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Geography, Gender, and Informal Economic Activities
- A case study of street vending in San Cristóbal de Las Casas, Mexico -

공간, 젠더, 비공식 경제활동: 멕시코 산크리스토발데라스카사스의 노점상을 사례로

2015년 2월

서울대학교 대학원
사회교육과 지리전공
조영지
Geography, Gender, and Informal Economic Activities
- A case study of street vending in San Cristóbal de Las Casas, Mexico -

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Abstract

This research locates informal economic activities in the study of economic globalization. Though there is a plethora of research about economic globalization, most of the literature is centered on formal processes and excludes many other grounded aspects of the economy such as informal economic activities and the relevant actors. The purpose of this thesis is to expand the narrow focus of the conceptualization of work and economic activities in the mainstream economic geography and economic globalization literature by focusing on informal economic activities of women in the Global South. More specifically, this research pays attention to street vending of indigenous women in San Cristóbal de Las Casas (SCLC), Mexico.

Upon reviewing literature related to feminist geography, the informal economy, and street vending, this research examines ‘differing degrees of informality’ of spatially differentiated street vending types, gender and age influences on ‘differing degrees of informality’, and factors engaged in the feminization of certain economic activities with high informality.

The case study conducted in this research showed that there were four spatially differentiated street vending types in SCLC (street hawkers, craft fair vendors, outdoor market vendors, and indoor market vendors) with different degrees of informality. Gender impacts on the spatial differentiation were also identified, since more women were dedicating themselves to the business with
higher degrees of informality. According to interviews with street vendors, four factors (scarcity of other job opportunities for women compared to men, men's migration to bigger cities or to other countries, the social construction of work and gender roles, and women's housekeeping and parenting obligations) were integral to the process of feminization of street vending. It is noted that street vending cannot be fully understood without connecting it to the home, or rather, without escaping from a dichotomous and masculine conceptualization of work and home.

SCLC has been chosen as the case study area since it displays a robust effect of globalization, as can be seen in the growth of tourism and the decline of agriculture after economic restructuring. Also, the region’s unique landscape related to its colonial history and the dynamics resulting from recent alternative social movements by its indigenous people, including not only the very well-known activity of the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional, EZLN), but also emergent feminist movements, offer a geography where we can observe distinct contexts of street vending in the region.

Keywords: Informal economic activities, Differing degrees of informality, Street vending, Feminist geography, Indigenous people, San Cristóbal de Las Casas, Chiapas

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I. Introduction

1. Research Relevance and Purpose

We engage in informal economic activities on a daily basis both consciously and unconsciously. When we go shopping, depending on the venue, we might pay for a T-shirt in cash and in return get a discount for an item and then grab a quick snack from a stand in the street. Many times, the activities of people in the informal sector are an important, and sometimes the only, source of income for them, because they cannot find formal employment. In particular, this concerns women in the Global South (ILO, 2013).

Though not considered to be the ‘movers and shapers’ of the global economy, they try to make the best out of their own situation in order to survive in our increasingly globalized world. This thesis suggests that our attention be focused on these other actors in the global economy. It focuses on economic processes which are informal, actors who are women, and a place which is in the Global South, all while keeping in mind the fact that they too are part of discursive economic globalization processes.

There is a plethora of research about economic globalization in many social science studies, including economic geography. However, it has been pointed out that most of the literature is centered on certain processes (e.g. formal processes), certain actors (e.g. states and multi-national corporations), and certain scales (e.g. national and global) and excludes many other grounded aspects of economic globalization (Nagar et al., 2002). Among others, informal economies, which have critical and active roles in contemporary society and economies (Nagar et al., 2002; Daniels, 2004), have been regarded as an incidental side of globalization in mainstream economic globalization studies (see Dicken, 2011).

On the other hand, literature about informal economic activities\(^1\) such as

\(^1\) For the purpose of this research, I followed the ILO’s definition of ‘informal employment’
street vending has been developed continuously, paying special attention to the economy of cities in the Global South (Arizpe, 1977; Tokman, 1978; Gilbert, 1994; De Soto, 2000; AlSayyad, 2004; Varley, 2013). However, issues specific to women have not been reflected sufficiently, despite the high tendency for women to engage in the informal economy (Agadjanian, 2002; ILO, 2002; Bueno Castellanos, 2009). In turn, this creates a need to examine labor market restructuring. Labor market restructuring related to the informal economy can be understood in terms of a gendered division of labor (Mackenzie, 1986). In Latin America, participation in the global economy and structural adjustments starting in the 1980s after the debt crisis lead to a change in labor market structures and an increase in informal economic activity (Gilbert, 1994; Raynolds, 1998; Alarcón and McKinley, 1999). When women join the labor pool in this context, the process is characterized by its gendered nature, particularly because there may be a maintaining of the patriarchal subordination of women (Raynolds, 1998; Coe et al., 2007, p.359).

This research is also informed by criticism of ‘masculinity’ in studies of geography (Rose, 1993) and a masculine conceptualization of work and the workplace, the topic of the 2014 AAG plenary and Roepke Lecture on economic geography (McDowell, 2014). The mainstream economic geography literature has regarded the workplace as clearly divided from home, while excluding or looking down on women’s roles and the value of their (both paid and un-paid) work in capitalist societies (McDowell, 1999; Coe et al., 2007, p.367).

At the same time, feminist geography has also been criticized for its racial one-sidedness (hooks, 1991) and for being less sensitive to the matter of class or ethnicity (Sharp, 2009, p.116), which has led to some self-reflection. As Garcia Ramon and Dina Vaiou (2006) point out, there is “…an Anglo-American dominance in feminist...”

which is “…all employment arrangements that do not provide individuals with legal or social protection through their work, […]”, whether or not the economic units they work for or operate in are formal enterprises, informal enterprises or households” (ILO, 2013, p.3) and have excluded ‘non-wage work’ which refers to “…unpaid work within the household” from informal economic activities (Gress and Paek, 2014, p.185).
geography,” and most feminist research about women’s work is still based on cases of formal economic activities in the developed world or the experience of white women (Dyck 1989; Brush, 1992; Meyerson and Kolb, 2000; Ross-Smith and Huppatz, 2010; Gress and Paek, 2014). Here arises the necessity to include, “…the diversity of women’s experience and to focus on the significance of geographical context in shaping those experiences” (IGU, 1992; Nast, 1994, p.55), and to decentralize the geographically biased nature of mainstream academic geography.

So the case study that forms the central pillar of this research is conducted in, 
*San Cristóbal de Las Casas* (from hence, *SCLC*), Chiapas, Mexico, where academic attention from economic geography has been scarce. If the selection of a field in feminist research has a political aim to tackle “…the preserve of the white, the masculine, and the abstract–the ivory tower”(Nast, 1994, p.57), my field selection seeks to incorporate a place which has been regarded as marginal as far as where critical economic activities of ‘people’ exist. In this respect, this research should not be viewed as merely something ‘exceptional, divergent and local’ (Garcia Ramon and Dina Vaiou, 2006, p.3).

Previous research related to the case study region has been conducted by scholars in the fields of anthropology and in the social movement literature (Castillo, 1997; Vargas-Cetina, 2001; Lopez, 2005; Nash, 2005; Ruiz, 2005; Berg, 2008; Pérez López, 2012). Although these works provide an in-depth perspective of the locality and the people, they do not succeed in showing how the place is intimately connected to ‘multiple-scales’ (Park, 2012), how people get affected by the ‘spatiality’ (Soja, 1989) to include both enabling and limiting conditions, and how people respond to the conditions both in passive and active ways through practices in daily life, sometimes leading to the change of a spatiality of a place. This work can be improved upon by approaching the topic from a feminist geographical perspective.

Taking the above as guidance, the purpose of this thesis is to expand the narrow focus of the conceptualization of work and economic activities in the mainstream economic geography and economic globalization literature. This is not to
say that previous research in mainstream economic geography is not important, but rather to point out the partiality of the literature which overlooks other crucial aspects of economic globalization, namely gender. This thesis attempts to address the significance of women’s informal economic activities in the Global South by, “...building an alternative ensemble of intellectual and material resources that can be used to pose and answer different kinds of questions” (Schoenberger, 2004, p.402).

Results from a case study of female street vendors in Mexico serve as the basis for analyses. Structural adjustments in Mexico and the market opening, culminating with the start of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1994, have stagnated the agricultural sector in the country (Alarcón and McKinley, 1999; Rhee, 2009) and have brought about rapid growth in the tertiary sector, especially tourism, in SCLC. I shall show how street vending of crafts is feminized due to its historical tradition, women’s material conditions, and the social construction of work. This study also highlights an area where home and work cannot easily be divided, thus opposing the presumption of the masculine concept of work which devalues women’s work and their economic activities.

To make the research manageable, I narrowed the scope to SCLC and a specific informal economic activity, street vending, which is highly visible, and to a specific type of street vending, craft-works vending, which is specific to the tourism industry. SCLC has been chosen as the case study area since it displays a robust effect of globalization, as can be seen in the growth of tourism and the decline of agriculture after economic restructuring. Also, the region’s unique landscape related to its colonial history and the dynamics resulting from recent alternative social movements by its indigenous people, including not only the very well-known activity of the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional, EZLN), but also emergent feminist movements, offer a geography where we can observe distinct contexts of street vending in the region.
2. Thesis Outline

The remainder of this thesis is organized into four parts. In Chapter II (Research Design and Methodology), (1) research design, (2) positionality of this research and the researcher, and (3) claim for grounded research are presented. Following that, Chapter III (Literature Review) provides (1) literature about women's economic activities and the feminist (economic) geography perspective, (2) geographical aspects of the informal economy and (3) street vending, and regional background of research area (4). Later, Chapter IV (Empirical Case Study) presents (1) empirical research questions for the case study, (2) methods of the case study, (3) results from the analysis, and (4) summary and further discussion generated from the empirical research. Lastly, in Chapter V (Conclusion), the thesis ends with a brief summary, limitations to the study, and direction and implications for future research.
II. Research Design and Methodology

This chapter presents research design and methodology. Firstly, it presents overall research design which is divided into analysis of materials of literature and fieldwork. Following that, positionality of the research and the researcher is provided. Finally, this chapter ends with locating this work in a series of grounded research.

1. Research Design

The research method is divided into two parts. First the literature review is separated into a theoretical discussion and a section on the regional background of SCLC. Previous studies on theories and arguments related to informal economies and feminization of informal economic activities were collected through an academic journal search site (http://scholar.google.com) and other journals, theses, reports, and books that could not be acquired via internet were collected using the library of Seoul National University and network of Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social (CIESAS). Other quantitative and qualitative information related to the regional background was acquired through Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI), reports made by local, national and international organizations, Mexican newspapers and books.

The second part consists of a case study about street vending in SCLC and the study’s related fieldwork. I stayed in SCLC from July 18th 2014 to August 28th 2014 as a visiting student in CIESAS Sureste (Southeast) with the help of Professor Maria Elena Martinez-Torres. I first spent about two weeks building an understanding of street vending through participant observation and light conversation with vendors, while visiting an indigenous children’s rights organization, Melel Xojobal, related to children.

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2 There exists previous research about children street vendors in SCLC (Pérez López, 2012) and a voluntary organization (Melel Xojobal) is highly active in grasping situation of the street. Their quantitative and qualitative data was a great additional source to my research.
street vendors and assisting in a feminist forum\(^3\) related to problems that women in the region have confronted since structural adjustment.

I produced some statistics in the field to show the profile and feminization of the work by counting the approximate age and sex of vendors, and the goods sold by vendors in each of the four types of vending locations unearthed. A large number of photographs were taken in the field to show the landscape related to the feminization of the work and the continuum of the workplace and home, since photographs can be an importance source in illustrating ‘an analysis’ for human geographers (Rose, 2008, p.158) and particularly play critical role in constructing and delivering information acquired through fieldwork (Sidaway, 2002). Interview was one of the most major sources of this research and I conducted with 50 vendors, with diversified age and gender vendor informants.

2. Situating the Research and the Researcher

As an Asian researcher concerned with ‘regional studies’, crossing many ‘borders’ resulting from gender, race, ethnic, national, cultural and class differences, I felt a strong need to situate myself sufficiently at the beginning of the project in terms of research ‘ethics’ (Spivak, 1988).

Feminist geographers have been highly critical about the ‘masculine’ nature of geography which, “...while claiming to be exhaustive, forgets about women’s existence and concerns itself only with the positon of men” (Rose, 1993, p.4). Schoenberger (2004) also points out this tendency in economic geography in her examination of the concept of ‘competitiveness’. She asserts that knowledge, which assumes to be ‘objective’, should be re-examined while considering the ‘knowing subject’ and the issue of ‘discourse’ which constitutes social reality.

\(^3\) Forum South-East of Analysis and Construction of Alternatives: Possession, use and usufruct of land for women (Foro Sur-Sureste de Análisis y Construcción de Alternativas: Tenencia, uso y usufructo de la tierra para las mujeres), from July 24\(^{th}\) to 26\(^{th}\), 2014.
‘Situating knowledge’ has been a crucial task for feminist geographers and a large number of methodological considerations to realize ‘reflexivity’ have been produced, especially in terms of fieldwork (England, 1994; Katz, 1994; Kobayashi, 1994; Nast, 1994). Rose (1997), for example, points out that many of these trials failed in claiming that the messiness of relationships can be fully understood, which she calls ‘transparent reflexivity’. Researchers still need to be conscious about the way they are positioned in the field, which can affect the results of the fieldwork (Turner, 2013). It is also important to admit ‘absences and fallibilities’ uncontrollable by the researcher (Rose, 1997) and to reveal honestly one’s limitations in doing research (England, 1994). I try to do this in this section.

When I was in the field conducting my research, my look and my Korean accent presented me as tourist, and a total stranger to the town. I actually first visited SCLC in 2011, after a one year stay in Mexico as an exchange student. I was an Asian tourist who had an idealized concept of the region, associating it with the Zapatista movement. So when I first approached vendors telling them that I was doing research on street vending and asking if they could help me out by answering some questions, most showed uncomfortableness or denied the interview, pretending not to be able to communicate in Spanish.

My time and budget limits did not allow me to communicate in Tzotzil or Tzeltal, the first language for most vendors, which might have provided a better a space of commonality with vendors. Fortunately, most of them could speak Spanish fluently, a skill gained from lots of years working as vendors or learned from their parents or at school. Still, especially for women over their 40s, there were some who could not communicate comfortably in Spanish. Nevertheless, I included them as research participants as not to exclude women from a certain social background.

Additionally, my positon as researcher established a certain power-relationship and limited the research process. Considering the education level in Chiapas, people, especially street vendors, are not accustomed to the world of

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4 In Chiapas, the average level of schooling of the population 15 years and over is 6.7 years.
academia, which could result in misunderstandings when I presented myself as a researcher. Also, considering that their work is happening in a somewhat grey area legally, it is not a delightful experience for them to let an unknown foreign researcher with a different ethnic heritage know about the reality of the street.

Gender and age of both the researcher and the research subject can have different effects on the research process (Tarrant, 2013). My identity as a young Asian woman in her twenties caused an ambivalent effect. While talking to some male vendors of around my age, there were some uncomfortable moments when I was considered as ‘exotic Asian woman’ and I had to stop the interview in the middle. However, my gender and age also helped establish a shared space of interaction, especially with middle-aged female vendors when, for example, I mentioned a potential topic of women’s commonality, like the sense of loss I, as a daughter, felt at the passing of my mother.

Nast (1994, p.54) points out that, “…we are always everywhere in between or negotiating the worlds of me and not-me,” and “…we are never outsiders or insiders in any absolute sense.” Though coming from the opposite side of the globe, my positionality was not fixed as an outsider during the whole research process, and differences and similarities were “…continuously constituting” (Rose, 1997, p.313).

Since it was my first attempt at doing fieldwork, I had a hard time asking people to participate in the interviews and was initially refused several times. After I had improved my interviewing skills, an interesting event occurred: a vendor lady around my age started to talk to me while I was still hesitating as to how I should start the ‘interview’, saying that she liked my iPhone and if I could take some pictures of her. Soon thereafter, she, her vendor family and I started to associate more frequently, which provided me a chance for participant observation – while helping them out with selling and arranging their goods - and also resulted in some cultural interactions - sharing some Korean jjimdak that I cooked with their tortilla. Thanks to this

compared a national average of to 8.6 years (INEGI, 2011c).
acquaintance who had approached me openly first, I realized that, unconsciously, I had been regarding myself as a researcher who is an outsider of the town, and therefore I had tried to just converse with vendors unilaterally, not telling much about myself or leaving room for people to ask about me and the place that I came from. In hindsight, it proved to be one very simple but crucial detail - that the research process should be led as an interaction rather than a rigid investigation, offering more chances of ‘in-betweenness’.

García Canclini (2000, p.8), while explaining modernity of Latin America in terms of globalization, defines hybridization as a “…sociocultural process in which discrete structures or practices combine to generate new structures, objects and practices”. Hybridity can be “…an unforeseen result of processes of migration, tourism, economic and communicational exchange,” many times, arising from, “…individual and collective creativity” (ibid., p.10). I consider my research a small process of ‘hibridación’ as I performed fieldwork in my third language with people who speak Spanish as their second. This was not just about communication between those who use different languages, but rather about “…coexistence of multi-temporal heterogeneity” of cultures (García Canclini, 1989; Lee and Kim, 2008), which can give room for in-between forms of understanding between the researcher and the researched (Smith, 1996, p. 165).

3. In Pursuit of Grounded Research

The last methodological consideration is about the pursuit of grounded research. A great deal of my research was based on observation and listening to the everyday life of street vendors at the local scale, following the feminist emphasis on “empirically grounded research” (Nast, 1994; Nagar et. al., 2002).

Still, investigating “…the detail of everyday life for understanding how human agency operates in local contexts” (Dyck, 1989, p.331) does not mean the researcher needs to be trapped in the locale itself. Rather, the researcher needs to grasp dynamic
interactions “...from the immensity of the global to the intimately tiny” (Massey, 2005, p.95) because “...the specificity of a place is not embedded in the local itself but is constituted through the interaction with other multiple scales” (Lee, 2013, p.53).

In the pursuit of grounded research, a case study about street vending in SCLC is deployed. I acquired most of my material from casual, semi-structured interviews and participatory observation during my fieldwork. In an attempt to do 'multi-scalar' geographic research, I tried to contextualize the details of everyday life within a broader national and global context.

The next chapter presents a literature review related to the subject of this research. It presents previous work on feminist geography’s understanding of women’s economic activities, informal economic activities, and street vending, in addition to regional background. Information.
III. Literature Review

The purpose of this chapter is to review the standing literature and the arguments related to the subject of this research. It consists of four parts: (1) reading women’s economic activities through a feminist geography perspective; (2) space and scale of the informal economy; (3) geographically situating street vending; and (4) regional background, which is divided into 4.1) Chiapas and the Mayan people, 4.2) economic background of Chiapas and SCLC, and 4.3) women in Chiapas.

1. Reading Women’s Economic Activities through a Feminist Geography Perspective

The first part of the literature review starts with a critical assessment of work made by a feminist geographer.

In Feminism & geography, Rose (1993) points out the masculinity of geography as a discipline which excludes women as both objects and subjects of the discipline. Rose names the first type of exclusion which omits geographies of women as research objects ‘social-scientific masculinity’ and the second type which objectifies women as other, ‘aesthetic masculinity’.

Similarly, in the 2014 AAG Roepke Lecture, McDowell (2014) started her presentation with ‘feminist challenges’, “...to masculinist theorizing and empirical focus” and described the ignoring of gender in economic geography. Though more than two decades have passed since Rose (1993) pointed out the masculine nature of geography, gender issues remain as urgent a task in (economic) geography studies as ever.

The concept ‘women’s economic activities’ is difficult to define and to quantify, and it infers methodological and theoretical dilemmas. Due to the fact that the concept of ‘work’ itself is based on ‘a masculine ideal of work’, it excludes many parts of women’s work performed for merely aperiodic pay or for free but still
contributing to livelihoods (McDowell, 1999, p. 125).

The interpretation of women's work from the feminist perspective started to develop in earnest from the 1970s as it extended from an analysis of political economy to more diverse issues, such as workplace culture, gendered aspects of power relationships and sexuality (ibid., p. 125). Unlike past explanations of female participation in income generating activities, which connected gendered work/workplace with the innate nature of women, feminist social scientists stress patriarchal discrimination in capitalist societies which generates women’s ‘horizontal segregation,’ ‘vertical segregation,’ and lower wages than men (ibid., p.126–7). Women are horizontally segregated in that they tend to be clustered in certain jobs, and vertically segregated in that their work tends to be located at the bottom of the job hierarchy.

Female dependency in the waged labor world tends to be maintained “… by (1) creating new gendered work spheres, (2) limiting women’s wages and opportunities for advancement, and (3) ideologically undervaluing women’s work” (Raynolds, 1998. P. 165). For instance, research about female managers in South Korea indicates that, although there have been policy changes geared toward the creation of gender equality in Korean organizations, most female managers are still centered in the lowest managerial positions, are excluded from formal and informal organizational networks, and have limited promotion opportunities compared to their male counterparts (Gress and Paek, 2014).

The social construction of gender roles and work is essential in building ‘female-dominated job ghettos’ (McDowell, 1999, p. 127). For example, in Mexico City, female street vendors tend to dedicate themselves to selling food rather than other goods, which has to do not only with the techniques that women already possess, but also with, “…the traditional image of women as providers of food” (Arizpe, 1997, p.34). On the other hand, gender roles are not fixed, but rather reproduced and reconstructed, especially when a cheap labor force is necessary. Raynolds (1998)’s research about agricultural/industrial labor market restructuring in the Dominican Republic indicates
that even when women are engaging in physically demanding work, which is traditionally described as men's work, tasks are assigned based on reconstructed gender roles and images – that men are good at handling machinery and women are careful - rather than a person's capability.

Several studies (Dyck, 1989; Bueno Castellanos, 2009; Johnston-Anumonwo and Doane, 2011; Wilson et al., 2012) suggest that women in capitalist societies, regardless of whether they are in the Global South or in the Global North, tend to participate in economic activities to find some extra source of income when an economic crisis or a structural change hits the society and when it becomes difficult to sustain a family with only the earnings of the breadwinning husband. However, whether women's participation in economic activities works in their favor or not is disputed (Johnston-Anumonwo and Doane, 2011).

Hanson (2009) indicates that women's entrepreneurial activities can contribute to advancing women's livelihoods and to changing the relationship between genders, especially when combined with governmental and nongovernmental aid. Similarly, Wilson's study (1993) on workshops in rural towns in Mexico suggests, desiptes some exploitative effects, women's waged work generates opportunities for women to realize and claim their rights and autonomy.

Nevertheless, other studies have stressed the limitations of women's economic activities. Drawing upon the work of Lefebvre (1991) to incorporate a spatial dimension into their analysis of women's waged labor, Gress and Paek (2014) introduced the concepts of 'abstract space', a homogenous space generated by status quo power, and 'differential space' which challenges 'abstract space'. They discover that the 'abstract space' of the status quo patriarchy does not change easily even when women are recognizing and practicing strategies to challenge discriminatory structures (Gress and Paek, 2014).

Espinal and Grasmuck (1997) also note that, though female entrepreneurship in the Dominican Republic enhances women's ability to influence household decision making, especially in traditional women's fields, it is not advanced enough to propel
them to the head of the family, even when their financial contribution to the household is bigger than their spouses.

More generally, the ‘feminization’ of the labor force in the context of flexible labor markets and the growth of the service sector has not always been beneficial for women. This has been reflected in their low pay and temporary contracts, and female workers in export manufacturing in the ‘New International Division of Labour’ are understood to be exploited by TNCs (Laurie, et al., 1997). Thus, though there are some women who take advantage of their new ‘opportunities’, more generally, “…women are underpaid in the formal sector and disproportionately employed in the informal sector” (Klak and Hey, 1992, p.224; Gilbert, 1994, p.616), representing their marginalization in the labor market.

Women, especially from the Global South, are predominantly found in the informal sector, which is due to shorter years of education (Asiedu and Agyei—Mensah, 2008), their lack of opportunities and experience in formal economic activities, and their obligations in the household (Espinal and Grasmuck, 1997, p.106). And in the Dominican Republic, even when running informal businesses, men have been found to have twice the amount of assets accumulated compared with women, and to generate higher incomes than women (ibid., p.111). Similarly, Asiedu and Agyei-Mensah (2008) point out the gender aspect of different degrees of informality in street vending in Ghana, noting that men tend to dedicate more time to businesses that require bigger capital inputs and that generate bigger profits than women.

In spite of a considerable amount of studies examining gendered aspects of informal economic activities, previous research has paid relatively little attention to the age difference between women and men. It has been noted that men tend to, “…join the street trade while young and leave for other jobs, while women join the trade later in life and continue until old age” (Asiedu and Agyei—Mensah, 2008, p.193). This leaves room for further investigation through grounded research.

Among the many causes of women’s vulnerability, both in the formal and informal sector, women’s duties as mothers confine them within a relatively small
spatial sphere when making job decisions, regardless of their location in the western or non-western world (Dyck, 1989; Shroeder, 2000; Wilson and Ivanova, 2012; Etzold, 2014). Rather than helping women to be free from household obligations, income generation becomes an additional responsibility of mothers (Raynolds, 1998), resulting in ‘double days’ for women (Laurie, et. al, 1997). Women’s domestic roles are likely to have a conflicting relationship with enhancing their position in the waged labor world (Espinal and Grasmuck, 1997; Gress and Paek, 2014), impeding promotion or extension of their business.

It is interesting to note that women can somewhat cope with their spatial constraints in income generation through the help of other women, either a member of the family or a friend in the community (Schroeder, 2000). Thus, ‘spatial arrangements’ for women workers are complicated by not only work opportunities available, but also household obligations, work and the existence of child-care providers (ibid., p.203).

Feminist geographers address the masculine nature of social sciences, including geography (Rose, 1993), and the notion that ‘work’ in economic geography is conceptualized within the patriarchal nature of the capitalist society (McDowell 1999; 2014). In general, the contention is that the workplace can be divided clearly from home, which has downplayed women’s work both at home and in their workplace (McDowell, 1999; Coe et. al., 2007 p.367).

Here, feminist geographers have paid attention to, “...the boundaries drawn between dichotomous categories such as home/work, and the spaces which they occupy, are more blurred than they might appear to be” (Laurie, et. al, 1997). Several activities and assets for micro-entrepreneurs are based at home (Espinal and Grasmuck, 1997), and, for instance, women textile weavers work in their home, but also travel to other towns or even abroad to find consumers (Goldin and Little, 2007).

In summation, Table 1 presents articles and authors that deal with major considerations for feminist economic geography research. Table 2 then summarizes affiliated themes and literature on Latin America.
Table 1 Major Considerations for Feminist (Economic) Geography Research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theoretical consideration</th>
<th>Main author(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Masculinity of geography</td>
<td>Rose (1993); McDowell (2014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecting home and wage workplace</td>
<td>McDowell and Massey (1984); Dyck (1989); Laurie et al. (1997); Schroeder (2000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social construction of work/workplace</td>
<td>McDowell (1997; 1999); Massey (1997)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender and organizational practices</td>
<td>Kang and Rowley (2005); Ross-Smith and Huppatz (2010); Gress and Paek (2014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changing places through economic activities</td>
<td>Hanson (2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Globalization and women’s informal economic activities</td>
<td>Gilbert (1994); Johnston-Anumonwo and Doane (2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding capitalism through a feminist geography view</td>
<td>Gibson-Graham (1996)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 Studies on Latin American Women's Economic Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major issues</th>
<th>Main author(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Labor market restructuring</td>
<td>Gilbert (1994); Raynolds (1998); Wilson et al. (2012)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal economic activities</td>
<td>Arizpe (1997); Espinal and Grasmuck (1997); Wilson (1998); Bueno Castellanos (2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empowerment of women</td>
<td>Wilson (1993); Cruz-Torres (2012)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperation and competition</td>
<td>Agadjanian (2002)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this section, I have outlined the view of women's economic activities through a feminist geography perspective, referring to Latin American studies about women's economic activities whenever possible. The following sections more specifically focus on the informal economy and street vending.

2. The Informal Economy: Space and scale

This section provides an overview of major literature on the informal economy. The impact of the informal economy first became known when Hart (1970; 1973) explained Ghana's dual economy stressing the informal sector (Bueno Castellanos, 2009). The ILO acknowledged the concept of the “informal sector” officially in 1972, which was vital to comprehend the reality in the periphery of the global economy (Tokman, 1978). Among others, discussions made in Latin America were critical to
broadening the understanding of the informal economy, taking into account social and political aspects (Alsayyad and Roy, 2004). Since the informal economy has to do with both visible and invisible extensive economic activities around the world, it is hard to clearly define what the informal economy is, and it is even more difficult to derive numbers that accurately portray the informal economy (Brown, 2006).

Nevertheless, there has been continuous effort to better define the informal economy in terms of measurement (ILO, 2013). Advancing from the past enterprise-based concept of the ‘informal sector’ to the broader job-based concept of ‘informal employment’ (Hussmanns, 2004), the ILO defines informal employment as, “…all employment arrangements that do not provide individuals with legal or social protection through their work, thereby leaving them more exposed to economic risk than the others, whether or not the economic units they work for or operate in are formal enterprises, informal enterprises or households” (ILO, 2013, p.3; emphasis added). The heart of this definition does not have to do with a certain type of ‘industrial group’ (Brown, 2006. P.5), but rather with vulnerability and the instability of economic activities undertaken by individuals.

Fairly recent literature about the informal economy stresses the continuity between the formal and informal sector and the fluidity of the concept which needs to be understood in a regional context (Alsayyad and Roy, 2004). Though average incomes of workers in the informal sector tend to be lower than those working in the formal sector (Brown, 2008), being part of the informal economy does not necessarily mean poverty.

Cross (2000) underlines the, ‘...differing degree of informality’, rather than dividing informal and formal sector via a strict dichotomy. Similarly, Daniels (2004) stresses the connectivity of the formal and informal sectors, addressing economic activities which are regarded as informal, yet in numerous cases are linked to the formal economy. Some economic activities are not fixed as either formal or informal since the state, as a creator of a ‘state of exception', can produce informality by legalizing/illegalizing or tolerating/expelling certain activities (Roy, 2005, p.155).
Accordingly, the informal economy can be understood as a ‘mode of urbanization’ which is, “...a series of transactions that connect different economies and spaces to one another” (ibid., p.148). For the purpose of the present research, the most critical characteristic of informal economic activity gleaned from these arguments is that it is not in terms of its legality, but rather its instability vis-a-vis outside stimulation and the, ‘...unprotected nature of the labor force’ (Wilson, 1998).

There are briefly two contrasting views when approaching informal economic activities, which boil down to different solutions. The fundamental division between the 'legalist' and 'structuralist' views stems from the difference in the belief that market capitalism can bring equality (Alsayyad, 2004, p.11; Rakowski, 1994). The first view comes from a more classical liberal economic view and it considers informal economic activities the ‘spirit of capitalism’ and an ‘opportunity’ for the poor (De Soto, 1989; Ghersi, 1997; De Soto, 2000). The reason for poverty in developing countries, according to De Soto (2000), is therefore the fact that, even though there are considerable assets, the poor are in a grey area without possessing legal ownership due to excessively complicated administrative procedures, which hinders them from developing into capital that can generate additional capital in the formal sector. In response to the state’s administrative incapacity, people respond creatively and spontaneously by engaging in informal economic activities, even violating laws (De Soto, 1989). In this sense, the market distortion made by an inefficient legal system and high cost of legalization excludes the urban poor from formal economic activities and ‘deregulation’ is in turn perceived to be an answer to this dilemma.

The latter group purports that urban informality comes from the ‘uneven nature of capitalist development’ (Rakawski, 1994) and currently it cannot be understood apart from the issues of globalization and liberalization (Alsayyad, 2004). This group deems that the informal sector works, “...not for accumulation but for surviving” (Bueno Castellanos, 2009, p.219) and stresses that deregulation has more exploitative impacts on the poor (Gilbert, 1994). Roy (2005) points out that a policy approach related to the informal economy should not disregard unequal possession of
assets and that legalization itself without wealth transfer cannot be a solution.

Moving one more step further, Bayat (2004) warns against either regarding the poor as merely passive actors or victimizing them excessively, and understands ‘urban informality’ such as street vending and squatting as, ‘...quiet encroachment of the ordinary’. It is, “...the silent, protracted, but pervasive advancement of ordinary people in relation to the propertied and powerful in order to survive and improve their lives” (ibid., p.90). This is individualistic rather than collectivist, but it can develop into a political movement when their survival is threatened, aiming to gain social goods and opportunities and attaining autonomy from the state and institutions (ibid., p.93).

Several academic works address the relation between economic globalization and the structural adjustments that often follow together with informal economic activities, processes that generally affect the poor negatively (Schroeder, 2000). More broadly, Cross (2000) connects the increase in informal economic activities with the postmodern global economy that is represented as a flexible accumulation system, substituting Fordist mass production. Especially in Latin America and Africa, trade liberalization and privatization caused an increase in unemployment in the formal sector, and structural adjustments cut social service expenditures, which in turn brought about an increased role for informal economic activities (Agadjanian, 2002; Gilbert, 2004; Aseidu and Agyei-Mensah, 2008).

In this context, informal economic activities can bring some social benefits, such as offering an alternative for people to engaging in criminal activities (Hart, 1977). Therefore, considering that the informal and the formal economy have different costs and benefits (Cross, 2000), the meaning of informal economic activities should be interpreted in the regional context (Bromley, 2000). Also, rather than coupling ‘informalization’ with social problems, (Gilbert, 2004), it is more important to find better means of, “...fulfilling individual and collective socio-economic goals” (Daniels, 2004, 508), whether they are informal or formal.

Table 3 presents a breakdown of major themes associated with informal economic activity.
In this section, a definition of informal employment, the continuity between the formal and informal sector, two contrasting views on informal economic activities and the relation between structural adjustments and informal economic activities have been reviewed. The following section presents in particular an overview of literature on street vending.

### 3. Geographically Situating Street Vending

Though informality is widely spread out in the urban space, “...the streets are the main, perhaps the only, place where many urban poor can perform their daily functions” (Bayat, 2004, p. 96) and street vendors are, “...amongst the most visible, [and] symbolic of the informal economy in cities” (Daniels, 2004, p. 503). Table 4 summarizes the literature to be reviewed in this section specifically dedicated to street vending.

#### Table 3 Major Literature on Informal Economic Activities (IEA)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major issues</th>
<th>Main author(s)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Definition of IEA</td>
<td>Hussmanns (2004); Brown (2006); ILO (2013)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The continuity between the formal and informal sector</td>
<td>Cross (2000); Alsayyad and Roy (2004); Daniels (2004); Roy (2005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IEA as the ‘spirit of capitalism’</td>
<td>De Soto (1989); Ghersi (1997); De Soto (2000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uneven nature of capitalism</td>
<td>Gilbert (1994); AlSayyad (2004); Roy (2005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiet encroachment of the ordinary</td>
<td>Bayat (2004)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structural adjustments and IEA</td>
<td>Cross (2000); Schroeder (2000); Agadjanian (2002); Gilbert (2004); Aseidu and Agyei-Mensah (2008)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Table 4 Major Literature on Street Vending

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major issues</th>
<th>Main author(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Definition of street vending</td>
<td>Stuadt (1996); Bhownik (2005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Types of street vending</td>
<td>Bromley (1998; 2000); Cross (2000); Etzold (2014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political aspects</td>
<td>Bromley (2000); Cross (2000); Crossa (2009); Hwang (2014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geographical implication</td>
<td>Hanson (2008); Etzold (2014)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A street vendor is defined as, “...a person who offers goods for sale to the public without having a permanent built-up structure from which to sell” (Asiedu and Agyei-Mensah, 2008, p. 191; Bhowmik, 2005) and their occupation of public space represents, “...a visible challenge both to those who regulate that space and to economic competitors who occupy nearby private space” (Stuadt, 1996, p.435). Hays-Mitchell (1994) observes the ‘spatio-temporal’ behaviors of street vendors in Peru and points out that they prefer to locate in the center of a city and that they tend to make a ‘cluster’ of similar goods, taking into account not only attraction of customers, but also their social relationships with relatives or friends and legal considerations.

As one of the most representative informal economic activities, street vending also has differing degrees of informality. For instance, some street stalls, “...may have a permit, but not pay taxes” (Cross, 2000, p. 38), but others might not have a permit or pay taxes. There are various types of street vending. Street vending differs basically in its location, frequency, and scale (Bromley, 1998, p.247), and can be, “...fixed, occasionally mobile or almost continuously mobile” (Bromley, 2000, p.2). Similarly, Etzold (2014) notes four types of street food vending in Dhaka, ‘mobile hawkers’, ‘semi-mobile hawkers’, ‘semi-permanent vendors’ and ‘permanent vendors owning illegally-built food stalls’. The author noted that the higher the degree of mobility of street vending, the higher the degree of instability and vulnerability.

The legality of street vending is not permanently fixed, but rather located in a grey area between the illegal and somewhat legal. Research on street vending in Seoul (Hwang, 2014) and in Mexico City (Cross, 2000; Crossa, 2009) shows that though it is regarded as illegal by authorities, it is intimately taken into consideration when making urban policy decisions, and instead of total eviction, they tend to offer the vendors alternative spaces to sell, showing a, “...complex coexistence of persecution, regulation, tolerance and promotion” (Bromley, 2000, p. 22). Street vendors can also make usage of their own political power or actively find various survival strategies against the control of authorities. Again, local and national authorities can be interpreted as
producers of a ‘state of exception’ for street vendors.

Despite the legal vulnerability and the meagerness and instability of income, street vending is a means of survival and a tool to improve the quality of life for the urban poor. Hanson (2008), from a feminist geography perspective, stresses that the meaning of economic activity should be evaluated based not only on job creation, innovation and regional development, but also on its impact on the livelihood of individuals or families and how people change their lives and the places where they live through it. In other words, street vending can be read as a, ‘...quiet encroachment of the ordinary’, and street vendors participate in ‘remaking cities from below’ by turning streets, “…into vivid market places, sites of consumption and leisure, and into livelihood arenas” (Etzold, 2014, p. 3).

In this section, a definition of street vending, various types of economic activity, a grey area where street vending is located, and geographical implications of street vending have been reviewed. The following section presents regional background information on Chiapas and SCLC before drawing out implication for the case study.

4. Regional Background: Chiapas and SCLC

This section provides regional background information. It consists of three parts: 1) General information about Chiapas, SCLC, and the indigenous people; 2) The economy in Chiapas and SCLC; and 3) Women in Chiapas and SCLC.

4.1. Chiapas, San Cristóbal de Las Casas, and the Indigenous People

(1) Chiapas

As one of the thirty-two Federal Entities of Mexico, Chiapas is located in the Southeastern part of the country, neighboring Guatemala and the states of Tabasco,
Veracruz, and Oaxaca (see Figure 1). For Central American refugees, the state is a part of the journey to the United States (Robledo Hernández, 2009, p. 30). The surface of the state is 73,311 km² or 3.73% of Mexico’s national territory. It consists of 9 regions (Centro, Altos, Fronteriza, Frailesca, Norte, Selva, Sierra, Soconusco, and Istmo-Costa), which are divided into 118 municipios. Among others, Tuxtla Gutiérrez, the capital of the state, San Cristóbal de las Casas, and Tapachula are considered the most representative towns (Gobierno del Estado de Chiapas, 2014). Generally, the state has a tropical climate, but it also has an alpine climate in the highlands. As a central area of ancient Mayan culture, archeologically important ruins such as Palenque, Yaxchilán, Bonampak, and Chinkultic can be found in the state.

![Figure 1 Map of Mexico](image-url)

According to an investigation by Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI, 2011a), there are 4,796,580 inhabitants in the state of Chiapas, which is 4.3% of
Mexico's total population. Women make up 50.9% of the state population. The state has the second highest indigenous population in the country, following Oaxaca. The average birthrate in 2009 was 2.63, a considerably lower number compared to 4.50 in 1992, due to an increase in the use of contraception. Still, it is the second highest in the country, following the state of Nayarit (2.66) (CONAPO, 2011). Indigenous women tend to have more children than other mestizo and ladino women, and some even have eight or more children (Olivera, 2004b, p.87). The average annual rate of population growth from 2005 to 2010 was 2.2%, higher than the national average of 1.8% (INEGI, 2011b). This information is relevant to the present research as women's child rearing obligations are taken into account.

1,141,499 people above the age of 5, or 27% of the whole population of the state, can speak indigenous languages - among others, tseltal (37.9%) and tsotsil (34.5%) are the most frequently spoken- and 14 among every 100 people who can speak an indigenous language cannot speak Spanish at all (INEGI, 2011a). The average level of schooling of the population aged 15 and above in the state is 6.7 years, compared to a national average of 8.6 years (INEGI, 2011c). Women in the state tend to have less education than men, since 321,692 women above the age of 15 do not have any school education, compared to only 198,070 men (ibid.).

Chiapas is considered one of the poorest states in Mexico (Proceso, Oct. 13, 2013). Nine out of fifteen municipios nationwide where a majority of the population is poor are located in Chiapas, whereas none of Mexico's 15 richest municipios are there (CONEVAL, 2011). 4,796,580 people, or 49% of total population, live in urban areas

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5 A person born from a father and mother of different races, especially a white man and an indigenous woman or an indigenous man and a white woman (Translated to English from Spanish Language Dictionary of Real Academia Española (RAE), Accessed on December 1, 2014).

6 Mestizo who only speaks Spanish (Translated to English from Spanish Language Dictionary of Real Academia Española (RAE), Accessed on December 1, 2014).

7 The percentage of the population with at least an upper secondary education is 20% of the national population in the case of Mexico, compared to the OECD average of 49% and 50% in the U.S.
compared to 51% in rural areas. The urbanization rate is significantly lower than the national average (78%) (INEGI, 2011a).

Traditionally the urban area of the state was predominantly occupied by ladinos, non-indigenous people, and most indigenous people stayed in rural areas. However, from the 1970s and onward, many indigenous people have moved to urban areas such as SCLC, searching for jobs or due to political and religious reasons (Robledo Hernández, 2009, p. 58-9). Some of the immigrated indigenous population, particularly those from San Juan Chamula, have settled down more firmly than others, living with better economic conditions (ibid., p.54).

At the beginning of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in January of 1994, Chiapas became famous globally not for its ancient heritage, but for the revolutionary peasant uprising of the ‘Zapatista Army of National Liberation’ (EZLN: Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional). Autonomous movements by the indigenous people in Chiapas rose up several times for centuries. As one of the most representative, the Tojolabal tribe in the 1980s claimed their own right to their territory. The claim of the EZLN was not only against the negative effects of economic globalization represented by the trade agreement, or against the discriminating attitude of the state against indigenous people’s rights after the independence of the country in the nineteenth century, but also against a 500 year of history of colonization which persists to the current day (Marcos, 2002). As a result of several negotiations between the government and the National Forum of Indigenous People, an agreement (Acuerdos de San Andrés) was reached in February of 1996, which included topics such as indigenous rights and culture, democracy and justice, welfare and development, reconciliation in Chiapas, and women’s rights (Kim, 2013). However President Zedillo vetoed the agreement in November and insisted on its modification, worrying about the loss of control of natural resources in Chiapas, which led the Zapatista movement to change its course towards the achievement of self-government from 1997 and onward (ibid.).
(2) San Cristóbal de Las Casas

San Cristóbal de Las Casas, the research area for the present study, located in the Altos (highlands) region in Chiapas (see figure 2), was named after priest Bartolomé de las Casas, a guardian of the rights of indigenous people during the colonial era, and now is regarded as the ‘cultural capital of the state’ (El informador, 2011). According to a census by Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI, 2011a), the total population of the town is 185,917 and women represent 52.1% of the population. The higher percentage of women is a result of men’s migration to other cities in Mexico or to the United States when they cannot find employment in the town, especially among indigenous people from rural towns in Chiapas (Robledo Hernández, 2009).

Figure 2 Map of the State of Chiapas

59,943 people above the age of 5, which is 37% of the whole population of SCLC, can speak indigenous languages and tsotzil is the most frequently spoken, followed by tseltal (INEGI, 2011a). 17 among every 100 people who can speak an indigenous language cannot speak Spanish at all (ibid.). The average level of schooling
of the population aged 15 and above in SCLC is 8.3 years, compared to a state average of 6.7 years, due to the high concentration of institutions of higher education in the town (INEGI, 2011c). Women in the state tend to have less education than men, since 10,493 women above the age of 15 do not have any school education, compared to only 4,926 men (ibid.).

Though it used to be a ladino dominated society until the 1940s, SCLC has experienced a big influx of population from rural towns. Especially after the 1970s, the establishment of new colonias in the periphery of the city, such as La Hormiga and Primero de Enero, came about due to more education and economic opportunities in SCLC, government repression toward the peasants’ uprisings in the rural towns, and among others, expulsion of evangelists from traditional catholic communities (Robledo Hernández, 2009, p. 31-2). Since Catholics of the rural societies were intimately connected to the tradition, costumes, and social life in the community and deeply embedded in this power-relationship, people's conversion to evangelism meant a disconnection with the communities and a threat to the authority of the privileged class, which called for a violent conflict and expulsion (ibid., 38-40).

In addition to the influx of indigenous population to SCLC, there are also a number of Mexicans from other states and foreigners with various nationalities. However, a ‘symbolic border’ drawn by ethnicity is still maintained, marking the indigenous people as ‘others’ and limiting their scope of activity spatially (Robledo Herández, 2012, p.51-7).

The next section provides historical change and current information on the status of the economy in Chiapas and SCLC.

4.2. The economy in Chiapas and San Cristóbal de Las Casas

The agriculture of milpa (corn/corn field) is traditionally the most critical part of a Mesoamerican economy, which dates back to 2000 B.C., and foods based on maize
are the most basic meal for the Mayan people and all over Mexico (Goldin and Little, 2007). Even today, in the highland region, though its topography and climate are not suitable for agriculture, smallholding agriculture stands out, mostly for self-consumption (Robledo Hernández, 2009, p. 29-30). In milpa agriculture, men and women have complementary roles, and while men mainly care for the field, women cultivate vegetables and livestock and produce daily necessities (Goldin and Little, 2007).

During the colonial period, though the traditional agriculture system was maintained in many communities, many new crops, stocks and cultivation skills were introduced from Europe, and repartimiento, a compulsory labor system, mobilized the indigenous labor force in the fields of colonizers (Burkhart and Gasco, 2007). Lands which were expropriated by Europeans on a massive scale were dedicated to growing commercial crops, especially coffee in Chiapas. Many indigenous people who lost their land were degraded to the status of peasant or tenant farmer (Goldin and Little, 2007) or became de facto slaves, working in mines, logging, and on plantations (Olivera, 2004b, p.66).

Mexico’s independence in the 19th century did not bring any prosperity nor autonomy to the chiapanecos, but rather extended capitalist agriculture which gave rise to even tougher working conditions, especially in haciendas and coffee fields forged from foreign and national capital (Robledo Hernández, 2009, p. 34). Even the Mexican revolution and land reform in the 20th century did not extend to plantations in Chiapas until the 1970s due to the owners’ influence on land distribution (Olivera, 2004b, p.81).

Import Substitution Industrialization in Mexico, which lasted from the 1940s to the 1980s, intended to grow and protect national industries at the expense of agriculture, marginalizing rural areas including Chiapas. The prices of agricultural products were kept low for the national market and export benefits of commercial crops were in the hands of owners of plantations, while indigenous people were
working in a servile status (Olivera and Vázquez, 2004, p.92-3). The petroleum boom and accompanying good economic conditions brought some modernizing projects to Chiapas, such as those associated with the exploitation of natural resources, construction of infrastructure and the development of tourist zones, and helped to establish niche labor markets. However, a sudden debt crisis in the 1980s and a drop of international prices for crops caused high unemployment (Robledo Hernández, 2009, p. 36).

Afterwards, neoliberal reforms, given as a solution to the debt crisis of the 1980s, expanded agroindustry and commerce. This also saw the establishment of big hydroelectric plants financed with foreign capital, petroleum development and an emphasis on the tourism industry, stressing the ‘comparative advantage’ of the region (Olivera and Vázquez, 2004, p.92-3). However, these measures which did not confer any benefits upon most indigenous people. In this context, men tended to find work in construction as day laborers, itinerant vendors, and tenant farmers, while women, and even children, tried to complement insufficient incomes with domestic service, micro business, small agriculture in the backyard and artisanal production (Robledo Hernández, 2009, p. 66-7). When it was not possible to find these jobs with meager wages, people left the town and moved to bigger cities or even crossed borders (ibid., 138; Rhee, 2009). Men are more likely to emigrate easily and have more mobility than women and children (Goldin and Little, 2007), which is reflected in the ratio of men to women in SCLC (women 52.1% and men, 47.9%) (Robledo Hernández, 2009).

In Chiapas, the primary industry makes up 8.92% of the economy, the secondary 25.37%, and tertiary 65.71%, reflecting a strong tourism effect (INEGI, 2010). In SCLC, there are no factories nor maquiladoras (Pérez López, 2012, p.59) and the most important source of income in the region is also the tertiary sector, which consists of commerce and services related to tourism and employs 67% of the workforce of the town (Gobierno del Estado de Chiapas 2010). After the uprising of EZLN, SCLC became a famous tourist destination, not only for its colonial and exotic landscape with a high
indigenous population, but also for the image of ‘adventure and social revolution’, namely, ‘Zapaturismo’ (Berg, 2008).

The following section provides historical and current information on the status of women in Chiapas and SCLC.

4.3. Women in Chiapas and San Cristóbal de Las Casas

Gender relationships in Chiapas in the pre-Hispanic period, though not completely equal with a certain degree of hierarchy, stressed ‘complementarity’ between different gender roles (Rosenbaum and Eber, 2007). Women in traditional Mayan society were a symbol of ‘land and harvest’ and their major works were performed at home. Rather than female subordination, women contributed to the household economy as much as men (Robledo Hernández, 2009, p. 122-3). While men went hunting or working in the corn fields, women took care of the home and children, produced household necessities, and raised domestic animals and vegetables (Rosenbaum and Eber, 2007).

The distortion of gender complementarity and severe degradation of indigenous women’s status occurred as the colonial period started and Catholicism in particular played a critical role in stigmatizing and controlling women based on the notion of the ‘original sin’ (Olivera, 2004b). Female domination under men is understood to be imported from the patriarchal occidental world and indigenous women suffer both racism and sexism, meaning double marginalization (Mendoza, 2010). In this respect, gender in Latin America should be understood vis-a-vis ethnicity and class, especially paying attention to the colonization process (Olivera, 2004a).

Colonialization brought the market system with it, and as the capitalist economy expanded into the indigenous communities, women started to find a source
of income as well, but with a more subordinated status compared to male workers (Olivera, 2004b). In the nineteenth century, women worked both in the rural and urban areas. Female farm workers did the same job as men, harvesting, cutting, washing, drying and selecting coffee, but they also had to engage in domestic work for their patrons, many times, leading to sexual harassment (Olivera, 2004b, P.78). Some women worked in the cities to pay back their family’s debt and most of them engaged in domestic services for rich mestizos without any salary while being exposed to violence from the employer (ibid., p.79). Considering these conditions, women took part in the revolution as a major actors in peasant uprisings for centuries (Robledo Hernández, 2009).

Despite women's early incorporation in the waged labor world, most women's obligations were tied mostly to their homes. Men, either their father or their husband, did not allow women to work ‘outside’, and this situation persists even today (Robledo Hernández, 2009). However, this started to change rapidly after the economic crisis in the 1980s, as women were urged to engage in remunerated work and to generate a financial contribution to the family, especially when their husband is an alcoholic, cheats on them, abandons the family or passes away (Olivera and Vázquez, 2004).

Many women in Chiapas find their in the niche labor market associated with the increasing role of the tourism industry in the region, making artisanal products or cooking. Via these forms of economic activity, they can connect their traditional capacity to income generation (Robledo Hernández, 2009). More specifically, in SCLC, many women work as a domestic workers, cook at economic restaurants, and sell food, flowers, or craftwork as itinerant vendors or in an artisanal market such as in the park of Santo Domingo, which was once threatened with removal by the government (ibid., p. 137). On the other hand, street peddlers work under more precarious conditions than market vendors (Robledo Herández, 2012, p.56), suffering, “...racist rejection of hoteliers and restaurant owners that prohibit them from entering their property” (Olivera, 2004b, p.84).
Women’s participation in economic activities have somewhat contributed to their influence and have changed past gender relationships, especially in urban areas (Robledo Hernández, 2009, p.136-7). However, the ‘provider’ of the family is still considered to be a man’s role, and domestic labor is predominantly performed by women even when they are working as a ‘provider’ (ibid., p.148). Furthermore, women can find jobs in a very limited amount of fields with poor working conditions and low incomes. Language capacity works as one of the major barriers, especially for many adult women, when reaching for better and broader job opportunities, unlike men and the younger generation who can speak Spanish more fluently (ibid., p.150).

Gender inequalities and misogyny in Chiapas are more serious than in the rest of the country in terms of exclusion from society and are driven by legal and political persecution and violence against women in their homes (Ruiz, 2005). Among others, male alcoholism is a major cause of violence committed against women (Glantz et al., 1998) and this was pointed out as one of the major issues that needs to be fixed in zapatista communities (Kim, 2011). Femicide, mostly targeting female family members, is also a serious problem in Chiapas. In 2012, ninety-seven women were victims of this crime but punishment for the crime tends to be light (Proceso, Aug. 8, 2013). Activists and feminist organizations in SCLC declared an ‘Alerta de Violencia de Género’ (Alert of Gender Violence) in response to the recent increase of misogynistic crime in the region from 1993 on. Institutes such as Obsevatoria Ciudadano Nacional del Feminicidio (OCNF), Procuraduría General de Justicia del Estado (PGJE), ONU Grupo de Mujeres de San Cristóbal de Las Casas are working on the issue actively (Proceso, Jul. 3, 2013).

On the other hand, some studies show signs of feminism in the Zapatista movement from a very early stage. It has been pointed out that organized feminism is not just the mere result of the guerilla struggle in Chiapas, but that it also influenced the guerilla movement, showing a reciprocal relationship between women’s organizing and indigenous people’s rights (Kampwirth, 2004). In the Agreement of San Andrés, ‘...the right of women and gender equality’ were included as major issues (Kim 2011).
The relationship between men and women and role allocation in the guerrilla movement tend to be equal, though traditional gender roles persist within homes even for the guerrilla members (Kampwirth, 2004).

More Zapatista and non-Zapatista women in Chiapas have been participating in public life recently, taking part in craftwork cooperatives, committees of service management in the colonias, and regional NGOs for women’s right (Robledo Hernández, 2009, p.151). In the forum I attended (‘Forum South-East of Analysis and Construction of Alternatives: Possession, use and usufruct of land for women’), the issue was not limited to the rights of women and the feminist movement, but also included broader issues such as land rights and building awareness of the detrimental impacts of neoliberal development policy.

Following this section, the last section of this chapter ends with a summary of literature review and implication for case study of this thesis

5. Summary and Implication for the Thesis

In this chapter, I reviewed the arguments related to the subject of this research, divided into four parts.

The literature review in the first section provided a description of women’s economic activities through a feminist geography perspective. This included theoretical consideration about the masculinity of geography, the connection between the home and workplace, the social construction of work/workplace, organizational gender practices, changing places through women’s economic activities, and women’s economic activities in the informal sector. Studies on women’s economic activities in Latin America complemented the theoretical consideration with a regional focus on labor market restructuring, informal economic activities, the empowerment of women through economic activities and cooperation and competition between women.
Following that, the second section presented a definition of informal employment, the continuity between the formal and informal sector, two contrasting views on informal economic activities, and the relation between structural adjustments and informal economic activities.

After that, the third section further delved into the definition of street vending, various types of the economic activities, a grey area where street vending is located, and the geographical implications of street vending.

Lastly, the final section provided a regional background with more general information, and described the economy and gender issues in Chiapas and SCLC.

For the case study, this research focuses on certain points and arguments made in the review of the literature. Firstly, following Etzold's study (2014) about food street vendors which introduced four types of street vending, different types of street vending in SCLC are identified through the case study.

Following that, the case study investigates the spatial differentiation and differing degrees of informality of different types of street vending in SCLC. In the literature review, it was noted that street vending differs in location, frequency, scale (Bromley, 1998, p.247) and mobility (Bromley, 2000, p. 2), presenting differing degrees of informality.

This study also looks into gender impacts affecting spatial differentiation. Espinal and Grasmuck (2997) and Agyei-Mensah (2008) have addressed the fact that women are predominantly found in the informal sector, and even when running informal economic activities, men tend to be found more in businesses which require bigger capital inputs and generate higher income than women.

Previous studies examining gendered aspects of informal economic activities have not paid sufficient attention to the age difference between women and men. Asiedu and Agyei-Mensah (2008) addressed that men tend to dedicate themselves to informal economic activities only in the earlier stage in life, whereas women tend to work in the informal sector for their whole life. The case study examines age-based
impacts on gender and street vending in SCLC.

This research focuses specifically on the process of feminization of street vending in SCLC. Though many ‘multi-scalar’ factors come into play when researching the feminization of work, for analytical purposes, four factors were drawn from the previous literature review: 1) Lack of other opportunities for women compared to men (Espinal and Grasmuck, 1997; Robledo Hernández, 2009); 2) Immigration (Robledo Hernández, 2009); 3) Social construction of work (Arizpe, 1997; Raynolds, 1998; Massey, 1997; McDowell, 1999); and 4) Women's obligation of housekeeping and parenting (Dyck, 1989; Shroeder, 2000; Wilson and Ivanova. 2012; Etzold, 2014).

Lastly, feminist geographers have found a deconstructed, dichotomous conceptualization of home and work which has downplayed women’s work both at home and in their workplace (Laurie, et. al, 1997; McDowell, 1999; Coe et. al., 2007). In this regard, this case study seeks to understand ‘boundaries’, if any, drawn between the home and workplace from women's street vending activities in SCLC to potentially eliminate the dichotomous conceptualization.
IV. Case Study: Qualitative research augmented by empirical data

This chapter introduces an empirical case study about indigenous women’s street vending in SCLC. It includes (1) three research questions drawn from the previous literature review, (2) an explanation of methods deployed for the data collection, (3) results from the analysis, and (4) discussion.

1. Research Questions

As a part of an ongoing effort to expand the narrow focus of the conceptualization of work and economic activities, this study raises three major research questions (RQ) based on the previous literature review on feminist geography, informal economic activities and street vending. The first RQ is split into three sub-RQs, and the third, into two.

RQ 1 explores street vending in SCLC, spatial aspects of street vending in SCLC, and, finally, gender impacts of the spatial nature of street vending in SCLC.

RQ 1(a) What types of street vending take place in SCLC?

RQ 1(b) Is there spatial differentiation between street vendor types in SCLC which reflect ‘differing degrees of informality’?

RQ 1(c) Does gender impact the spatial differentiation of street vendor types in SCLC?

Different types of street vending (RQ 1(a)) were categorized based on participant observation and photos taken during fieldwork. ‘Differing degrees of informality’ between spatially differentiated street vendor types (RQ 1(b)) were explored through participant observation and interviews with 50 vendors in SCLC. Gender impacts on spatial differentiation between street vendor types (RQ 1(c)) were
identified through descriptive statistics of basic profiles of different types of street vendors.

RQ 2 delves into age-based impact on gender and street vending in SCLC.

RQ 2 Are there age-based gender influences impacting the process of feminization of street vending in SCLC?

To identify age-based gender influences, statistics with basic profiles of street vendors, which include gender and the approximate age of vendors, were used. Additionally, in the interviews, questions that have to do with generational succession between women are included.

RQ 3 broadly explores the feminization of street vending in SCLC including the work-home nexus.

RQ 3(a) What brings about the feminization of street vending in SCLC?

RQ 3(b) Is the vending workplace perceived as clearly separated from home? If not, why not?

Data for RQ 3(a) were acquired mostly through interviews, which included questions about (limited) opportunities for women, immigration, the social construction of work, and women's duties of housework and parenting. RQ 3(b) is informed by some of the interview answers to RQ 3(a) (about women's duties revolving around housework and parenting even when generating income) and is augmented by a photograph collection which characterizes the coexistence of home and work.

In this section, RQs for a case study and brief methods to answer the RQs have been outlined. The following section presents a more detailed explanation of research methods including the interview questions.
2. Methods of the Case Study

There are three major methods of data collection deployed in the case study: descriptive statistics, interviews, and participant observation.

2.1. Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were generated and analyzed to formulate basic profiles of different types of street vending in SCLC. The place of vending, sex, approximate age and goods of the vendors were counted to show the ‘gender impact on spatial differentiation between street vendor types’ (RQ 1(c)) and ‘age-based gender influences impacting the process of feminization of street vending’ (RQ 2).

In somewhat fixed vending places, several family members were working together in the same spot. Due to time and financial limits, it was difficult for an individual researcher to ask all the vendors about the exact ownership of their business. Furthermore, most accompanying family members, including children, were working together. Since the aim of the exercise was to show gender and generational aspects of street vending, all family members, except those in the infantile age group, were counted as participating in the work. Altogether, 691 vendors were counted, 164 vendors in type one vending, 216 in type two, 215 in type three, and 96 in type four.

Approximate age groups were divided into six categories, 1) infants, 2) children, 3) adolescents, 4) youth, 5) middle-aged, and 6) seniors. Selling items and services were categorized into eight types: 1) Craftworks including embroidered textiles, bracelets, belts and other accessories with ethnical characteristics; 2) jewels, especially

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⑧ Since this type of vendor was walking constantly around the central area of the town, I could not figure out the exact number of these vendors. Alternatively, I counted the vendors I came across as I walked through the major three streets and two squares, which are the major activity spheres for the vendors.

⑨ Due to the high number of type three vendors, I only counted vendors in and around a third of the type three market area.
amber; 3) food and snacks; 4) leather work; 5) cigarettes and small snacks; 6) shoe shining; and 7) others.

2.2. Semi-structured Interview

To complement the quantitative description of street vending, semi-structured interviews were performed during fieldwork. Interviews can be a great source of information about ‘events, opinions, and experiences’ of people, in particular when it comes to research about “...marginalised or subaltern groups, whose opinions are rarely heard” (Dunn, 2005, p.80). I conducted 50 interviews with four different types of vendors in SCLC of diverse ages and both sexes (Table 5).

Table 5 List of Interview Participants (Gender, Civil Status, Age)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vending Type 1</th>
<th>Vending Type 2</th>
<th>Vending Type 3</th>
<th>Vending Type 4</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F, Single, 8</td>
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<td>F, Single, 17</td>
<td>F, Single, 22</td>
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<tr>
<td>F, Single, 12</td>
<td>F, Single, 19</td>
<td>F, Single, 18</td>
<td>F, Married, 23</td>
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<tr>
<td>F, Single, 13</td>
<td>F, Single, 21</td>
<td>F, Married, 18</td>
<td>F, Married, 25</td>
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<tr>
<td>F, Single, 14</td>
<td>F, Married, 26</td>
<td>F, Married, 23</td>
<td>F, Married, 28</td>
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<td>F, Single, 40</td>
<td>F, Married, 31</td>
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<td>F, Married, 23</td>
<td>F, Married, 33</td>
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<td>F, Married, 36</td>
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<tr>
<td>F, Married, 35</td>
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<td>F, Single-mom, 44</td>
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<tr>
<td>F, Married, 42</td>
<td>M, Single, 21</td>
<td>M, Single, 16</td>
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<td>F, Married, 60</td>
<td>M, Married, 38</td>
<td>M, Married, 25</td>
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<td>F, Single-mom, 22</td>
<td>F, Single-mom, 17</td>
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<td>F, Single-mom, 35</td>
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<td>F, Single-mom, 38</td>
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<td>F, Single-mom, 50</td>
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<td>M, Single, 7</td>
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Casual questions related to the RQs made out of ‘easily understood language’ were asked in the form of ‘semi-structured interviews’ so as to learn more about the
research area, street vendors and street vending, but were not limited to certain questions prepared previously (see Dunn, 2005). Every interview was performed in Spanish, taking on average 20-30 minutes for each interview. As mentioned before, though there were some who could not communicate comfortably in Spanish, I included them as research participants so as not to exclude women of a certain social background.

Many researchers who focus on people in marginal status (e.g. England, 1994; Cross, 1998) stress the importance of real dialogue and open interview skills, “...to understand the people studied in their own terms” (England, 1994, p.82). It was a very urgent task for me to loosen the rigidity of the situation caused by me being a foreign researcher and to generate a natural atmosphere so that I could listen to the voices of the vendors. Key to a successful interview, building rapport with informants not only at the beginning of the interview, but also during the interview, is critical (Dunn, 2005). I tried to create a narrative typical of a curious Asian tourist being interested in the street vendors’ lives in order to ‘warm-up’, and most of the questions related directly to the research were an extension of the ‘warming up’ conversation. Due to the many constraints that I had, my research does not come close to a ‘testimonial narrative’ (Beverley, 1993) consisting of the voice of the ‘subaltern’, the people in the marginal status. However, I approached the interview process more like an interactive casual conversation to avoid describing the vendors as exotic “Others”.

When performing research related to people in a marginal status, there is a risk of ‘exploitation and betrayal’ by revealing information that is better to be unknown to outsiders, presenting an ethical problem (England, 1994). While performing interviews, I made every effort to exclude any questions that had to do with possible ‘secrets’ held by informants (Gress and Bagchi-Sen, 2007) in an attempt to try not to contribute further to the vulnerability of the vendors.

One of the techniques of open interviews has to do with picking a proper place and circumstance for the interview. Elwood and Martin (2002) point out that the
The interview site not only affects the way research participants behave and the contents of the interview, but also creates a “micro-geography” where further understanding related to the field can be acquired. For me, their workplace itself was the best site, not only due to my 'positionality', but also to make a “micro-geography”, where chances for 'sort of' participatory observations were offered. Therefore, the interviews were performed in their workplace, but only when they were not busy so as not to interrupt their work.

The following main questions were prepared before conducting the interviews:

(1) Basic Information:

Sex, age, town of origin, current area of residence, method and time to get to work, approximate years of performing this work, education level, Spanish capacity and first language, membership in certain kind of vendors’ associations, accompanying family members, and motives for starting current work.

(2) Questions related to the RQ 1(b) (Is there spatial differentiation between street vendor types in SCLC which reflect 'differing degrees of informality'?):

1) “How did you get your current vending spot?” (Only to those who have a more fixed spot of selling, Type 2-4 vendors)
2) “Have you ever worked as a hawker before?” (Only to those who have a more fixed spot of selling, Type 2-4 vendors)
3) “Would you like to move into a more fixed and stable selling place if there is a chance?” (Only to those who working in an open space, Type 1-3 vendors)

(3) Questions related to the RQ 2 (Are there age-based gender influences impacting the process of feminization of street vending in SCLC?):
1) “Did your mother use to work as this type of vendor with you when you were young? What is she doing now?”
2) “What do you want to do in the future? Do you want to keep doing this work?”
(Only to children and adolescent vendors)

(4) Questions related to RQ 3(a) (What brings about the feminization of street vending in SCLC?):

Though many factors come into play when researching the feminization of work, for analytical purposes, four factors were drawn from the previous literature review: 1) Lack of other opportunities for women compared to men (Espinal and Grasmuck, 1997; Robledo Hernández, 2009); 2) Immigration (Robledo Hernández, 2009); 3) Social construction of work (Arizpe, 1997; Raynolds, 1998; Massey, 1997; McDowell, 1999); 4) Women’s housekeeping and parenting obligations (Dyck, 1989; Shroeder, 2000; Wilson and Ivanova, 2012; Etzold, 2014).

1) Lack of other opportunities for women compared to men
   - “What are other work options for women in this region to make money aside from this type of vending?”
   - “Would you prefer to have another type of job to this work?”
   - “To what work do men in this region dedicate?”, “Do men have more job opportunities than women?”

2) Immigration
   “Do men from this region move to bigger cities or go to other countries to find better job opportunities? Do you have any family members who left town?”

3) Social construction of work
   - “Is selling craftwork considered a woman’s job?”
4) Women’s housekeeping and parenting obligations

- “Do you have children? What do you (or did you use to) do with them when you leave (left) home for work? Do (or did) you have to take care of them even when you are (were) working here?” (Only to women vendors)

- “Does he help you with taking care of children or doing house chores?” (Only to married women vendors)

The direct responses to these questions are the main source of research material and more information acquired through interviews was added when necessary. The next section presents participant observations, which complement the gap generated from what I was not able to ascertain from direct answers to the interview questions.

2.3. Participant Observation

In addition to semi-structured interviews, participant observation consists of another critical qualitative source of the case study. Two types of observation related to research can be distinguished: primary and secondary observation (Kearns, 2005). For primary observation, a researcher him/herself observes and interprets human activity while also becoming a participant. For secondary observation, a researcher interprets what others have observed, such as analyzing images on postcards. What I mostly engaged in for this research was primary observation during fieldwork, making me somewhat of a participant.

Participant observation is crucial in developing a understanding of ‘everyday interactions’ of human beings, and when, “...developing a geography of everyday experience requires us to move beyond reliance on formalized interactions such as those occurring in interview” (Kearns, 2005, p. 195). At the beginning of my fieldwork in SCLC, I merely walked around town to observe different types of vending, or sat on
a bench to observe vending activity for hours. However, the ‘observation’ was often interrupted by vendors who tried to sell souvenirs to me, leading from observation to interaction with the vendors. It is noted that the role of participant and observer is not easily divided in real fieldwork, and according to Gold (1958), I was an ‘observer-as-participant’, rather than a mere observer (sited in Kearns, 2005, p.196).

Since the interview was performed at their workplace, as mentioned before, it gave me a chance to become an ‘observer-as-participant’, helping to complement the previous two research methods. While having conversations with vendors, I was also able to engage in ‘primary observation’ of their economic activities and everyday life. A hawker lady around my age I got along well with suggested that I accompany her when street vending and asked me to help her and her vendor family with selling and arranging items. This short experience taught me what I could not have learnt from just listening to or observing vendors and their vending activity. Due to my short stay in SCLC, I could not develop the participatory observation into a profound ethnography. However, this activity gave me more opportunities to understand the everyday life of street vendors, something that I could not have realized by just generating statistics or conducting interviews.

Based on these quantitative and qualitative research methods, the next section provides results from the case study analysis.

3. Results from the Case Study Analysis

This section presents results from the analysis of the data acquired through descriptive statistics, interviews and participant observations during fieldwork. For the sake of clarity, results are organized by answering each RQ, and included responses from the informants, photos, maps, and graphs to complement the analysis.

RQ 1(a) What types of street vending take place in SCLC?
Firstly, previous studies about street vending point out that there are various types of street vending. Etzold (2014) notes four types of street vending in Dhaka: ‘mobile hawkers’; ‘semi-mobile hawkers’; ‘semi-permanent vendors’ and ‘permanent vendors owning illegal stalls’. Similarly, fieldwork observations in SCLC revealed that a subdivision into four categories of street vendors is feasible.

(1) Type one: street hawkers (ambulantes)

Type one is Ambulantes, or street hawkers (Figure 3). They sell goods (mostly craftwork) and services (such as shoe shining) while walking around the central area of the town and carrying goods to be sold on their shoulders (Figure 4). Though each vendor can decide when to work, fieldwork observations suggest that they work the most during the day time and around dinner time when they have the best chance of encountering customers.

(2) Type two: vendors at a craft fair

Type two is vendors working at Feria de Artesanía, a craft fair (Figures 5 and 6). They sell at the square by City Hall during the summer peak season. The fair starts around 6 p.m. every day during the summer season and ends around midnight when most tourists have left. As the fair starts, each vendor (or vendor family) spreads a mat

\* All photographs in this work without specific citation belong to the researcher.
and goods to sell over a spot they rent from the local government temporarily. After work, they pack things up and bring them back home.

(3) Type three: vendors at an outdoor market

Type three vendors work in a park in front of the Church Santo Domingo (Figures 7 and 8). The figure shows a tianguis, an open area market where not only indigenous people but also ‘hippies’ and other mestizos are working. Vendors start to work around 9 a.m. and go back home around 7 p.m., though some vendors stay longer. Each vendor family rents a spot (or spots) made out of tents and wooden boards.

Like feria vendors, they spread out their goods every day and pack them back.
up before going back home. However, they do not take wrapped goods home but keep them in storage where they rent. In 2006, the local government tried to move this market to a remote area away from the touristic zone, which sparked strong opposition from vendors (Proceso, Jan. 18, 2006). When I asked vendors about this event during the interviews, they stated that now the market is settled down and that they can work without worrying too much about its removal or relocation anymore.

(4) Type four: indoor market (Mercado de Dulces y Artesanías) vendors

Type four vendors work at Mercado de Dulces y Artesanías, a fixed market where candy and craftworks are sold (Figures 9 and 10). Though this type of vending can hardly be regarded as informal economic activity due to the stability and fixed nature of the work, it is also included in the research to draw a comparison to the other three types of vending because of the similarity of the products sold and the possibility of mobility between different types of craftwork vendors.10

![Figure 9 Mercado de Dulces y Artesanías (Aug. 20, 2014)](image1.png)

![Figure 10 Inside of the Indoor Market (Aug. 26, 2014)](image2.png)

In total, four types of selling, ‘street hawkers’, ‘craft fair vendors’, ‘outdoor market vendors’ and ‘indoor market vendors’ were observed in SCLC. The following

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10 Craftwork selling in separate shops is excluded for the case study since it is difficult for street vendors to acquire these spots due to the requirement of capital involved.
question delves into the spatial differentiation and ‘differing degrees of informality’ of each vending type.

**RQ 1(b)** Is there spatial differentiation between street vendor types in SCLC which reflect ‘differing degrees of informality’?

In the previous literature review, I showed that street vending differs in location, frequency, scale (Bromley, 1998, p.247) and mobility (Bromley, 2000, p. 2), presenting differing degrees of informality. Similarly, four types of (street) vending in SCLC display different degrees of informality and spatial differentiation. Figure 11 shows the spatial differentiation between the four types of vendors.

![Figure 11 Spatial Differentiation between Four Types of (Street) Vendors in SCLC](image-url)
Street hawkers walk around the central zone of town, three main sidewalks (20 de Noviembre, Real de Guadalupe, and Miguel Hidalgo) and two squares around the Cathedral. Craft fair vendors stay at the square of City Hall most of the time, but they also head to the streets to find more customers. Outdoor market vendors are found at an open space located at the end of one of the major pedestrian walkways (20 de Noviembre). Lastly, the indoor market is located four blocks away from the Cathedral.

This spatial differentiation reflects differing degrees of informality. More specifically, each vendor type differs in degrees of mobility, scale/capital input for business, and social network to access/stay in the business. The following describes in detail the differing degrees of informality in each vending space.

(1) Street hawkers (ambulantes)

Street hawkers show the highest degree of informality for several reasons. Firstly, they do not have a permanent and fixed vending place. They have to be constantly walking to sell, being highly exposed to changes in weather.

According to the vendor informants, the local government allows street vendors to sell in the public space if they are moving and not occupying a certain space for a long time.

“They (the police) don’t say anything if we are walking. If someone harasses us, we can talk to the public service center. Of course, when vendors are arguing, then the police comes.”

- Type one vendor 06 (female, married, 23 years old)

However, they also sit on benches to arrange their goods or to take a rest without fear of getting disturbed by the police (Figure 12). Most conversations with street hawkers were held when they were sitting on a bench. During an interview, I often commented on the goods of the vendor and I did not forget to purchase
something at the end of the conversation. Though police officers witnessed this, they never intervened, showing a sort of generosity toward the street vendors.

Figure 12 Hawkers Arranging Their Items (Aug. 7, 2014)

Some street hawkers who work in the late afternoon even spread out a mat with their items in the middle of the sidewalk and fold it when a police officer is approaching (Figure 13).

Figure 13 Street Hawker's Temporary 'Shop' (Aug. 22, 2014)

The scale of the business of street hawkers tends to be minuscule, since the body of the vendors itself is the ‘shop’ and it is the smallest among the four types of vending in SCLC. It is the cheapest option among the four types since they do not have a vending spot to fill with a lot of goods, and they do not need to pay rent or utility bills.
Type one vending also showed a low level of unionization among the vendors. Only 3 out of 17 street hawkers responded that they are members of vendors’ associations. Thus, street hawkers work individualistically rather than in groups. When I asked street hawkers if they would like to work at type 2-4 markets, many vendors responded that they could not, even though they would like to. Most of them mentioned that there is no seat left for them at the markets or that they could not afford the rent and the costs associated with running a bigger business. Some mentioned that their Spanish is not good enough to work at a market.

“I don’t have a space there. I don’t have the money or connections to get a place in the markets.”

- Type one vendor 09 (female, single mother, 35 years old)

However, the absence of union membership and the small scale of the businesses did not always mean that vendors were vulnerable, because often, this type of vending is a choice of the vendor due to various personal reasons.

“I prefer to work individually like this. I like working only during the day time. Since I am working individually, I can choose when to work. [...] There is a craftwork fair where the government offers a place to sell, but I don’t want to work there because then I need to bring a lot more items every time I work.”

- Type one vendor 05 (female, single mother, 50 years old)

“I used to work in the open area market in front of the church Santo Domingo before. I had a lot of problems there. There are many conflicts among vendors trying to take more space. So I decided to work alone on the streets.”

- Type one vendor 06 (female, married, 23)
In summary, street hawkers generally show a high degree of mobility, small scale/capital input for business, and weak social networks between vendors, which can be interpreted as a high degree of informality (Bromley, 1998; 2000; Cross, 2000). However, this does not necessarily indicate vulnerability, since some of them prefer to live with the increased personal choice that this type of vending offers.

(2) Craft fair vendors

Type two vending shows a high degree of informality as well, but more formal than the first type. Due to the limited time and seasonality of the fair, many were noted to be type one vendors at the same time. When I asked if they had ever worked as a hawker before working in this fair, eight out of nine fair vendors responded that they would go back to working as ambulantes, when the summer season ended.

In terms of their mobility, they can work seated without the need to walk once they spread their mat as they start working. However, when it starts to rain hard, they need to cover their items and take shelter from the rain under the eaves of City Hall until it stops. They also need to re-spread and repack their goods every time they work (Figure 14). Yet, one interview participant mentioned that working at the fair is much more comfortable than on the streets because she does not need to carry her items all the time.

Figure 14 Repacking (Aug. 16, 2014)

The scale of the business of type two vendors tends to be much bigger than
the first type, but much smaller than type three and four. According to their statements during the interviews, vendors pay rent to the local government which is not expensive (around 100 peso or 8 US dollars). But the bigger scale requires more investment to display enough items to fill a mat. And since it is difficult for an individual vendor to bring all the goods by him/herself unless he/she is selling small items such as jewels, more family members were working together. One vendor couple said that although the husband works a regular job in general, every vacation he helps his wife and they both work together in the craft fair.

Four out of nine interview participants in the fair said that they are members of vendors’ associations, but the number of interviewees was too small to assess the ‘social capital’ (Putnam, 1993) of the vendors. However, an answer from a vendor complements this point. I asked fair vendors about how they got their current vending spot and one stressed the importance of social networks, saying that,

“[Vendors] people form groups with leaders and each place gets filled quickly with people of the group. Even here, people cannot enter anymore. […] It is not just a matter of money, but also a matter of who knows whom.”

- Type two vendor 03 (male, married, 38 years old)

When I asked fair vendors if they would like to work in type 3-4 markets, similarly to the street hawkers’ answers, most of them pointed out that it is impossible because the rent is too expensive, because it is already full and no space is left for them, or because they do not have any social connection to access the markets.

In sum, fair vendors showed a lower degree of informality with lower mobility, bigger scale/capital input for business, and stronger social connections compared to the first type.

(3) Outdoor market vendors
Type three vending shows a relatively higher degree of formality compared to street hawkers and fair vendors. Firstly, their mobility was observed to be much lower than the previous two types. Though outdoor market vendors need to spread, arrange, and keep their goods in storage every day, they barely need to move while working. They rent a spot in the park in front of a church from the local government and they are less vulnerable to the weather change because each spot is protected by tents (Figures 15 and 16).

“Here it is much better to work. I just need to spread my items and stay seated while waiting for customers. But on the road I had to keep walking. It was very tough to take care of my children, having them on my back while selling.”

- Type three vendor 06 (female, married, 37 years old), who worked as a hawker

The scale of the business is generally much bigger than type one and two, yet various sizes of spots are filled with goods. According to the market vendors, they pay around 1000 peso or 80 US dollars annually to the local government for a spot. They also need to pay storage fees where their goods are kept while they are away from work.

This market showed strong social networks between vendors compared to other types of vending. 12 out of 13 interviewees said that they are members of vendors’ associations. According to the outdoor market vendors, association (sindicato) leaders are in charge of collecting bills when they pay the rent to the government.
Interviews with vendors reinforced the importance of social connections when accessing this market. When I asked twelve vendors about how they got their current vending spot, eight vendors said that they took over the business from their parents who used to work (or are still working) in the market, three said that they have worked in the market for a long time (from when there were not many street vendors in SCLC), and one said she used to work as a street hawker before an acquaintance of hers introduced her to the current workplace. Type one and two vendors noted that there is a high entry barrier to the type three market. One interview suggests that the barrier is caused by an excessive number of street vendors in SCLC.

“It has to do with [limited] space [to sell] and few opportunities. Not everyone can have a fixed space to sell and some have to work on the street. It depends on the possibilities that one has. [sic] People tend to depend on ‘their people’ when there is too much competition. Over-population of vendors is the problem. Competition between vendors is too strong.”

– Type three vendor 10 (male, married, 24 years old)

When I asked vendors if they wanted to work in a more fixed market such as Mercado de Dulces y Artesanías, most pointed out that there is no space left for them even if they would like to work there. But some preferred to sell in their current working place given the more centric location than the indoor market.

In sum, outdoor market vendors show a lower degree of informality with much lower mobility, bigger scale/capital input for business, and stronger social connections compared to the first and second type.

(4) Indoor market vendors

Type four vendors work in a permanent market and it can be regarded as engaging in formal economic activity. Thus, rather than identifying its degree of
informality, the possibility of mobility for street vendors to this market is investigated through interview questions.

Four out of eleven interviewees used to work as street vendors before acquiring a spot in the market. Although they were aware of high competition with street vendors who sell goods for cheap prices, some showed sympathy to the status and situation of street vendors.

“I think the government should allow street vendors to work on the street. They also need to survive. And I think everybody should be able to extend their business from the very bottom. When money is accumulated then they can get a place like this afterwards. [...] I used to work as a street vendor before, and I do understand their situation.”

– Type four vendor 7 (male, married, 36 years old)

When I asked eleven vendors how they acquired the current spot, four vendors said that they inherited the business from their parents who used to work (or are still working) in the market, three said that they have worked in the market from the initial formation stage of the market, and four said that their acquaintances or family members recommended the place when there were empty spots.

“I started to work here six years ago when one of my cousins let me know that there was an empty spot in this market. [...] Before then, I used to stay at home and just embroidered to sell blouses to a wholesale dealer.”

– Type four vendor 11 (female, single, 22 years old)

Interview results suggest that there used to be more opportunities for people to enter the market when (street) vending was not highly competitive. Considering the previous interviews from type 1-3 vendors, there is high barrier to this market but it can
be overcome in some cases by social networks.

Results from the RQ 1(b) suggest there is spatial differentiation between street vendor types in SCLC which reflect differing degrees of informality. The next sub-RQ delves into gender impacts on the spatial differentiation, mostly through the use of descriptive statistics.

**RQ 1(c)** Does gender impact the spatial differentiation of street vendor types in SCLC?

When analyzing the proportion of men and women, the descriptive statistics generated in the fieldwork show that gender impacts spatial differentiation between street vendor types in SCLC.

In general, (street) vending in SCLC is identified as female dominated work. 480 out of 691 vendors counted were female vendors, which is 69.46% of the whole vendor population (Figure 17).

![Figure 17 Overall Breakdown of Male and Female Vendors in SCLC](image)

However, the exact portion of women varies significantly depending on the street vending types. In turn, this implies that gender impacts spatial differentiation (Figure 18). For type one vending, 122 out of 164 street hawkers counted were women, which is 74.39% and it shows female predominance. However, vending of some items
and services showed a male dominance. All nine shoe shiners were men (Figure 19), and there were 10 male vendors selling cigarettes and small snacks (Figure 20) compared to only two women vendors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type 1</th>
<th>Type 2</th>
<th>Type 3</th>
<th>Type 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>112 (59.6%)</td>
<td>168 (77.9%)</td>
<td>135 (62.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>55 (26.8%)</td>
<td>48 (22.2%)</td>
<td>84 (37.2%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 18 Breakdown of Male and Female Vendors in Four Types of Vending

Figure 19 Shoe Shiner (Aug. 25, 2014) Figure 20 Cigarettes and Snack Vendor (Aug. 8, 2014)

Type two vending also showed a predominance of women. 168 out of 216 vendors in feria were women, which is 77.78 percent. It is a slightly higher number than that of type one, which can be explained by an absence of cigarettes and small snacks vendors and shoe shiners in the fair.

Type three vending shows a more balanced gender ratio, and the portion of women decreased considerably. 135 out of 215 outdoor market vendors were women,
which is 62.79%. In the indoor market, there were slightly more women than men. 57.29% of type four vendors, or 55 out of 96, were female.

One interview with an indoor market vendor complements the numerical description. When I asked him if selling craftwork is considered a woman’s job, he responded,

“Well, it depends on the place. On the streets, there are more women than men. But in this [indoor] market, there is a considerable number of male vendors as well.”

– Type four vendor 8 (male, single, 16 years old)

This analysis shows similar results noted by Espinal and Grasmuck (2997) and Agyei-Mensah (2008) in that women are predominantly found in the informal sector, and even when running informal economic activities, men tend to dedicate more to businesses which require bigger capital inputs and generate higher incomes than women. Following this, RQ 2 identifies age-based gender aspects associated with the feminization of street vending in SCLC.

RQ 2 Are there age-based gender influences impacting the process of feminization of street vending in SCLC?

In the literature review presented previously, I noted that though there are a considerable amount of previous studies examining gendered aspects of informal economic activities, they have relatively not paid attention to the age difference between women and men. Asiedu and Agyei-Mensah (2008) asserted that men tend to dedicate themselves to informal economic activities only in the earlier stage in life, whereas women tend to work in the informal sector for all of their life time.

This case study used descriptive statistics, which included gender and the approximate age of vendors, to identify age-based gender influences. Followings are
suggested to facilitate the analysis of the results.

According to results from the analysis, in addition to the overall female domination of (street) vending, there are noted age-based differences related to the feminization of street vending in SCLC (Figure 21). Though there are slight differences in ratios depending on the vending type (Figures 22-25), all shared a tendency related to age-based gender influences impacting the process of feminization of street vending in SCLC: among members of younger generations (children and adolescents), gender ratios tend to be balanced, whereas those in older generations (youth, middle-aged and seniors) show a high imbalance of gender ratios. In other words, as children grow up with stronger gender identity, men tend to dedicate less time to (street) vending, whereas women tend to dedicate for longer periods of time to it, in turn widening the gender gap between different generations.

Figure 21 Age-based Gender Differences in All Four Types of (Street) Vending

The proportions roughly agree with Melel Xajobal’s investigation (2012, p.32) about children street vendors in SCLC. It is noted that there are 2,481 vendors under the age of 17, which consists 1,059 (42.7%) girls, 1,284 boys (51.7%) and 138 children whose sex could not be determined.

The age groups were divided as follows: The age of five was regarded as the start of childhood since many young vendors started to work at this age. People aged 13 to 17 were considered adolescents, since primary education ends at the age 13. 18 is regarded as the start of adult (mayor de edad) stage in Mexico. 33 was counted as the start of middle-age as a woman who bear her first child at her age twenty would have a kid starting adolescence at this age. Fifty is the approximate age when menopause starts and thus was regarded as the start of senescence.
The number of overall female children is about the same as that of male children (a ratio of 64:62). The gap between genders increases for adolescents as there are 84 women, which is 1.53 times more than the number of male adolescents (55). For youth, the gap becomes even more distinctive. There are 106 women, which is 2.41 times more than the number of male youth (44). The gender gap between middle-aged vendors is the biggest as there are 194 women, which is 3.32 times more than the number of middle-aged male vendors (59). Male vendors in the oldest cohort were
hardly found compared to the 22 female seniors.

This result can be interpreted as a generational succession between women, unlike the experience of men who often leave for other job fields. For further information, during interviews I asked all vendors, “Did your mother used to work as this type of vendor with you when you were young? What is she doing now?” Many vendors responded that they used to work (or they are still working) with their mother.

As mentioned previously related to RQ 1(b), eight out of twelve vendors in the outdoor market acquired their current vending spot from their parents who used to work (or are still working) in the market. Some of the vendors’ mothers keep working with them and others stay at home, either to take care of their younger siblings or just to retire from vending. Some mentioned that before they started to work as vendors, they learned how to embroider blouses or how to make bracelets from their mother.

“My mom used to work in this market with me before. [...] Now she stays at home. [...] She makes these necklaces, bracelets, and dolls. [...] I have three younger siblings and she takes care of them. [...] My mom cooks and does house chores.”

- Type two vendor 8 (Girl, 10 years old)

“My mother used to work in this market and I grew up here helping my mother. [sic] I started to work from when I was five years old and learned how to make these [dolls] from my mother.”

- Type three vendor 2 (female, married, 23 years old)

I also asked children and adolescent vendors, “What do you want to do in the future? Do you want to keep doing this work? Male vendors mentioned other types of work such as soldier, farmer, or finding work in bigger cities, whereas most female respondents answered that they would like to keep the same job or other jobs related to traditional craftwork, perhaps extending to a more formal shop. Some mentioned
that they do not have other job options aside from their current work. These answers suggest that there is a higher probability of girls succeeding their mother than boys in the future.

In sum, analysis related to RQ 2 shows similar results noted by Asiedu and Agyei-Mensah (2008) in that men tend to dedicate themselves to informal economic activities only in the earlier stage of life, whereas women tend to work in the informal sector for their entire life time. In the following section, RQ 3(a) and RQ 3(b) broadly explore the feminization of street vending in SCLC including the work-home nexus.

**RQ 3(a)** What brings about the feminization of street vending in SCLC?

As mentioned previously, a lot of multi-scalar dynamics are involved in the process of feminization of street vending in SCLC. For analytical purposes, four factors were drawn from the previous literature review: 1) a scarcity of other job opportunities for women compared to men, 2) men's immigration to bigger cities or to other countries, unlike women's limited mobility, 3) the social construction of work and gender roles, and 4) women's housekeeping and parenting obligations.

**(1) Lack of other opportunities for women compared to men**

Firstly, in respect to a scarcity of other job opportunities for women in SCLC, I asked informants, “What are other work options for women in this region to make money aside from this type of vending?” Most of the respondents pointed out that indeed they do not have enough work options and that street vending is one of only a few feasible options left as tourists have increased drastically in the town.

“Many women are working in this field these days. Not many people raise maize as they used to. It has to do with the fact that tourists have increased a lot in this town.”

- Type one vendor 10 (female, single mother, 22 years old)
“Women barely have other job opportunities unlike men. We (women) have to stay here (on the streets).”

- Type two vendor 04 (female, married, 26 years old)

“There is no land left to raise the maize. When I first started this work [12 years ago], not many people were engaged in this work, but now there are too many hawkers.”

- Type one vendor 13 (female, married, 60 years old)

Others mentioned that women can also cook, work on the farm, work at a shop, and do laundry. However, informants also noted that not everyone has land to raise maize and that other work pays too little.

“Well, there are other opportunities as well. We can grow maize or vegetables. My sisters are actually working on a farm.”

- Type two vendor 09 (female, single, 21 years old)

“Some women cook and sell food in the marketplace. But still there are not many work options for women. Mostly we just sell craftwork like this to make money.”

- Type one vendor 06 (female, married, 23 years old)

“They can work at a shop, but the pay is too small. It is not enough to feed a family. But since many (women) do not know how to do other kinds of work, they just sell craftwork like this even though there is a lot of competition.”

- Type three vendor 12 (male, married, 38 years old)

Adding to the question about other job options, I looked into whether or not female vendors had motivation to dedicate themselves to other kinds of occupations by asking, “Would you prefer to have another type of job to this work?”
Some said that they are quite satisfied with their current job, but others mentioned that even though they want to find another type of work, they do not have options because they do not have other skills to make money, or because they do not have money to learn some new skills.

“I like my job. I learned how to speak Spanish while working. My first language is tsotsil, and I know how to speak tseltal and tsol. I really like learning languages. It is a wonderful thing that I can learn such various languages while working.”

- Type one vendor 13 (female, married, 60 years old)

“I do not know how to do other things but embroidering blouses like this. [...] I’d like to learn English, but it costs too much if I learn something.”

- Type three vendor 03 (female, single, 17 years old)

“Yes. [I think about other job opportunities]. But I don’t know how to do other work because I started to work like this from when I was very young, from in the morning to at night. [sic] There are some women who are employed in a restaurant, but they are paid really poorly. I don’t want to work like that.”

- Type three vendor 07 (female, single, 18 years old)

The interviews show that women indeed do not have many job opportunities aside from street vending. In turn this contributes to the building of ‘female-dominated job ghettos’ (McDowell, 1999, p. 127). Street vending is one of a few easy and possible options to start making money for women. The influx of national and international tourists to the town seems to have offered a decent niche labor market for a while before the streets got packed with street vendors.

However, in spite of extreme competition between vendors, they have to keep doing the work because they do not have other alternatives given the skills and
education level they have. Female vendors showed motivation to study more and learn others skills to expand their chances, but their material conditions, in particular a lack of ‘money’, hinder them from approaching the broader labor market.

On the other hand, interview results suggest that men have more job opportunities than women. According to vendors, men in the town engage in broader fields of work, such as construction, day labor, taxi and truck driving, farming, carpenter work, mechanic work and other ‘physically demanding types of work’, using a vendor’s words. But some noted that they are also very poorly paid jobs.

“Many men are working as construction workers or as itinerants. It is true that there tend to be more work opportunities for men. But not many jobs pay well even for men.”

- Type four vendor 06 (male, single, 19 years old)

Some informants mentioned that men tend to leave for other cities to find jobs, which is related to the second factor of the feminization of street vending, immigration.

(2) Immigration

In the review of allied literature, it was noted that when it is not possible to find jobs in the region, people leave their town and move to bigger cities or even cross borders (Rhee, 2009; Robledo Hernández, 2009, p.138), with men having more mobility than women and children (Golding and Little, 2007).

In terms of immigration, I asked the informants, “Do men from this region move to bigger cities or go to the United States to find better job opportunities? Do you have any family members who left the town?” 13 vendors told me real stories of their family members who left the town for other cities in Mexico or for the United States.
“Yeah, many people move to the bigger cities and some even go to Canada or the United States. My brother as well moved to Cancún [in Yucatán State], but personally, I don’t want to leave here.”

- Type one vendor 08 (male, single, 23 years old)

“Indeed. One of my uncles moved to Mexico City. He says that though there are more job opportunities and work which pays better, the living price is very high as well”

- Type four vendor 06 (male, single, 19 years old)

“One of my cousins went to the United States when he was 24 years old, but he died there. It is better to live near family. It is dangerous to move to somewhere far away. [....] Some women move to the bigger cities as well, but mostly, men tend to move more.”

- Type four vendor 11 (female, single, 22 years old)

Though there was a vendor who said that her daughters moved to the United States, it is less common for women to live far from their hometown.

“Yes. [Men move many times to the bigger cities and other countries.] My son moved to the United States. But my daughter lives with me. She helps her mother a lot.”

- Type one vendor 11 (male, married, 40 years old)

Though not having any immigrated family members, most vendors answered that indeed a lot of men of the region leave their communities to find more job opportunities in bigger cities, such as in Mexico City, or even in the U.S.

These interviews could not suggest how many men and women had immigrated to other regions with any quantitative accuracy. However, immigration is identified as a common social phenomenon which can be observed easily in the everyday life of vendors. Since men are the main actors who participate in immigration,
increase of immigration can be understood to be contributing to the feminization of street vending in SCLC. The next section delves into how street vending in SCLC is constructed socially as women’s work.

(3) Social construction of work

Feminist geographers focus on the social construction of work and gender roles. The present research seeks to identify if street vending of craftwork, in particular, is socially constructed as a woman’s job by asking vendors, “Is selling craftwork considered a woman’s job?”

The most common answer I heard was that it ‘is’ a woman’s job. This might be more understandable if female vendors only sell items hand-made by themselves. While waiting for customers, some women vendors were embroidering or making bracelets/belts (Figure 26), which was regarded as women’s work until these items got substituted by products made in factories. However, not every female vendor has these skills. Some just sell goods made in factories or what others have made.

Figure 26 Female Hawker Embroidering with her Daughter (Aug. 14, 2014)

Thus, the street vending of craftwork does not necessarily need to be regarded as a woman’s job, considering what vendors actually do. It was mentioned previously
that men, unlike women, tend to dedicate themselves more to ‘physically demanding work’. However, working as a street vendor particularly, a street hawker, requires tough physical strength. One of the critical keys to generating more sales is to bring more of the items that possible customers might want, driving hawkers to carry as many goods as they can (Figure 27). With heavy items on their shoulders, and sometimes even carrying a baby on their back at the same time (Figure 28), hawkers also need to keep walking to try avoid any possible conflict with the police. Also, as mentioned previously, though they take a rest from time to time on benches, they stay outside while being exposed to the weather, meaning, again, tough physical work.

Figure 27 Hawker Carrying Items (Aug. 25, 2014)  Figure 28 Hawker Carrying Baby (Aug. 7, 2014)

One male market vendor was conscious about how the job is constructed socially.

“It is regarded as women’s work because people have thought that way. The fact is not exactly like that. Everyone can engage in selling. Not all female vendors embroider. Both men and women can engage in this work.”

- Type four vendor 07 (male, married, 36 years old)
Male street vendors tend to dedicate their effort to selling cigarettes and small snacks, and to shoe shining as mentioned previously. Also, a considerable number of male jewel vendors (28 out of the whole 49) not only just sell, but also work on jewel pieces, which requires more trips to, and networks in towns such as Simojovel, where amber is produced, to acquire stone to work with.

“Yes (Selling craftwork is considered women’s work). But men engage more in jewel working. Women engage more in weaving or embroidering”

- Type three vendor 12 (male, married, 38 years old)

“Many women are dedicated to making textiles or embroidering. That is work requiring high patience. [...] Men tend to engage in working which requires more strength. In this market, there are a considerable number of men. There are many men selling or working jewels, especially amber produced in (a near town) Simojovel. But for most women it is difficult to approach to this kind of work (jewel working).”

- Type four vendor 1 (male, married, 28 years old)

Here, the vendor stresses traditional gender roles and nature, as he relates high patience to women’s work, as opposed to connecting physical strength to that of men. One male jewel worker/vendor assigned ‘professionalism’ to their work description and he tried to distinguish it from craftwork producing, which is regarded as women’s work.

“This work (jewel crafting) is our (men’s) work. It takes much more work (than textile work).”

- Type two vendor 06 (male, single, 21 years old)

From these interviews, it is apparent that the feminization of craftwork
selling is intertwined with women’s traditional work, such as weaving and embroidering. The gender of street vending is socially constructed and thus regarded as women’s work, which further contributes to the feminization of the work.

However, the concrete mode of construction was rather arbitrary and variable. Many vendors’ actual work is not necessarily connected to the traditional role and skills of Mayan women, such as craftwork making, and they were only dedicated to selling items. In this case, it requires more physical strength, which is generally regarded as a typical trait of men, because vendors have to keep walking while carrying goods and even kids on their back all day. Some male jewel vendors assigned ‘professionalism’ and masculinity to their work, which reflects the arbitrary construction of the gender of work. The following section focuses on the last factor of feminization of street vending in SCLC, women’s housekeeping and parenting obligations.

(4) Housekeeping and Parenting Obligations

The last factor that needs to be examined is women’s housekeeping and parenting obligation of. It was the factor that I could recognize immediately as I first arrived at the fieldwork area, because it was reflected visibly in the landscape of the town. Many women vendors were taking care of their children while working, either by carrying a baby on their back, or by taking young children with them when they searched for tourists (Figure 29).
To enquire after both visible and invisible obligations through interviews, I asked women vendors, “Do you have children?, What do you (or did you use to) do with them when you leave (left) home for work? Do (or did) you have to take care of them even when you are (were) working here?” Most of the married and single mother vendors responded they have (or had) to take the kids with them when they are (or were) working because no one can take care of the kids instead of themselves and because there are a scarce number of day care center (that they can afford). Also, when kids grow enough to start working as street vendors, they can generate an extra source of income for the family.

Some have other family members who can take care of young children such as their mother, mother in law, sisters, or daughters. Some mother vendors start to stay at home and stop working as street vendors once they can pass their work to their children, dedicating more time to their households. Some go the other way, as they dedicate more time to street vending, while making their grown up children do housework. Others work with their kids to generate more income, which can be interpreted as a ‘household surviving strategy’ (Gilbert, 1994).

I looked into whether or not women’s obligations decreased if they were also engaging in economic activities. In these cases their husband is not the only one who makes money in the family. I asked married women, “Does he help you with taking care of children or doing house chores?”

In spite of their financial contributions to their families, most women responded that they are not free from housework. In particular, single mothers have no option but to dedicate themselves to both what is regarded as men’s roles and women’s roles. One jewel vendor women said her husband worked at home making the jewels that she sells, but she added,

“Every men has to help his wife with housework, but still women always have much more work to do than men.”
- Type two vendor 07 (female, married, 31 years old)

Though her husband mostly stays at home according to what she said, she was the one working outside, while caring for their baby.

“Female vendors work to make money, but they also do house chores and take care of their children. Before coming to work, they need to take their kids to school, pick them up once school is over, and take care of them afterwards.”

- Type four vendor 05 (female, married, 58 years old)

However, from some informant remarks, changes, whether in perception or in practice, were also noted as women started to work.

“My husband never helped me with house chores even before he abandoned me. But I was unlucky to have had a husband like that. Nice husbands help with housework and bring food to the family.”

- Type one vendor 05 (female, single mother, 50 years old)

One married couple working together at an outdoor market noted,

“I do help my wife with house chores. People in San Juan Chamula are more machista (male chauvinist), but since we are working together here, we should share housework as well.”

- Type three vendor 01 (male, married, 28 years old)

In summary, these interview suggest that vendor women have heavy domestic obligations. In terms of the feminization of the work, these obligations compound the first factor further, the lack of other opportunities for women. In other words, for
women who need to take care of children while working and who need flexible time schedules to cope with household work at the same time, there are even fewer job opportunities. Street vending can be understood as their last option.

For these women the space of work is the space of family at the same time, challenging the dichotomous conceptualization of home and work. The last RQ examines this issue further.

**RQ 3(b) Is the vending workplace perceived as clearly separated from home? If not, why not?**

I answered RQ 3(b) partly through the analysis related to the previous RQ, noting that women street vendors are engaging in what is regarded as ‘tasks of home’ even when they are dedicated to working outside the home.

Street vending can mistakenly be understood as trivial and insignificant from the perspective of a masculine conceptualization of work since income is meager, not much capital input is required, and no official education is required. Also, vending is highly vulnerable to external shocks. Women vendor workers are indeed located at the bottom of the job hierarchy as passive workers of economic globalization if it is interpreted from these criterion.

However, as mentioned in Chapter III, the literature review, feminist geographers criticize the masculine conceptualization of work and pay special attention to the boundaries between work and home, which cannot be grasped with the dominant perspective. In this regard, place is understood as “…relational, rather than absolute” (Laurie et al., 1997, p.112), which leaves room for a re-interpretation of street vending in SCLC.

That the workplace is actually connected to home suggests a critical point in the re-valuation of economic activity. Street vending is not just important as a source of income for vendors and their families. It implies more than the economic aspect. As
noted briefly from the previous research questions, the streets are socially produced places, allowing mothers to keep taking care of their kids even when they have to generate income to survive and to feed their families (see Figures 30 and 31).

The streets also give vendors chances of socialization and education in accordance with Pérez López's study (2012) about children street vendors in SCLC. Children can learn not only how to make craftworks from their mother, but also how to live a life even under tough conditions, and how to get along with people (Figures 32-34).
In summary, street vending cannot be fully understood if it is regarded merely as workplace separated from home, particularly when considering how many other activities occur concurrently and their significance in the lives of these women.

4. Summary and Discussion

This study has explored street vending in SCLC, connecting issues of gender, informality, and geography. Firstly, it examined four spatially differentiated street vending types in SCLC, with different degrees of informality. Gender impacts on the spatial differentiation were also identified: the higher degree of informality was, the more women vendors were dedicating themselves to the business.

Secondly, aged-based gender influences were noted. In other words, as children grow up with embedded gender identities, men tend to dedicate less time to (street) vending, whereas women tend to dedicate longer periods of time to it. This implies that generational succession occurs more between female vendors.
Thirdly, it examined four factors [1) scarcity of other job opportunities for women compared to men, 2) men’s immigration to bigger cities or to other countries, unlike women’s limited mobility, 3) the social construction of work and gender roles, and 4) women’s housekeeping and parenting obligations] that are integral to the process of feminization of street vending. I asserted that street vending cannot be fully understood without connecting it to home, or rather, without escaping from a dichotomous and masculine conceptualization of work and home.

Hanson (2008) suggests that economic activities should be understood not only from macroscopic criterion such as innovation, the creation of employment, and regional development, but also from what they mean for ‘livelihoods and well-being’ of people and how people change their everyday place through these economic activities. In other words, the dynamics of ‘…quiet encroachment of the ordinary’ (Bayat, 2004) offer another standard by which to gauge the economic activities of not only dominant actors associated with economic globalization, but also of others who are just as intimately connected, though they may have been overlooked in the mainstream globalization literature.

Though working under tough material conditions without having other alternatives, street vendors in SCLC do clearly help to shape landscape of the town. Vendors change the ‘spatiality’ of the streets by turning ‘a space for passage’ into a ‘space for dilly-dallying and consuming’. Street vending not only offers a means of producing a livelihood, but also helps reproduction, education, and the socialization of vendors to be possible.
V. Conclusion

This study has focused on informal economic activities in combination with gender and geographical aspects impacting street vending in SCLC. It started with a brief presentation of the research design and methodological considerations associated with performing cross-cultural research. In particular, I addressed the positionality of the researcher and the benefits of a grounded research.

In the third chapter, a literature review related to the research topics was provided. That section examined major arguments and issues related to feminist economic geography, informal economic activities, street vending, and the regional background of the research area.

The fourth chapter examined gender and spatial aspects of informal economic activities through a case study of street vendors in SCLC. It was shown that there were four spatially differentiated street vending types in SCLC (street hawkers, craft fair vendors, outdoor market vendors, and indoor market vendors) with different degrees of informality. Gender impacts on the spatial differentiation were also identified, since more women were dedicating themselves to the business with higher degrees of informality. Also, according to interviews with street vendors, four factors (scarcity of other job opportunities for women compared to men, men's migration to bigger cities or to other countries, the social construction of work and gender roles, and women's housekeeping and parenting obligations) were integral to the process of feminization of street vending. It is noted that street vending cannot be fully understood without connecting it to the home, or rather, without escaping from a dichotomous and masculine conceptualization of work and home.

Though I tried to incorporate case study through fieldwork and various, mostly qualitative, research methods to approach the issue of gendered nature of urban informality empirically, the research has its limitations caused by the researcher as an
outsider to the research area. More specifically, other critical factors affecting the feminization of street vending in SCLC might have been missed or overlooked due not only to the relatively short amount of time spent in the field, but also different cultural and ethnic backgrounds that I have. It was a highly difficult task for me to understand the ethnicity of research participants in such a short time (less than two months). Thus, research with a longer period of time conducting fieldwork is required to embed the researcher deeper in the research context and to widen understanding of the research subject. Also, more consideration is needed to create a broader space of in-betweenness between the researcher and research participants and to broaden their mutual understanding.

Also, since this research includes just one case study, it is not sufficient to conceptualize the relationship between space, gender and informality. To make invisible people and stories of globalization visible, abundant empirical studies which examine the relationship between urban informality and gender based on various contexts, while taking into consideration dynamics of multiple scales, are needed.

As mentioned in the literature review, Rose (1993) points out two types of masculinity in geography: ‘social-scientific masculinity’ and ‘aesthetic masculinity’. Unfortunately, the strategies against the two forms of exclusion are contradictory: one is to form a unified identity of women via maternity and to assign a positive value to that nature, whereas the other is to highlight the differences among women and to detach typical femininity from women. Negotiating these two conflicting strategies, the author offers an ‘oscillatory strategy’ (Rose 1993, p.84) which alternates between the two approaches until it is finally able to destruct the dualistic perspective on gender and the phallocentric framework of the discipline. I end this thesis by locating this work in the practices of ‘oscillatory strategy’, entertaining a hope that it may contribute to deconstruction of dichotomous divisions which generate exclusion.
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국문초록

공간, 젠더, 비공식경제활동

멕시코 산크리스토발데라스카사스의 노점상에 관한 연구

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본 연구는 비공식 경제 활동을 경제의 세계화 논의에 위치시키고자 하고 한다. 지금까지 경제의 세계화와 관련한 대부분의 연구들은 공식적인 과정에 치중되어 왔다. 이로 인해 일상 생활과 보다 밀접하게 닿아있는 비공식 경제와 관련 행위자들의 활동은 주류 논의에서 간과되어 왔다. 본 논문은 글로벌 남부 여성들의 비공식적인 경제활동에 주목함으로써, 주류 세계화 논의의 협소한 경제 활동의 개념화를 보다 넓히고자 하는데 목적으로 두고 있다. 특히 사례 연구를 통해 멕시코 산크리스토발데라스카사스 원주민 여성들의 노점상 활동에 주목하였다.

이론적인 배경으로는 여성들의 경제활동에 관한 여성주의 지리학의 논의, 비공식 경제 및 노점상에 관한 논의들을 참고했다. 이를 바탕으로 사례연구에서는 다양한 정도의 비공식성의 공간적인 차원, 젠더와 연령이 다양한 비공식성의 정도에 미치는 영향, 높은 비공식성을 가진 일부 경제 활동들의 여성화에 개입하는 요인들을 살펴보았다.

사례 연구 결과에 따르면 산크리스토발에서는 다양한 정도의 비공식성과 관련하여 크게 4가지 노점상 유형 (행상, 공예품 박람회 상인, 야외 시장 상인, 실내 시장 상인)을 관찰할 수 있었으며 이들 사이에 공간적인 구분이 존재하고 있었다. 또한 보다 높은 비공식성을 가진 노점상 활동일수록 더 많은 여성들이 종사하는 것으로 미루어보
아 젠더와 비공식성의 정도 사이의 상관 관계를 관찰할 수 있었다. 또한 상인들과의 인터뷰를 통해서 1) 다른 일자리에서의 기회 부족, 2) 다양한 스케일에서의 이주의 증가, 3) 일의 사회적인 구성, 4) 여성의 육아와 가사에 대한 의무와 같은 요인들이 노점상 활동을 여성화 시킴을 확인할 수 있었다. 더불어 노점상이라는 경제 활동을 하는 데 있어 일터와 가정은 이분법적으로 구분되지 않으며, 오히려 두 공간이 밀접하게 연결되어 있음을 살펴볼 수 있었다.

산크리스토발데라스카사스가 사례 지역으로 선정된 이유는 1980년대 부채 위기로 구조조정을 단행한 뒤 급속히 관광업이 증가한 것과 대조적으로 농업 활동이 감소되었으며, 이러한 세계화 과정이 도시의 경관과 경제에 날카롭게 반영되었다는 점에 있다. 시장 개방 이후 20년 넘게 이어지고 있는 사파티스타민족해방전선 (EZLN)의 자치/대안적 세계화에 대한 목소리는 세계화 과정이 많은 지역 주민들에게 (고통스러운 방식으로) 피부에 와닿아 있음을 보여준다. 더불어 오랜 식민적인 역사로 형성된 도시 경관, 높은 원주민 비율로 인해 형성된 독특한 문화 경관, 사파티스타 운동을 넘어서 벌어지고 있는 다양한 대안적 세계화 움직임은 지역의 차원에서 여성화된 노점상 활동을 이해하는데 흥미로운 역학을 구성한다.

주요어: 비공식 경제 활동, 다양한 정도의 비공식성, 노점상, 여성주의 지리학, 원주민, 산크리스토발데라스카사스, 차이파스

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