and expenditure patterns, and the major challenges affecting the sustainability of petty shops. The research is based on primary data collected from 50 petty shop owners through structured questionnaires and personal interviews conducted between August and September 2025. The findings reveal that most petty shops are family-owned and self-managed enterprises depending mainly on personal savings. Poor infrastructure, low customer demand, and limited government support were identified as major challenges. The study suggests improving infrastructure, enhancing access to micro-credit, and providing business training to strengthen petty shops and promote inclusive economic development in Kamalanagar.

Keywords – Petty shops, Informal economy, Kamalanagar, CADC, Small traders, Livelihood, Rural economy, Economic development.

I. INTRODUCTION

The word “petty” originates from the Old French word *petit*, meaning “small” or “little.” Petty shops are small-scale informal retail establishments that sell daily necessities such as groceries, snacks, toiletries, stationery, and household goods in small quantities.

These shops generally operate with low investment and limited space, often functioning from roadside stalls, kiosks, or small sections of residential houses. They serve the day-to-day needs of local consumers and represent a vital component of the informal economy in India.

Across developing countries, petty shops remain a resilient part of the retail sector. Sarkar et al. (2018) observed that petty shops form the backbone of informal markets by supplying affordable goods to low-income households. Similarly, Singh and Sharma (2020) emphasized that petty traders continue to survive despite challenges such as lack of institutional credit, competition from organized retailers, and inadequate policy support.

In Kamalanagar, the headquarters of the Chakma Autonomous District Council (CADC) in Mizoram, petty shops occupy an important place in the local economy. These shops are commonly found in marketplaces, residential areas, and near educational institutions.

Besides providing daily commodities, they support household livelihoods, encourage local trade, and contribute to economic circulation within the community. Therefore, an economic study of petty shops in Kamalanagar is necessary to understand their contribution, challenges, and sustainability in the changing market environment.

II. RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY

The study is relevant because petty shops are an important source of livelihood and local economic activity in Kamalanagar. Despite their small scale, they contribute significantly to meeting consumer needs and supporting local suppliers. The research provides valuable insights into the socio-economic conditions of petty shop owners and the operational challenges they face.

The findings may assist policymakers, local authorities, and development agencies in designing suitable strategies to strengthen petty trade, promote local entrepreneurship, and improve rural–urban economic linkages within the CADC region.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The major objectives of the study are:

1. To study the socio-economic profile of petty shop owners in Kamalanagar.
2. To analyze the economic contribution of petty shops in Kamalanagar.
3. To examine the sources of capital, income, and expenditure of petty shop owners.
4. To identify the challenges faced by petty shop owners.
5. To suggest measures for improving the economic viability of petty shops.

IV. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of the study is limited to petty shops operating within Kamalanagar town under the Chakma Autonomous District Council (CADC), Mizoram. The study focuses on the socio-economic conditions of petty shop owners, their



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income and expenditure patterns, business operations, and challenges affecting sustainability.

The research aims to generate reliable information regarding the role of petty shops in livelihood generation and local economic development. However, wholesalers, large retailers, and businesses operating outside Kamalanagar are excluded from the study.

V. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study is significant because it contributes to understanding the role of petty shops in sustaining the informal economy of Kamalanagar. Petty shops not only provide essential goods to consumers but also support household income and local market networks.

The research is expected to provide useful information for policymakers and CADC authorities in formulating welfare schemes, financial support systems, and development policies for small traders. It also contributes to academic literature on informal retail trade and rural economic development in Mizoram and the CADC region. Furthermore, the study highlights the importance of petty shops in promoting self-employment, local entrepreneurship, and inclusive economic growth.

Research Questions

The study seeks to answer the following research question: What is the economic significance of petty shops in Kamalanagar, CADC, and what challenges affect their sustainability?

Limitations of the Study

The study has certain limitations. First, the research is based on a sample of 50 respondents due to time, financial, and resource constraints. Therefore, the findings may not fully represent all petty shop owners in the region. Second, the study relies mainly on primary data collected through interviews and questionnaires. As a result, some responses may reflect subjective opinions and personal perceptions of the respondents.

Third, limited availability of official statistical records and previous studies on petty shops in Kamalanagar restricted the scope of comparative analysis. Finally, the study focuses only on Kamalanagar town and excludes other parts of the CADC region.

VI. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Study Area

The study was conducted in Kamalanagar, the headquarters of the Chakma Autonomous District Council (CADC), situated in Lawngtlai district of Mizoram. Kamalanagar is a semi-urban town where people mainly depend on small-scale trade, agriculture, government employment, and daily wage labor.

Sampling Method

The study population consists of petty shop owners operating within Kamalanagar town. Since surveying all shopkeepers was not feasible, a sample of 50 respondents was selected using purposive and simple random sampling methods.

Sources of Data

The study utilized both primary and secondary data.

- **Primary Data:** Collected through structured questionnaires and personal interviews.
- **Secondary Data:** Collected from books, journals, government reports, research papers, and online sources related to petty trade and the informal economy.

VII. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Socio-Economic Profile of Respondents

The study reveals that 62% of respondents are male and 38% are female, indicating that petty trade is slightly male-dominated, though women also participate significantly in local commerce. Most respondents belong to the economically active age group of 21–30 years (46%), followed by 31–40 years (28%), showing that petty shops are mainly operated by young and middle-aged individuals.

Educationally, petty shop ownership includes both educated and less-educated individuals. While 40% completed higher secondary education or graduation, 10% had no formal education. This indicates that petty trade provides livelihood opportunities regardless of educational background.

The majority of respondents (68%) are married, suggesting that petty shops primarily function as family livelihood activities supporting household income and daily expenses.

Economic Profile of Petty Shops

Most petty shops (70%) have been operating for 1–5 years, indicating that petty trading is a relatively recent livelihood activity in Kamalanagar. Only a small number of shops have continued for more than ten years, reflecting limited long-term business sustainability.

The study found that 78% of shops are family-owned, while 22% are individually owned. This highlights the importance of family participation in operating and sustaining petty shops.

Regarding sources of capital, 94% of respondents used personal savings to start their businesses, while only 6% accessed bank loans. This shows limited dependence on institutional finance and inadequate access to formal credit facilities.

Most shopkeepers earn between ₹10,001 and ₹20,000 per month, reflecting modest but stable income levels.



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Expenditure patterns also indicate that petty shops operate on a small scale with moderate monthly expenses, allowing limited savings.

The study further reveals that all petty shops are self-managed and do not employ additional workers, meaning that petty trade mainly provides self-employment opportunities. Most respondents procure goods from local suppliers within Kamalanagar, thereby strengthening local trade networks and supporting the circulation of money within the local economy.

Challenges Faced by Petty Shop Owners

Poor infrastructure emerged as the most serious challenge, reported by 42% of respondents. Problems such as poor road conditions, irregular electricity supply, and transportation difficulties negatively affect business operations and profitability.

Other important challenges include low customer demand (34%) and high transportation costs (14%). Competition from larger retail shops affects only a small proportion of respondents, indicating that organized retail competition remains limited in the area.

The study also found that only 6% of respondents received government assistance such as loans or subsidies, while 94% reported receiving no institutional support. This reflects poor awareness and limited accessibility of government welfare schemes for petty traders.

Suggestions for Improvement

Most respondents (56%) suggested easier access to loans and micro-credit facilities as the most important measure for improving their businesses. About 26% emphasized the need for protection from larger retailers, while 18% recommended training in business management and customer handling.

The findings further reveal that petty shops are widely recognized as important contributors to the local economy. A large majority of respondents considered petty shops essential for providing daily goods, supporting household livelihoods, and strengthening local market activities in Kamalanagar.

VIII. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The major findings of the study are:

- Petty shops are mainly operated by young and middle-aged individuals.
- Women actively participate in petty trade activities.
- Most businesses are family-owned and self-managed.
- Personal savings are the primary source of business capital.
- Petty shops generate modest but stable income for households.
- Local suppliers play a significant role in sustaining petty trade.

- Poor infrastructure and low customer demand are major constraints.
- Government support and financial assistance remain inadequate.
- Petty shops contribute significantly to local trade and livelihood generation.

Suggestions

Based on the findings, the following measures are suggested:

1. Improvement of roads, electricity, and transport infrastructure.
2. Easier access to loans and micro-credit facilities.
3. Business management and financial literacy training for shopkeepers.
4. Expansion of government welfare schemes for small traders.
5. Promotion of local markets and community trade fairs.
6. Special financial and training support for women entrepreneurs.

IX. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that petty shops play an important role in supporting livelihoods, local trade, and economic activities in Kamalanagar, CADC. Although these businesses operate on a small scale, they contribute significantly to the informal economy and provide accessible goods to local consumers.

However, infrastructural problems, limited financial access, and lack of institutional support continue to restrict their growth and sustainability. Therefore, proper policy interventions, improved infrastructure, accessible credit facilities, and capacity-building programs are essential for strengthening petty shops and promoting inclusive economic development in Kamalanagar.

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