

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT, FU JEN CATHOLIC DEPARTMENT

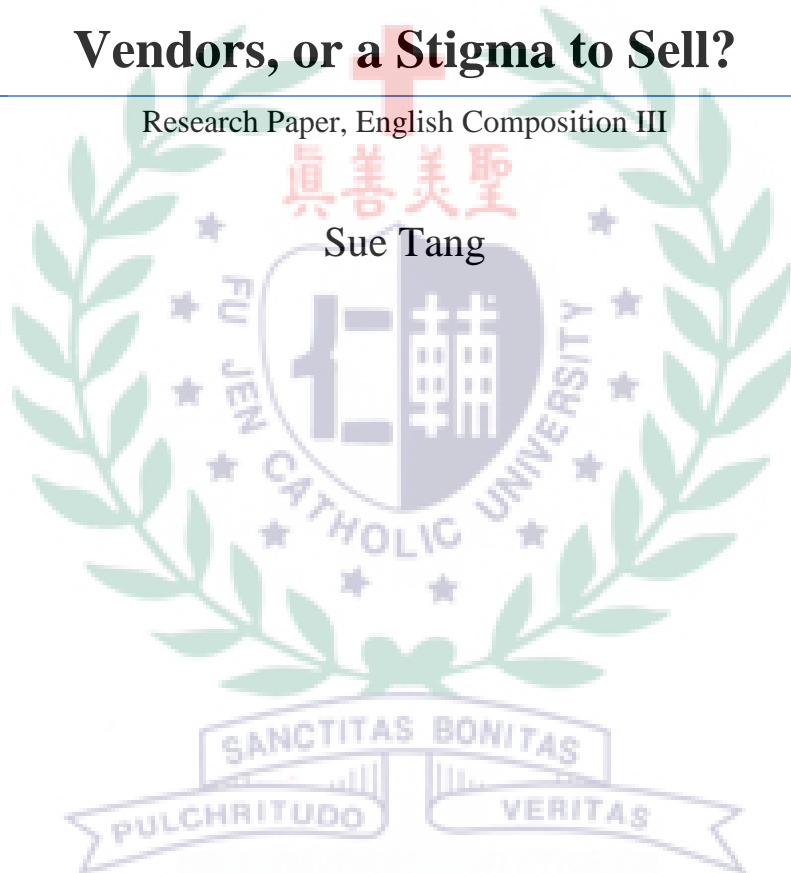
GRADUATION PROJECT 2016

Street Newspapers: Voices of Homeless Vendors, or a Stigma to Sell?

Research Paper, English Composition III

真善美聖

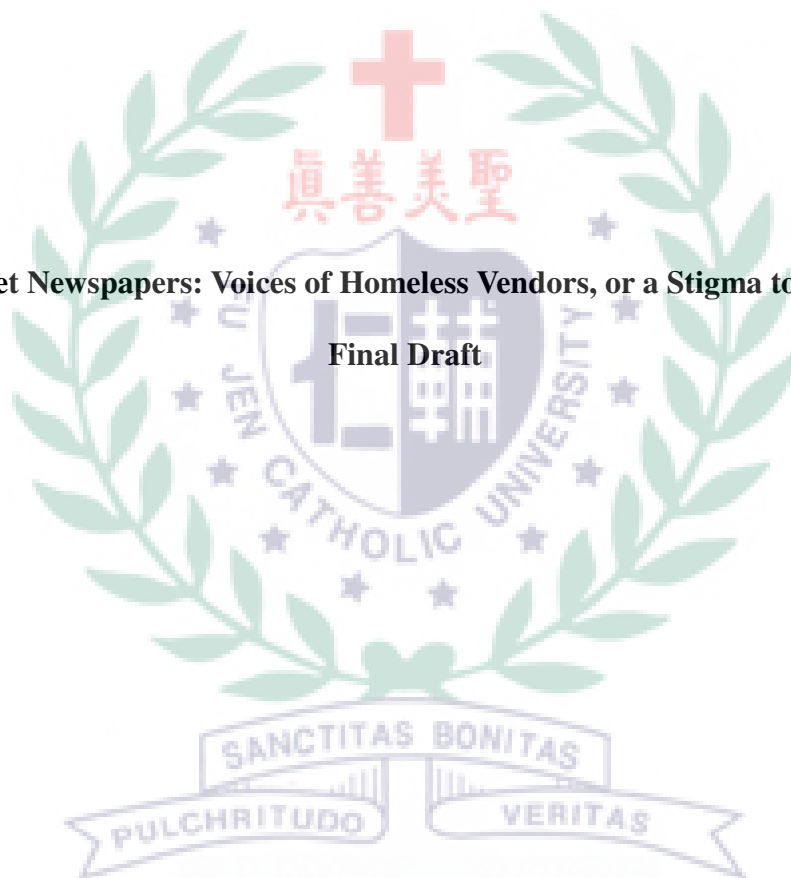
Sue Tang



Fu Jen Catholic University

Street Newspapers: Voices of Homeless Vendors, or a Stigma to Sell?

Final Draft



Sue Tang

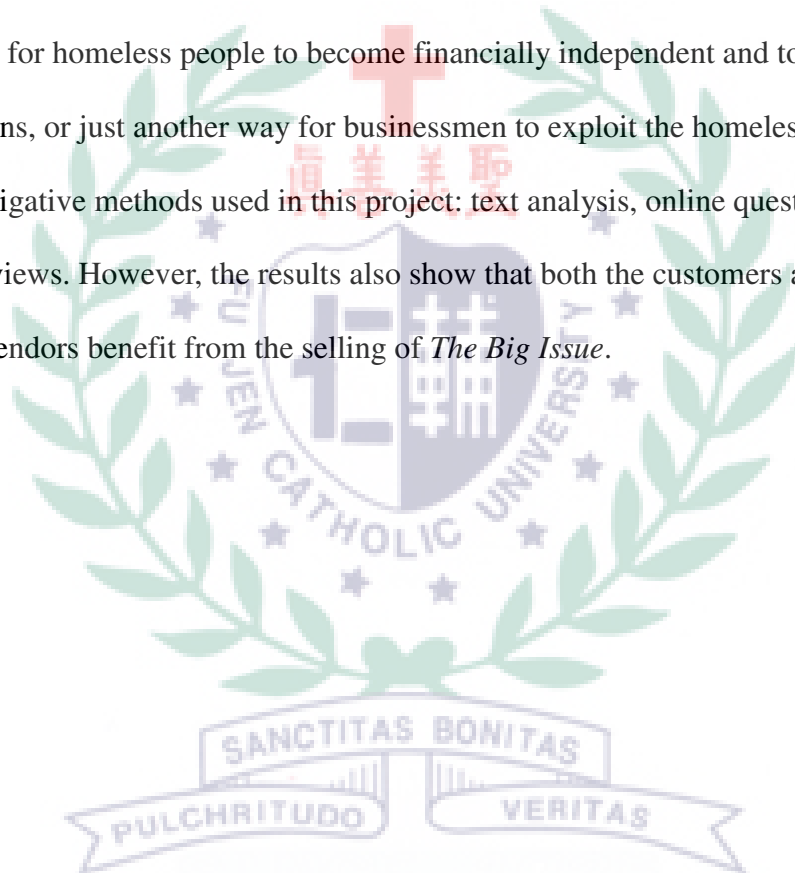
CCIII—Section E

Dr. John Basourakos

26 June 2015

Abstract

As the problem of homelessness nowadays becomes more and more notable in metropolitan cities, street newspapers, which help the homeless earn money, are springing up all over the world. Although the selling of Street Newspapers is a way for the homeless to express their opinions in writing and to earn money, this endeavor may actually reinforce social inequality instead of helping the homeless. This research paper aims to analyze the controversy about whether or not street newspapers are the ideal media for homeless people to become financially independent and to express their opinions, or just another way for businessmen to exploit the homeless. There are three investigative methods used in this project: text analysis, online questionnaires, and 5 interviews. However, the results also show that both the customers and the homeless vendors benefit from the selling of *The Big Issue*.



Outline

I. Introduction

A. Background information

1. A common experience from Taipei citizens
2. Statistics of homelessness in the U.S.

B. Current situation

1. Homelessness resulting after the widening of the wealth gap, which results from complicated causes.
2. Solutions
 - a. Social welfare system established by the government
 - b. The cooperation between the government and Non-Governmental Organizations.

C. Another solution: the selling of street newspapers, but there is a potential problem of reinforcing inequality

D. The survey

1. Showing that *The Big Issue* creates a stigma for selling, and reinforces inequality because of the marketing strategies which do not give the homeless opportunities to express their opinions.
2. Showing that both the customers and the homeless vendors benefit from the selling.

E. Essay map: divided into seven sections including introduction, literature review, methodology, data analysis, conclusion, works cited and appendices.

II. Literature Review

- A. Jamison D. Fargo, Ellen A. Munley, Thomas H. Byrne, Ann Elizabeth Montgomery, and Dennis P. Culhane

1. Studies about homelessness examining the relationship between individual-level factors and community-level factors are not enough.
2. Investigating those community-level factors such as demographics, behavioral, health related, economic and safety net factors, which are different from individual-level factors.
3. Indicating targets for interventions to reduce homelessness among subpopulations is a good method to examine the relationship between homelessness and community-level factors more accurately.

B. Barbara Schneider

1. The audience's reactions to the mass media by examining how the homeless are presented in several studies.
2. Observing focus groups formed by people caring about homelessness in 2009 and analyzing the data by focusing on the emotions which reflect concepts of homelessness, then examined the emotion discourses.
3. Emotion discourses which cause people to have general moral standards to deal with social interactions, and the media may reproduce such discourses to exaggerate social inequalities.

C. Kurt Lindemann

1. The homeless newspaper's vending interactions using the stigma of homelessness as a selling point to further stigmatize homeless individuals as "Other people."
2. Citizens in San Francisco thinking that the selling of the street newspaper *Street Sheet* by the homeless vendors is just another way for the homeless to beg for change.
3. Homeless vendors performing cultural meanings in the vending

interactions in:

- a. the media presenting or describing prevailing impressions of homelessness
- b. the street newspaper's function as souvenirs for tourists
- c. the stigma that comes from the vending process

D. Rachel L. Rayburn and Nicholas A. Guittar

1. More and more legislations being enacted to prohibit homeless people from living on the streets, which leads to marginalization, while the number of homeless people increases.
2. The ways homeless people save their identities and characteristics.
3. Necessary for the homeless to keep themselves away from other individuals because of stigma management.

E. Cheryl Forchuk, Mike Godin, Jeffery S. Hoch, Shani Kingston-MacClure, Momodou S. Jeng, Liz Puddy, Rebecca Vann and Elisabeth Jensen

1. Showing that planning for hospital discharge is a key point in preventing homelessness.
2. Two hypotheses that the authors raise: by discharging people from hospitals, the number of homeless people will be reduced, and this will cost less than keeping homeless people in shelters.
3. The study: showing the positive outcomes if we link housing support and income support together in the hospital system.

F. Gerald Daly

1. The policies and evolution of homelessness in Canada, the U.S. and Europe from a contextual perspective.
2. The human dimensions of homelessness by giving a "prescription for poor health," the deinstitutionalization of the caring community, and

the experiences of homeless people.

3. Gathering responses by government and the voluntary sector to illustrate current solutions to homelessness in Canada, the U.S. and Europe, and ways to improve the problems result from homelessness.

III. Methodology

- A. Using three kinds of investigative methods: undertaking text analysis, distributing questionnaires, and interviewing.
- B. Based on previous studies about homelessness.
- C. Distributed online to people in Taipei using Google Document.
- D. 3-5 street newspapers vendors who were homeless in the past or who are almost homeless now are interviewed.

IV. Data Analysis

- A. Taipei citizens' opinions on the homeless.
- B. Taipei citizens' experiences of Buying *The Big Issue*.
- C. Taipei citizens' opinions on *The Big Issue*.

- V. Conclusion: the survey and interviews show that people's general impression on the homeless is used as the selling point of *The Big Issue*. Although *The Big Issue* can actually help the homeless to earn money, it inevitably reinforces social inequality and the way people regard the homeless.

VI. Works Cited

VII. Appendix A: Questionnaires in English

VIII. Appendix B: Questionnaire in Chinese Distributed Online

IX. Appendix C: Interview Questions

X. Appendix D: Diagrams and Illustrations

XI. Appendix E: Transcripts of the Interview With Mr. Tsai at MRT Taipei Main Station

- XII. Appendix F: Transcripts of the Interview With Mr. Xie at MRT Ximen Station
- XIII. Appendix G: Transcripts of the Interview With Mr. Liu at MRT FJU Station
- XIV. Appendix H: Transcripts of the Interview With Mr. Xie at MRT Gongguan Station
- XV. Appendix I: Transcripts of the Interview With Mr. Ho at MRT Songjiang Nanjing Station



Walking out from Taipei Main Station, the biggest transportation center in Taipei, Taipei citizens can easily see several individuals with strong odors and dirty clothes sitting or wandering beside the magnificent buildings. They are homeless people, who do not have a shelter to take a shower and sleep in. According to Rayburn and Guittar, homelessness has been an important social issue in the United States, and the number of homeless individuals in the U.S. is approximately 3.5 million (159). In the modern world, as metropolitan cities developed prosperously, the problem of homelessness becomes more and more notable. Homelessness is a phenomenon that comes after the widening of the wealth gap, and which often results from complicated causes that can be individual or social.

Thus, the problem of homelessness needs to be solved or alleviated by the social welfare system established by a country's government, and sometimes by the cooperation between that government and Non-Governmental Organizations. Recently, street newspapers, which help the homeless earn money by themselves, are springing up all over the world. However, there is a controversy about whether or not street newspapers are effective media for homeless people to express their opinions or just a stigma for selling? This research project aims to examine the controversy from both its negative and positive sides. Although the selling of Street Newspapers is a way for the homeless to express their opinions in writing and to earn money, this endeavor may actually reinforce social inequality instead of helping the homeless. The survey and interviews conducted for this project show that the selling of *The Big Issue*, the main Street Newspaper sold by the homeless in Taipei, creates a stigma for selling, and reinforces inequality because of the marketing strategies which do not give the homeless opportunities to express their opinions. However, the results also show that both the customers and homeless vendors benefit from the selling.

This research paper is divided into seven sections including the introduction,

the literature review, the methodology, data analysis, the conclusion, works cited and appendices. First, this paper will provide some background information, including current situation and possible solutions of homelessness, and the controversial solution: the selling of street newspaper. Second, this paper will briefly review the secondary sources on issues related to homelessness and the problems of the selling of street newspaper. Third, the author will explain the investigative methods used in this research. Fourth, the author will analyze the data and diagrams collected from the investigative methods and sum up with a conclusion. Last, this paper will include works cited, the appendices including the questionnaires in English and Chinese version, the results in diagrams and illustrations, the interview questions, and the transcripts.

In the article “Community-Level Characteristics Associated with Variation in Rates of Homelessness among Families and Single Adults,” Jamison D. Fargo, Ellen A. Munley, Thomas H. Byrne, Ann Elizabeth Montgomery, and Dennis P. Culhane mention that as of January 2012 in the US, 62 % of homeless people are single adults, while 38% of homeless people are in homeless families. The authors argue that previous studies about the differences between homeless single adults and homeless families are not enough because the causes of why they become homeless are still unclear, which leads to divergent results. Although studies examining individual-level factors have been conducted, studies examining the relationship between individual-level factors and community-level factors are not enough. In this article, the authors investigate those community-level factors such as demographic, behavioral, health related, economic and safety net factors, which are different from individual-level factors. They use the multi-dimensional models to claim that the variables are different in different types of households, such as families and single adults, and in different regions, such as in metropolitan and in nonmetropolitan areas.

From the results, and as the authors mention, homeless families originate because of alcohol abuse, insufficient social welfare, and economic problems, while killing and drug abuse result in homeless single adults in metropolitan areas. In nonmetropolitan areas, the causes of homeless families are religious beliefs, the loss of jobs, short average life expectancies and the heavy burdens to rent houses, while crime and poverty and poor health care result in homeless individuals. The authors conclude that “indicating targets for interventions to reduce homelessness among subpopulations,” (340) is a good method to examine the relationship between homelessness and community-level factors more accurately, thereby investigating the two categories of families and individuals separately.

In the article “Homelessness: Emotion Discourse and the Reproduction of Social Inequality,” the author Barbara Schneider argues that we can understand the audience’s reactions to the mass media by examining how the homeless are presented in studies. Thus, this article focuses on the media’s effects on audience’s social interaction. The author discovered that people tend to use emotional words to describe their experiences when they get in touch with homeless people, so she conducted a study on emotion discourse, and she claims that emotions reflect cultural values and social activities. The author tried to determine the relationship between emotion discourse and media discourse, and in the summer of 2009, she collected data by observing focus groups formed by people who care about homelessness. The author analyzes the data by focusing on the emotions which reflect concepts of homelessness, then compared them to previous studies, and examined the emotion discourses. The author argues that emotion discourses cause people to have general moral standards to deal with social interactions, and the media may reproduce such discourses to exaggerate social inequalities. Schneider suggests that the participants develop a morality by expressing sympathy for homeless people to interact with others well.

When observing the focus group's discussion on the deserving and undeserving poor, the author discovers that the participants may encounter interactional difficulties when they express negative emotions. The author further claims that the participants may try to solve interactional difficulties by taking real action to care for homelessness. The limitation of this data collection is that the outcome may be different if the focus group changed, but the relationship between media discourse and emotion discourse can be further investigated. The author says that the interactions among people when they are in touch with the media about homelessness "also reproduces larger mediated discourses of social inequality, even when participants may think and hope that they are not doing so" (245).

In the article "A Tough Sell: Stigma as Souvenir in the Contested Performances of San Francisco's Homeless Street Sheet Vendors," Kurt Lindemann argues that the homeless newspaper's vending interactions may use the stigma of homelessness as a selling point and further stigmatize homeless individuals as "Other people." Nowadays, although the problem of homelessness is getting more and more serious, the number of homeless people and street newspapers increases. The street newspaper is a media for the homeless to highlight and to express the injustices which happen to them in society. However, the street newspaper *Street Sheet* has received negative reactions from the local government and the citizens in San Francisco because of its advocacy. Furthermore, claims Lindemann, some citizens think that the selling of the *Street Sheet* by the homeless vendors is just another way for the homeless to beg for changes.

By understanding homelessness' cultural meanings and the interrelationship of individuals and organizations among the street newspapers' vending, this study finds that the identity of the homeless needs to meet the expectations of the public. Using participant-observation, interviews and document analysis, Lindemann finds that

street newspapers reinforce the distance between the homeless and other citizens. From the way that the media presents or describes prevailing impressions of homelessness, the street newspaper's function as souvenir for tourists, and the stigma that comes from the vending process, one can understand that homeless vendors perform cultural meanings in the vending interactions. Lindemann then examines the vending process of the *Street Sheet* referring to the physical space and the population. Finally, the author concludes that "this essay illustrates the usefulness of a perspective on homeless advocacy that problematizes everyday interactions as informed by organizational policies" (55).

In the article "'This Is Where You Are Supposed To Be': How Homeless Individuals Cope With Stigma," Rachel L. Rayburn and Nicholas A. Guittar examine the stigmatization that is linked to homelessness based on ethnographic interviews and observations. While the number of homeless people increases, there are more and more legislations being enacted to prohibit homeless people from living on the streets, which leads to marginalization. The authors mention that from the data this study has collected, one can understand the ways homeless people save their identities and characteristics. The authors claim that stigma influences homeless people to change their identities and the way they react with other people. Using the concept of stigma, which comes from Erving Goffman's theory, this article aims to show how homeless individuals change their attitudes and identities when being stigmatized.

In this study, the interviewees and the participants in the focus group lived in two facilities provided by Coalition for the Homeless of Central Florida. By examining the collected data, the stigma emerges from the distance between homeless individuals and housed people. The authors also found that homeless people are willing to talk about their tough lives on the streets. Not only do homeless people "embrace their past and present," say the authors, but they also "fanaticize about the

future” by telling fictive stories (170). The authors conclude that this study shows that homeless individuals still think it is necessary to keep themselves away from other individuals because of stigma management.

In “Preventing Psychiatric Discharge to Homelessness,” Cheryl Forchuk, Mike Godin, Jeffery S. Hoch, Shani Kingston-MacClure, Momodou S. Jeng, Liz Puddy, Rebecca Vann and Elisabeth Jensen argue that among homeless people, people with mental illness, especially psychiatric illness (which is a common risk cause for homelessness), are the majority. In Canada and in the U.S., homelessness is associated with personal, physical and psychological problems. Thus, studies show that planning for hospital discharge is a key point to preventing homelessness. There are two hypotheses that the authors raise: by discharging people from hospitals, the number of homeless people will decrease, and this will cost less than keeping homeless people in shelters. The data is collected from psychiatric clients in London, Ontario, who are probably discharged from shelters. The authors also collect data from administrative intervention, hospitals and the organizations that provide the services of housing. In the discussion, the authors mention that the hypothesis of this study is supported by the data collection. The authors claim that this study shows positive outcomes, if we link housing support and income support together in the hospital system. There are some limitations in this study, as the authors mentioned, especially when it comes to the administrative data, but the authors claim, “the solutions need to cross-sector” (26).

In the book *Homeless—Policies, Strategies, and Lives on the Street*, Gerald Daly leads the readers to understand the policies and the evolution of homelessness in Canada, the US and Europe from a contextual perspective. Daly then discusses the human dimensions of homelessness by giving a “prescription for poor health,” (111) the deinstitutionalization of the caring community, and the experience of homeless

people. Lastly, he gathers responses by government and the voluntary sector to show the current solutions of homelessness in Canada, the U.S. and Europe, and ways to improve current policies. According to Daly, “There is often a substantial gap between policy and practice because of a lack of resources, and inadequate supply of affordable housing in locations legal duties, and a tendency for their responses to be shaped by ideology and parochial concerns” (191).

This research project is conducted by using three kinds of investigative methods: undertaking text analysis of previous studies about homelessness, distributing questionnaires online to people in Taipei using Google Document, and interviewing 3-5 street newspaper vendors who were homeless in the past or who are almost homeless now. The text analysis of previous studies is done by focusing on three topics: 1) a brief summary of the causes of homelessness in metropolitan cities, 2) a discussion of the stigma of homelessness represented in both main stream media and street newspapers, and 3) a discussion of street newspapers from both positive and negative aspects.

The purposes of conducting a survey by circulating questionnaires to people living in Taipei are: 1) to understand the current situation of homelessness in this city (to examine if current policies or methods solve the homeless problem adequately), 2) to understand citizens’ thoughts about homeless individuals, and 3) to examine their experience of and thoughts about buying *The Big Issue* magazine, which is the main street newspaper for homeless vendors in Taipei. The questionnaires are posted by using the URL of Google document on Facebook, because this will be the best and fastest way to collect the data. The interviews of 3-5 street newspaper vendors who were homeless in the past or who are almost homeless now aim to: 1) understand how *The Big Issue* works, 2) how the vendors feel about their jobs and this enterprise and 3) their attitudes about being homeless vendors. The interviewees are the vendors of *The*

Big Issue in Taipei. I use Chinese or Taiwanese to interview these vendors and then translate the transcripts of the interviews into English.

Research results show that most Taipei citizens do not fully understand both the group of homeless and homelessness as a social issue, including the reasons behind homelessness and the problems it causes (Fig.1 and Fig. 2). Being unfamiliar with the homeless, Taipei citizens tend to think about the homeless in their own ways. According to the Taipei citizens' answers to the open questions on the questionnaire, "What do you think about the homeless? (For example, nice, stinky, etc.)," most of the respondents (42 out of 97) think homeless people need help, including food, care and religion; 4 say the homeless need empathy and understanding instead of sympathy; 3 say the homeless need to be helped by a complete plan instead of short-term financially help. 34 out of 97 think they are dirty. 21 think they are poor. 24 think they are dangerous, unfriendly, indifferent or horrifying, making people want to get rid of them. 15 think they are friendly or quiet. 9 think their life style is unstable because they do not have shelter, so they cause problems, and sometimes they get mad. 11 think they are unlucky and do not have a choice of their lifestyle. The rest of the descriptions include sick, weak, lazy, self-dependent, free, complicated and pitiful. A few of the respondents think the homeless only choose this way to live, and there is no problem for them to do so. This outcome shows most people's impressions of homeless people: they need help. Furthermore, Taipei citizens' thoughts about how to help the homeless are restricted to an emergent help, such as giving money to them and helping them to find jobs. However, to help the homeless reintegrate into society, the government, the NGOs, the social enterprises and the public should be more forward looking instead of being limited to just giving money to them and helping them to get jobs.

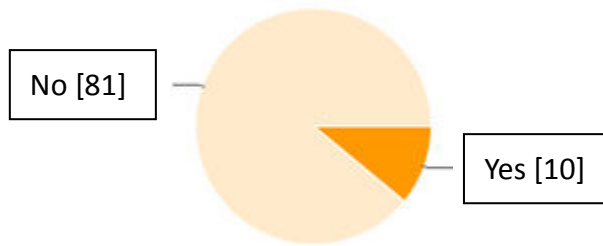


Fig. 1 Do you think you understand the group of homeless people?



Fig. 2 Do you think you understand homelessness (including the reasons that cause homelessness and the problems it causes)?

Therefore, here comes the problem of *The Big Issue*. According to the survey, Taipei citizens' answer the open question "I think buying *The Big Issue* can help me understand homeless people and homelessness," by choosing "agree," but the number of those who disagree is almost the same as the number of those who agree. This suggests that whether or not *The Big Issue* can help a person understand homeless people and homelessness is still confusing. Although *The Big Issue* actually helps the homeless to be financially independent, as a street newspaper, it should help the homeless to express their opinions and to eliminate social inequality, instead of just helping them earn money.

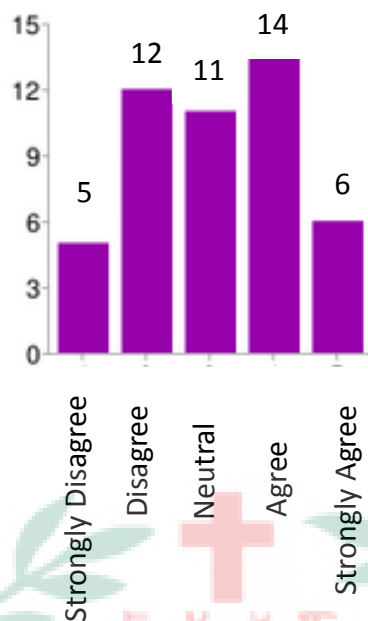


Fig. 3 I think buying *The Big Issue* can help me understand homeless people and homelessness.

According to the survey based on the opinions of Taipei citizens and the interviews from the vendors of *The Big Issue*, street newspapers such as *The Big Issue* definitely offer a solution to help the homeless be financial independent. However, the selling strategies of *The Big Issue* tend to use the public's impression on the homeless, such as poverty, needing help and pity to earn money. This way, the homeless themselves have become "a product." For example, during the pre-employment training, the company of *The Big Issue* always teaches the homeless not to sell *The Big Issue* by talking to passengers. This deprives the vendors of their rights to express themselves and to build up their own respect. Moreover, as more and more homeless people try to get jobs on *The Big Issue*, the money that one homeless person can earn from selling the newspaper decreases. Therefore, the selling of *The Big Issue* is a good beginning to help the homeless, but the methods and strategies should be considered and revised according to what the homeless people really need, such as opportunities for them to tell the public their stories to reintegrate with the society.

The research on the controversy of the selling of *The Big Issue* can be further investigated on ways to find a proper balance between the profits and the help to the homeless. Therefore, here is a question to be addressed in the future research: as a social enterprise which needs to take care of the homeless and earn money at the same time, how can *The Big Issue*'s selling strategies be revised?



Works Cited

- Daly, Gerald. *Homeless—Policies, Strategies, and Lives on the Street*. London: Routledge, 1996. Print.
- Fargo, J. D., et al. "Community-Level Characteristics Associated With Variation in Rates of Homelessness Among Families and Single Adults." *American Journal of Public Health* 103.2 (2013): 340-47. Web. 29 Dec. 2014.
- Forchuk, Cheryl, et al. "Preventing Psychiatric Discharge to Homelessness." *Canadian Journal of Community Mental Health* 32.3 (2013): 17-28. Web. 29 Dec. 2014.
- Lindemann, Kurt. "A Tough Sell: Stigma as Souvenir in the Contested Performances of San Francisco's Homeless Street Sheet Vendors" *Text & Performance Quarterly* 27.1 (2007): 41-57. Web. 29 Dec. 2014.
- Rayburn, Rachel L. and Nicholas A. Guittar. " "This Is Where You Are Supposed to Be" : How Homeless Individuals Cope with Stigma." *Sociological Spectrum* 33.2 (2013): 159-74. Web. 29 Dec. 2014.
- Schneider, Barbara. "Homelessness: Emotion Discourse and the Reproduction of Social Inequality." *Canadian Journal of Communication* 39.2 (2014): 235-48. Web. 29 Dec. 2014.

Appendix A: Questionnaires in English

Questionnaire About the Street Newspaper *The Big Issue* Sold Among Taipei**Citizens**

This is a questionnaire for a research paper on whether or not the selling of Street Newspapers is a way for the homeless to express their opinions in writing and to earn money, or a way to reinforce social inequality instead of helping the homeless. ALL RESPONSES to all questions will be held completely confidential by the researcher, and will ONLY be used for academic purposes. The questionnaire will take you about 10 minutes to complete. Thank you for your time.

This questionnaire will be distributed to citizens in Taipei. It is estimated that at least 70 citizens will answer and return the questionnaires.

I. Personal Information

1. What is your age?

Below 20 21-30 31-40 41-50 above 50

2. What is your gender?

Male Female

3. What is your highest education?

Below high school (including high school)

College

Junior college

Graduate school and above

4. What is the category of your occupation?

Government employee (Military, public and teaching personnel)

- ___ Executive officer of administration or enterprise
- ___ Technician
- ___ Service industry
- ___ Agriculture, forestry, fishing, animal husbandry, and industry
- ___ Financial industry
- ___ Student
- ___ Homemaker/Unemployed/Retired
- ___ Others (_____)

5. What is your monthly income?

- ___ None
- ___ Below 20000
- ___ 20001- 40000
- ___ 40001- 60000
- ___ 60001- 80000
- ___ Over 80000

6. What is your marital status?

- ___ Unmarried ___ Married

7. Where do you live?

- ___ Taipei City
- ___ New Taipei City
- ___ Others (_____) (Skip to the end of this questionnaire)

(Which district do you live in? _____)

II. Opinions on the homeless.

8-1. Do you think you understand the homeless?

- ___ Yes ___ No

8-2. Do you think you understand homelessness (including the reasons of homelessness and the problems it causes)?

___ Yes ___ No

9. Do you have any friends or family members who are homeless?

___ Yes ___ No

10. Have you ever talked to homeless people before?

___ Yes ___ No

11. What do you think about the homeless? (For example, nice, stinky, etc.)

12. What reasons do you think cause homelessness?

13-1. Do you think “homeless people” need help?

___ Yes (Please answer 13-2 and 13-3) ___ No (Please skip to 13-4)

13-2. Why do you think “homeless people” need help?

13-3. What solutions can you offer to help the homeless?

13-4. Why do you think “homeless people” do not need help?

13-5. Do you think “homelessness” should be solved?

___ Yes (Please answer 13-6 and 13-7) ___ No (Please skip to 13-8)

13-6. Why do you think “homelessness” should be solved?

13-7. What solutions can you offer to solve homelessness?

13-8. Why do you think “homelessness” should not be solved?

III. Experiences of Buying *The Big Issue*.

13. Have you ever bought *The Big Issue*?

Yes (Skip to 14) No (Please answer 13-1)

13-1. Why haven't you bought *The Big Issue* before?

_____ (Skip to the end of this questionnaire)

14. How many issues have you bought?

1-10 11-30 31-60 more than 60

15. In what ways have you purchased *The Big Issue*? (multiple choice)

From the vendors (Please answer 16-2 and 16-3)

From *The Big Issue* company in person

From Eslite bookstore

Subscribed to the magazine (Please answer 16-1)

Booked online

Others (_____)

16-1. For how long?

Below 6 months 6 months to 1 year 1-2 years

2-3 years over 3 years)

16-2. Do you usually buy *The Big Issue* from the same vendor?

Yes No

16-3. Where do you usually buy *The Big Issue*? Please indicate an answer

17. How often do you buy *The Big Issue*?

Seldom

___ Sometimes

___ Usually

___ Always

IV. Opinions on *The Big Issue*.

18. Why do you buy *The Big Issue*?

___ Helping the homeless

___ The content

___ Others (_____)

19. Which part of the content do you like the most?

___ Feature Stories

___ Issue, Affairs, Ideas

___ Business Tomorrow

___ Culture Related

___ Design for All

___ Editing Events (Commic, Stories about Homelessness. . .)

For each of the following statements, indicate the feelings you have about *The Big Issue* and the way it is made available to the general public. Circle the appropriate number.

20. I like *The Big Issue*.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree

21. I think buying *The Big Issue* can help the homeless financially.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree

22. I think buying *The Big Issue* can help the homeless to become familiar with society.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree

23. I think the content in *The Big Issue* is interesting.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree

24. I think buying *The Big Issue* is like doing charity.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree

25. I think buying *The Big Issue* is fashionable.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree

26. I think the content in *The Big Issue* should include more stories about the homeless.

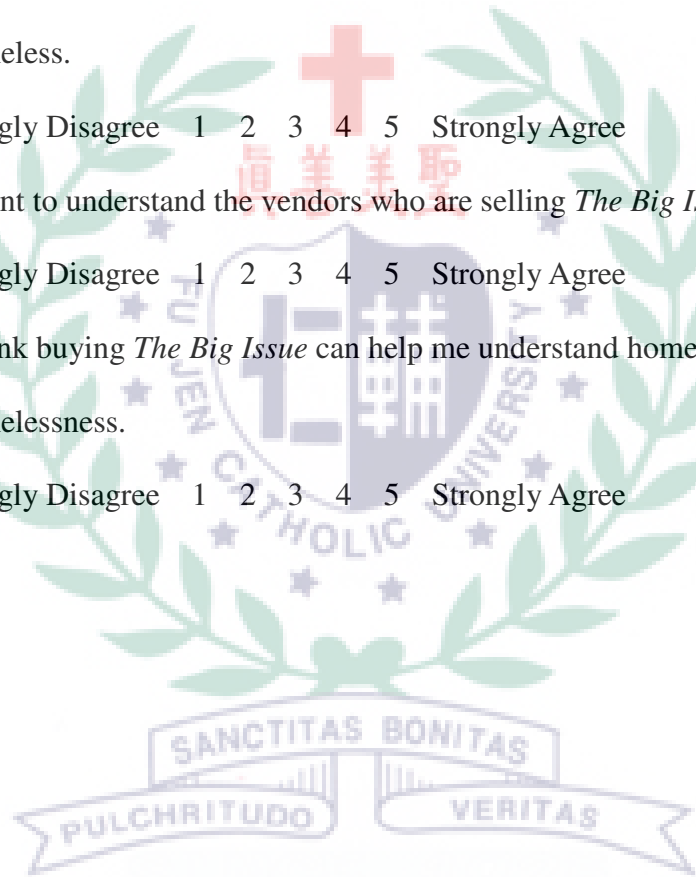
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree

27. I want to understand the vendors who are selling *The Big Issue*.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree

28. I think buying *The Big Issue* can help me understand homeless people and homelessness.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree



Appendix B: Questionnaires in Chinese Distributed Online

第 1 頁/共 9 頁

大台北居民對街友以及The Big Issue大誌觀感調查 Questionnaire About

***此問卷請台北市或新北市居民填答，謝謝

您好，我是輔仁大學英國語文學系三年級的學生，目前正在製作論文，研究The Big Issue大誌的販售方式是否幫助到街友，或是僅利用街友身分強化階級不平等的現象，故以此問卷調查大台北居民對The Big Issue大誌以及街友的觀感。

懇請您撥冗填寫問卷，以協助我完成此研究。

本問卷一共有四個部分，一共28題，大約需要10-20分鐘填答。

本問卷採匿名方式，問卷結果僅供學術之用，敬請放心填答。謝謝！

This is a questionnaire for a research paper on whether or not the selling of Street Newspapers is a way for the homeless to express their opinions in writing and to earn money, or a way to reinforce social inequality instead of helping the homeless. ALL RESPONSES to all questions will be held completely confidential by the researcher, and will ONLY be used for academic purposes. The questionnaires will take you about 10-20 minutes to complete. Thanks for your time.

學生：唐芝妍 Sue Tang

指導老師：包磊思 Dr. John Basourakos

第 2 頁/共 9 頁

第一部分

個人基本資料 Personal Information

1. 請問您幾歲? What is your age?*

- 20以下(含20)
- 21-30
- 31-40
- 41-50
- 51以上(含51)

2. 請問您的性別? What is your gender?*

- 男 Male
- 女 Female
- 其他：

3. 請問您的教育程度? What is your highest education?*

- 高中職以下 (含高中職) Below high school (including high school)
- 大學 College
- 專科 Junior college
- 研究所以上 Graduate school and above

4. 請問您的職業? What is the category of your occupation?*

- 軍公教 Government employee (Military, public and teaching personnel)
- 主管 Executive officer of administration or enterprise
- 專業技術人員 Technician
- 服務業 Service industry
- 農林漁牧工 Agriculture, forestry, fishing, animal husbandry, and industry
- 金融業 Financial industry
- 學生 Student
- 家管/退休 Homemaker/Unemployed/Retired
- 其他:

5. 請問您的月收入? What is your monthly income?*

- 無固定收入 None
- 20000元以下
- 20001-40000元
- 40,001~60,000 元
- 60,001~80,000 元
- 80,001 元以上

6. What is your marital status?*

- 未婚 Unmarried
- 已婚 Married
- 其他:

7. 你居住在? Where do you live?*

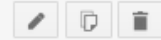
- 台北市 Taipei City
- 新北市 New Taipei City
- 其他:

居住在哪個區域? (例: 新莊區)*

新增項目 ▾

第 3 頁 / 共 9 頁

第二部分



對街友和街友問題的看法 Opinions on the Homeless.

8-1. 您認為您自己了解街友這個群體嗎?*

- 是 Yes
- 否 No

8-2. 您認為您自己了解街友問題(造成的影響或產生的原因)嗎?*

- 是 Yes
- 否 No

9. 您有任何親戚或朋友是街友嗎? Do you have any friends or family members who are homeless?*

- 有 Yes
- 沒有 No

10. 您曾經和任何街友進行交流或交談嗎?*

- 是 Yes
- 否 No

11. 您對街友的看法是? What do you think about the homeless?*

請簡答或詳述主觀感受; 例如貧窮、友善、安靜、需要幫助、骯髒、危險 (For example, nice, stinky, poor, etc.)

12. 您認為街友產生的原因是? What reasons do you think cause homelessness?*

請簡答或詳述

13-1. 您認為「街友」需要幫助嗎?*

本題著重於您是否認為「街友群體」應該被幫助

- 是 Yes (請接續填答 13-2 與 13-3 題)
- 否 No (請接續填答 13-4 題)

13-2. 為什麼您認為街友需要幫助?

答「是」者填答, 請簡答或詳述, 答完接答 13-3 題

13-3. 您認為可以如何幫助街友? What solutions can you offer to help the homeless?

答「是」者填答, 請簡答或詳述, 答完跳答 13-5 題

13-4. 為什麼您認為街友不需要幫助?

答「否」者填答, 請填答或詳述, 答完跳答 13-6 題

13-5. 您認為「街友問題」需要被改善嗎?*

本題著重於您是否認為「街友造成的問題」需要被改善

- 是 Yes (請接續填答13-6與13-7題)
- 否 No (請接續填答13-8題)

13-6. 為什麼您認為街友問題需要被改善?

答「是」者填答，請簡答或詳述，答完接答13-7題

13-7. 您認為可以如何改善街友問題?

答「是」者填答，請簡答或詳述，不需回答下題

13-8. 為什麼您認為街友問題不需要被改善?

答「否」者填答，請簡答或詳述

新增項目 ▾

於第 3 頁後 前往下一頁 ⇨

第 4 頁/共 9 頁

第三部分

購買 The Big Issue 大誌的經驗 Experiences of Buying The Big Issue.

14. 您有購買 The Big Issue 大誌的經驗嗎? Have you ever bought The Big Issue?*

- 有 Yes
- 沒有 No

新增項目 ▾

於第 4 頁後 前往下一頁 ⇨

第 5 頁/共 9 頁

第三部分之二

15. 您買過幾期 The Big Issue 大誌? How many issues have you bought?*

註：目前5月刊是第62期

- 1-10
- 11-30
- 31-60
- 60以上

16. 您是用何種管道購買 The Big Issue 大誌? In what ways have you purchased The Big Issue? *

此題為多選題，曾經購買的方式皆可選取 multiple choice

- 街頭銷售員 From the vendors (請接續填答 16-2 與 16-3 題)
- 親自到公司購買 From The Big Issue company in person
- 在誠品購買 From Eslite bookstore
- 長期訂閱 Subscribed to the magazine (請接續填答第 16-1 題)
- 線上訂購 Booked online
- 其他:

16-1. 訂閱多久? For how long?

購買管道有選擇「長期訂閱」者填答

- 半年以下 Below 6 months
- 半年到一年 6 months to 1 year
- 一到兩年 1-2 years
- 兩到三年 2-3 years
- 超過三年 over 3 years

16-2. 您有固定向同一個銷售員購買 The Big Issue 大誌嗎? Do you usually buy The Big Issue from the same vendor?

購買管道有選擇「街頭銷售員」者填答

- 是 Yes
- 否 No

16-3. 您通常在哪裡購買 The Big Issue 大誌? Where do you usually buy The Big Issue?

購買管道選擇「街頭銷售員」者填答，請舉出最常購買的地點 Please indicate an answer

17. 您認為自己有多常購買 The Big Issue 大誌? How often do you buy The Big Issue? *

請選擇自己的主觀感覺選項

- 很少 Seldom
- 有時 Sometimes
- 經常 Usually
- 總是 Always
- 其他:

新增項目 ▾

於第 5 頁後 移至第 7 頁 (第四部分) ⇅

第 6 頁 / 共 9 頁

不購買的原因?

請問您從來沒有購買過的原因為何? *

新增項目 ▾

於第 6 頁後 移至第 9 頁 (其他建議) ⇅

第四部分

對 The Big Issue 大誌的看法 Opinions on The Big Issue

18. 您購買 The Big Issue 大誌的主要因素? Why do you buy The Big Issue?*

- 幫助街友 Helping the homeless
- 喜歡內容 The content
- 其他:

19. 您最喜歡 The Big Issue 大誌的哪個單元? Which part of the content do you like the most?*

- Feature (封面故事)
- Issue, Affair, Idea (議題評論、各州短評)
- Business Tomorrow (品牌故事、商業短評、科技短評)
- Culture Related (電影、音樂、書籍、展覽、表演藝術)
- Design for All (設計、時尚短評)
- Editing Events (漫畫、街頭販售者群像、行事曆)

新增項目 ▾

於第 7 頁後 前往下一頁 >

第四部分之二

對 The Big Issue 大誌的看法 Opinions on The Big Issue

請您閱讀每題陳述內容後，在五個選項當中選擇符合您感受的程度。

1 表示非常不同意，2 表示不同意，3 表示普通，4 表示同意，5 表示非常同意。

For each of the following statements, indicate the feelings you have about The Big Issue and the way it is made available to the general public. Circle the appropriate number.

20. 我喜歡 The Big Issue 大誌 I like The Big Issue*

1 2 3 4 5

完全不同意 ● ● ● ● ● 完全同意

21. 我認為購買 The Big Issue 大誌可以在經濟上幫助街友 I think buying The Big Issue can help the homeless for financial reasons*

1 2 3 4 5

完全不同意 ● ● ● ● ● 完全同意

22. 我認為購買 The Big Issue 大誌可以幫助街友與社會交流 I think buying The Big Issue can help the homeless to become familiar with society*

1 2 3 4 5

完全不同意 ● ● ● ● ● 完全同意

23. 我認為The Big Issue大誌的內容是有趣的 I think the content in The Big Issue is interesting

1 2 3 4 5

完全不同意 完全同意

24. 我認為購買The Big Issue大誌是在做善事 I think buying The Big Issue is like doing charity*

1 2 3 4 5

完全不同意 完全同意

25. 我認為購買The Big Issue大誌很時尚 I think buying The Big Issue is fashionable*

1 2 3 4 5

完全不同意 完全同意

26. 我認為The Big Issue大誌的內容應該多容納一些關於遊民的議題 I think the content in The Big Issue should include more stories about the homeless*

1 2 3 4 5

完全不同意 完全同意

27. 我會想要去了解The Big Issue大誌的街頭銷售員 I want to understand the vendors who are selling The Big Issue*

1 2 3 4 5

完全不同意 完全同意

28. 我認為購買The Big Issue大誌可以協助我了解街友和街友問題*

1 2 3 4 5

完全不同意 完全同意

新增項目 ▾

第 9 頁 / 共 9 頁

其他建議

於第 8 頁後，移至第 9 頁 (其他建議) ⇅

針對以上問卷，如果有任何問題或建議歡迎在此提出！
也歡迎留下認識的The Big Issue販售員聯絡方式或資訊，協助我進行研究第二階段的訪談！謝謝！

新增項目 ▾

確認頁面

謝謝您的填答！祝你有美好愉快的一天！！！！

顯示連結以傳送更多回應

發佈並顯示表單結果的公開連結 ?

允許回應者於傳送後編輯回應

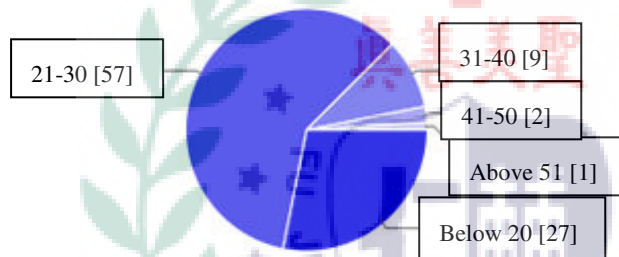
傳送表單

Appendix C: Diagrams

I. Personal Information

1. What is your age?

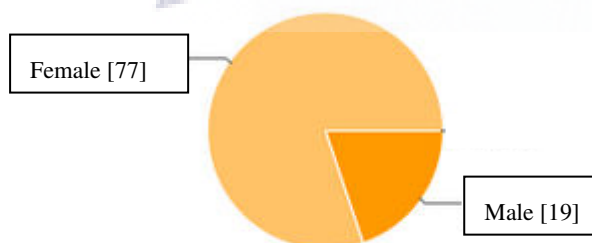
Below 20	27	28.1%
21-30	51	59.4%
31-40	9	9.4%
41-50	2	2.1%
Above 50	1	1%



97 Taipei citizens answered the questionnaires. A majority of the respondents (59.4%) are 21-30 years old, who are college students or new graduates.

2. What is your gender?

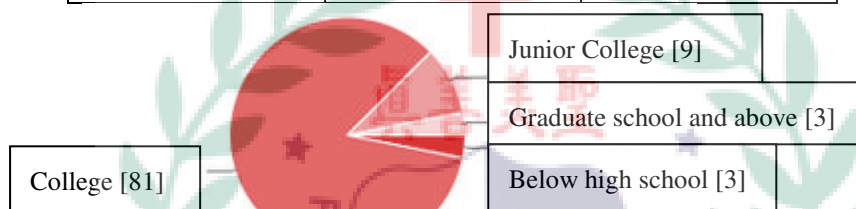
Male	19	19.8%
Female	77	80.2%



77 out of 97 are female Taipei citizens.

3. What is your highest education?

Below high school (including high school)	3	3.1%
College	81	84.4%
Junior college	9	9.4%
Graduate school and above	3	3.1%

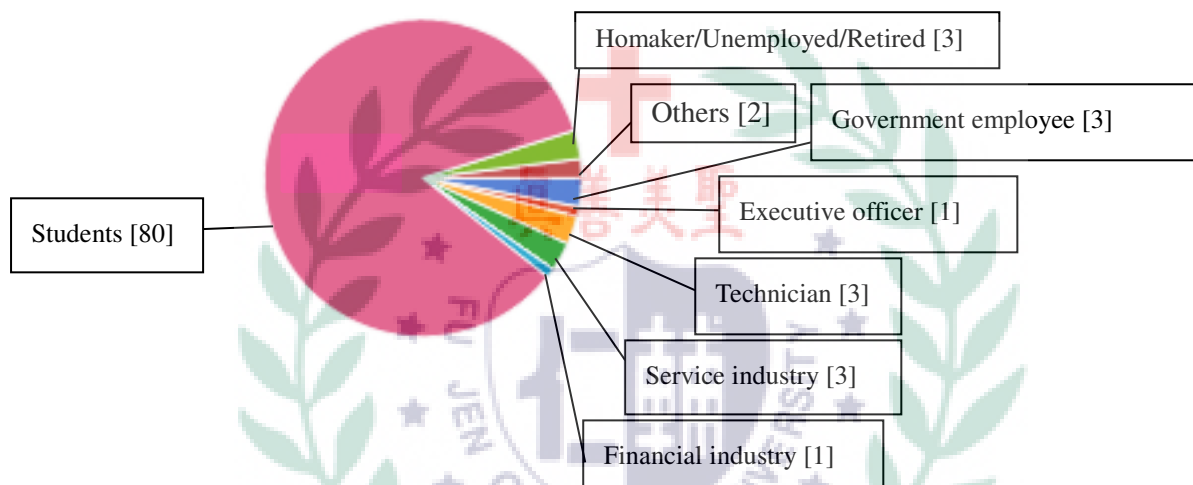


84.4% of respondents' highest education is college education, which means the target subjects of this research project are those who were highly educated.

4. What is the category of your occupation?

Government employee (Military, public and teaching personnel)	3	3.1%
Executive officer of administration or enterprise	1	1%
Technician	3	3.1%
Service industry	3	3.1%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, animal husbandry, and	0	0

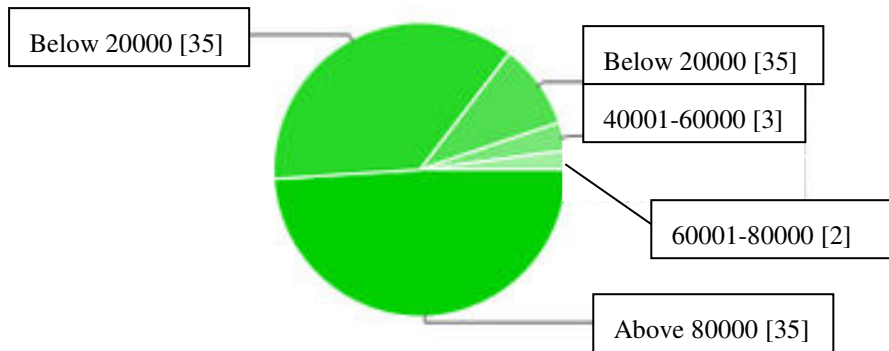
industry		
Financial industry	1	1%
Student	80	83.3%
Homemaker/Unemployed/Retired	3	3.1%
Others	2	2.1%



Most of the respondents (83.3%) are students who normally do not have to worry about their jobs and having an income.

5. What is your monthly income?

None	47	49%
Below 20000	35	36.5%
20001-40000	9	9.4%
40001-60000	3	3.1%
60001-80000	2	2.1%
Over 80000	0	0%



Most of the respondents do not have any income (49%) or have an income that is below 20000 NTDs (36.5%). This means the respondents can only use their pocket money or allowance to buy things they need in daily life, and they might not be able to afford other recreations.

6. What is your marital status?

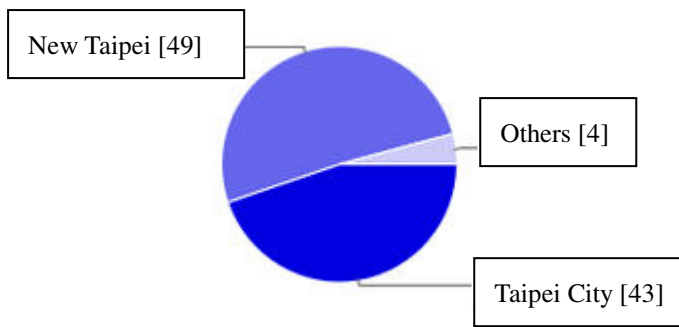
Unmarried	85	88.5%
Married	11	11.5%



Most of the respondents are unmarried (88.5%). This means the respondents are not influenced by marriage.

7. Where do you live?

Taipei City	43	44.8%
New Taipei City	49	51%



Half of the respondents live in Taipei City (44.8%), and the other half of the respondents live in New Taipei City (51%). Therefore, this research can equally investigate not only people live in Taipei City but also those who live in New Taipei City.

II. Opinions on the homeless.

8-1. Do you think you understand homeless?

Yes	10	11%
No	81	89%

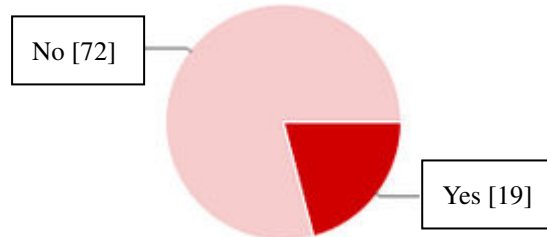


89% respondents think they do not understand the homeless, which suggests they may misunderstand the personalities of the homeless, have bias against the homeless or help the homeless in their own ways, which may actually harm the homeless instead of really helping them.

8-2. Do you think you understand homelessness (including the reasons behind homelessness and the problems it causes)?

Yes	19	20.9%
-----	----	-------

No	72	79.1%
----	----	-------



79.1% respondents think they do not understand homelessness, which suggests that most people do not fully understand reasons behind homelessness and solutions of homelessness, so they may harm them by taking wrong methods, no matter they do want to help them or not.

9. Do you have any friends or family members who are homeless?

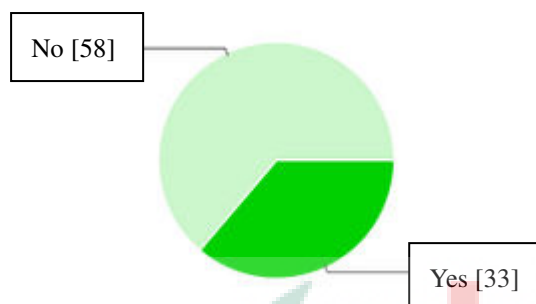
Yes	1	1.1%
No	90	98.9%



Only one respondent has a friend or a family member who is homeless, which means the homeless are distant from the society. People may not perceive that there are some homeless people who need help in our society, or even if they did notice the homeless, they may not help the homeless properly because they do not make acquaintances with them much.

10. Have you ever talked to homeless people before?

Yes	33	36.3%
No	58	63.7%



Only 36.3% of the respondents have spoken to a homeless person before. The other 63.7% do not have this experience.

11. What do you think about the homeless? (For example, nice, stinky, etc.)

Most of the respondents (42 out of 97) think homeless people need help, including food, care and religion; 4 say the homeless need empathy and understand instead of sympathy; 3 say the homeless need to be helped by a complete plan instead of short-term financially help. 34 out of 97 think they are dirty. 21 think they are poor. 24 think they are dangerous, unfriendly, indifferent or horrifying, making people want to get rid of them. 15 think they are friendly or quiet. 9 think their life style is unstable because they do not have shelter, so they cause problems, and sometimes they get mad. 11 think they are unlucky and do not have a choice. The rest of the descriptions include sick, weak, lazy, self-dependent, free, complicated and pitiful. A few of the respondents think they only choose this way to live, and there is no problem for them to do so.

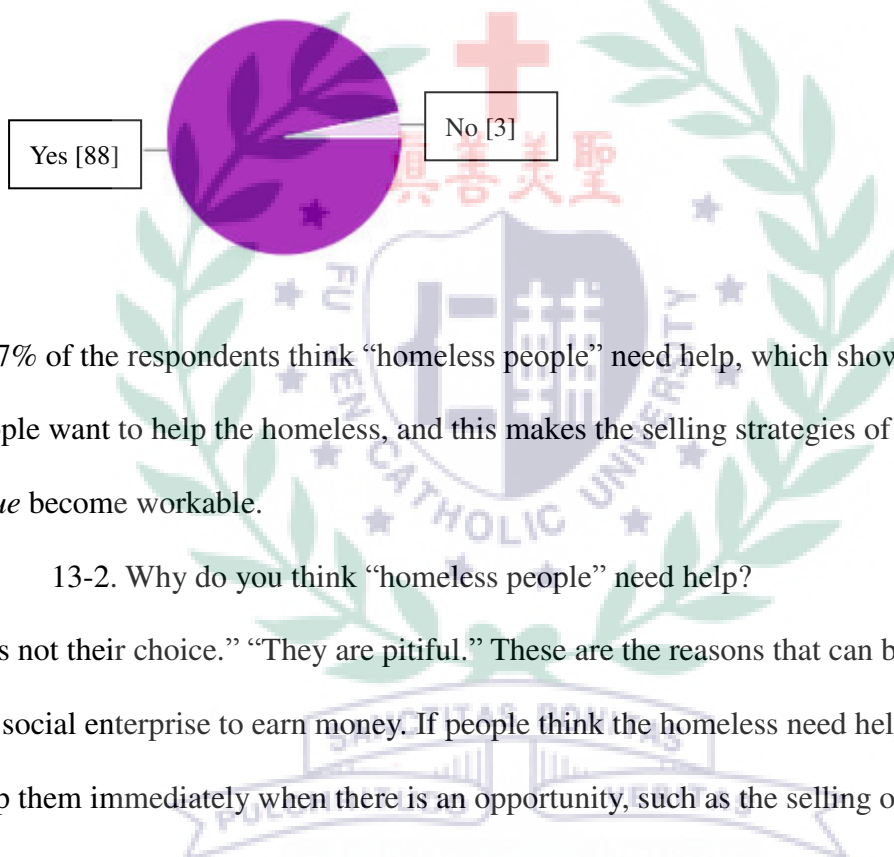
12. What reasons do you think cause homelessness?

“They are abandoned by their families.” “They are unable to find a job.” “They are too lazy.” “Some accidents happen to them.” These are all possible reasons on the

perspective of individual-level, but none of them answers from the perspective of community-level, which is the main reason of homelessness. Therefore, the solutions they provide may be wrong or inappropriate.

13-1. Do you think “homeless people” need help?

Yes	88	96.7%
No	3	3.3%



96.7% of the respondents think “homeless people” need help, which shows that most people want to help the homeless, and this makes the selling strategies of *The Big Issue* become workable.

13-2. Why do you think “homeless people” need help?

“It’s not their choice.” “They are pitiful.” These are the reasons that can be used by the social enterprise to earn money. If people think the homeless need help, they may help them immediately when there is an opportunity, such as the selling of *The Big Issue*. However, they may not stop to think if this solution is good or bad for the homeless.

13-3. What solutions can you offer to help the homeless?

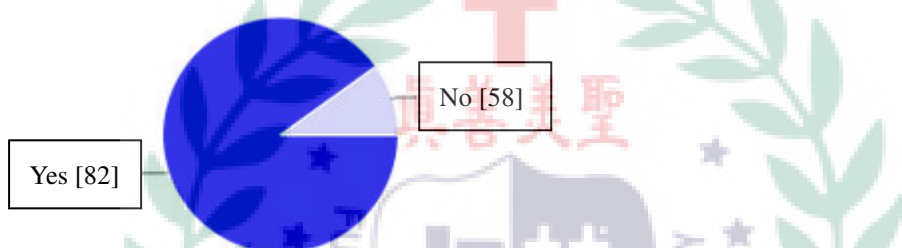
“It’s the government’s responsibility.” “We should give them food.” “We should help them find jobs.” The solutions that most of the respondents provided are short-term solutions, which can only help the homeless for a while.

13-4. Why do you think “homeless people” do not need help?

“They might want to be homeless.” “It’s their choices and we should not influence them to change.” There are some people think the homeless “choose” to wonder on the streets. Although quite a few homeless persons “choose” to live on the street, most of them did not “choose” do be homeless because it is too sorrowful.

13-5. Do you think “homelessness” should be solved?

Yes	82	90.1%
No	9	9.9%



Almost all the respondents (90.1%) think “homelessness” should be solved.

13-6. Why do you think “homelessness” should be solved?

“It influences society.” “Homeless people are stinky and sometimes dangerous.”

13-7. What solutions can you offer to solve homelessness?

“The government should help them find jobs.”

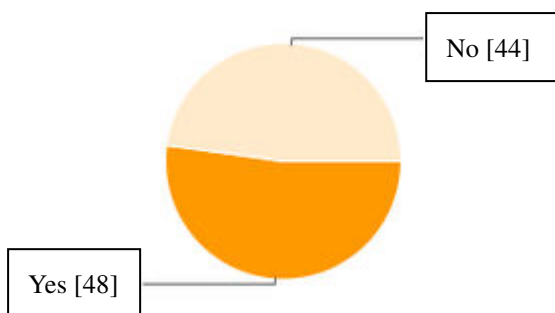
13-8. Why do you think “homelessness” should not be solved?

“I don’t even think it is a ‘problem’ which should be solved.”

III. Experiences of Buying *The Big Issue*.

14. Have you ever bought *The Big Issue*?

Yes	48	52.2%
No	44	47.8%



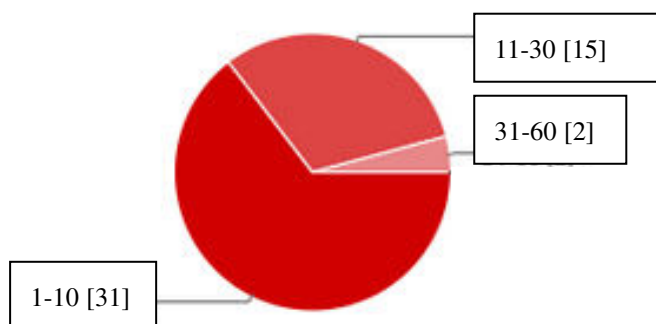
Half (52.2%) of the respondents have bought it before, while the other half (47.8%) have not.

14-1. Why haven't you bought *The Big Issue* before?

44 out of the 97 respondents have never bought *The Big Issue* before mainly because they do not know about this street newspaper (11 out of 44), they are not familiar with the content of *The Big Issue* (12 out of 44), they do not read magazines (7 out of 44), and it is too expensive (11 out of 44). Other reasons include no opportunities (3), borrowing instead of buying (2), having no time to read (2), and being afraid of approaching the vendors (2).

15. How many issues have you bought?

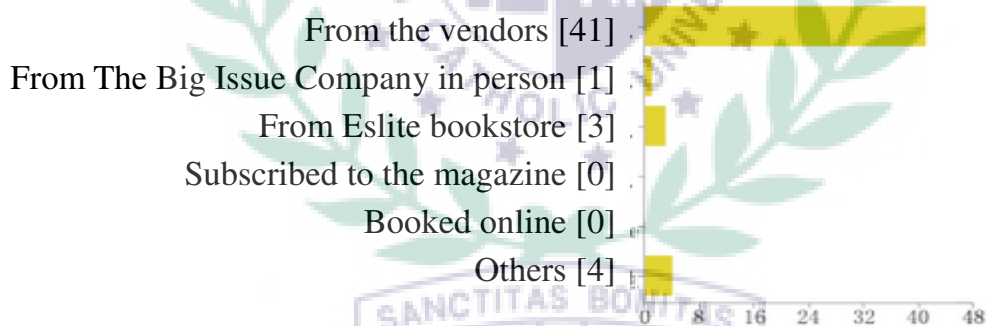
1-10	31	64.6%
11-30	15	31.3%
31-60	2	4.2%
more than 60	0	0



Most of the respondents who have bought *The Big Issue* before have bought 1-10 issues, and one third of the respondents have bought 11-30 issues.

16. In what ways have you purchased *The Big Issue*? (multiple choice)

From the vendors	41	85.4%
From <i>The Big Issue</i> Company in person	1	2.1%
From Eslite bookstore	3	6.3%
Subscribed to the magazine	0	0
Booked online	0	0
Others	4	8.3%



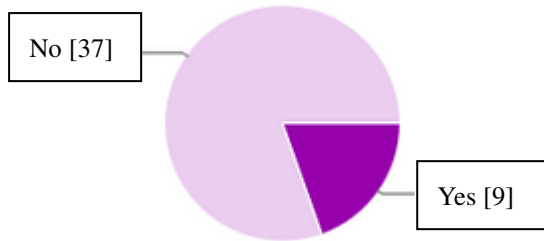
Most of the respondents (85.4%) purchased *The Big Issue* from the vendors.

16-1. For how long?

None of the respondents has subscribed to the magazine.

16-2. Do you usually buy *The Big Issue* from the same vendor?

Yes	9	19.6%
No	37	80.4%

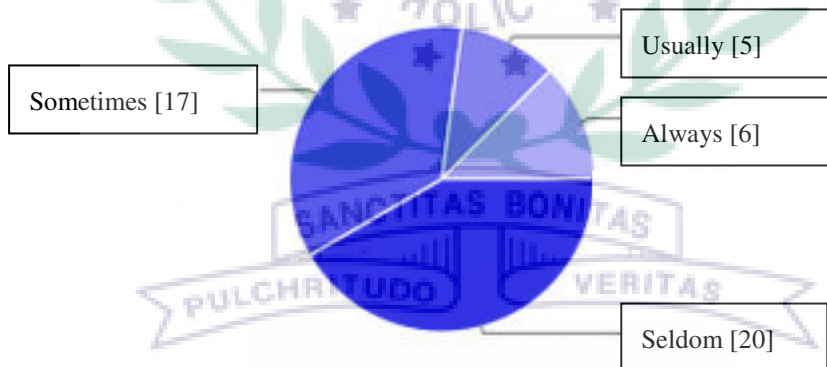


16-3. Where do you usually buy *The Big Issue*? Please indicate an answer.

Most of the respondents buy *The Big Issue* near MRT stations (especially near FJU, NTU and Taipei Main Station). Some of them buy *The Big Issue* randomly at different locations.

17. How often do you buy *真善美*?

Seldom	20	41.7%
Sometimes	17	35.4%
Usually	5	10.4%
Always	6	12.5%



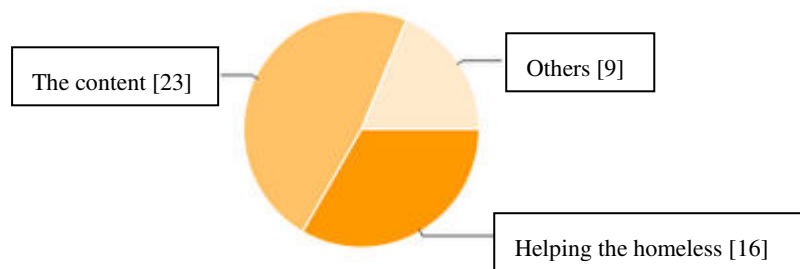
Most of the respondents (41.7% and 35.4%) think that they seldom or sometimes buy *The Big Issue*

IV. Opinions on *The Big Issue*.

18. Why do you buy *The Big Issue*?

Helping the homeless	16	33.3%
----------------------	----	-------

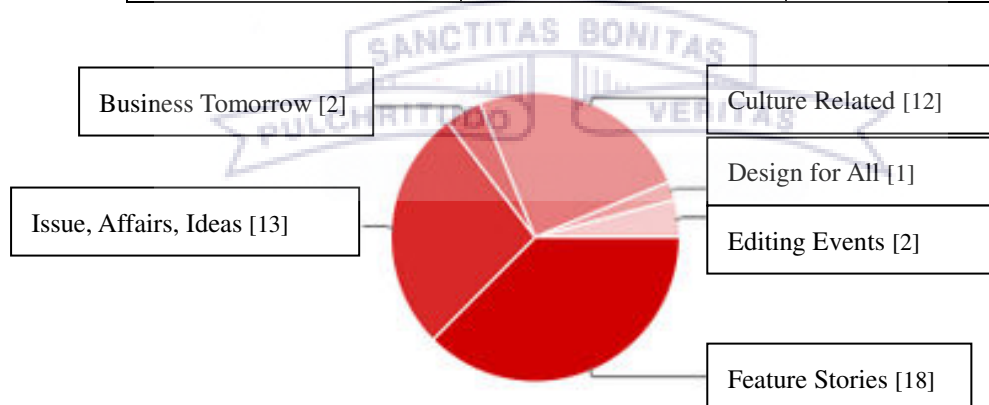
The content	23	47.9%
Others	9	18.8%



Almost half of the respondents (47.9%) like the content. The ones who choose “other” say that they like both the content and the thought of helping the homeless.

19. Which part of the content do you like the most?

Feature Stories	18	37.5%
Issue, Affairs, Ideas	13	27.1%
Business Tomorrow	2	4.2%
Culture Related	12	25%
Design for All	1	2.1%
Editing Events	2	4.2%



For each of the following statements, indicate the feelings you have about *The Big Issue* and the way it is made available to the general public. Circle the appropriate

number.

20. I like *The Big Issue*.

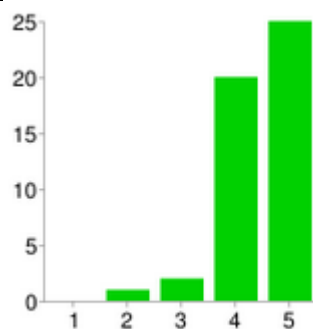
Strongly disagree	0	0%
Disagree	1	2.1%
Neutral	8	16.7%
Agree	22	45.8%
Strongly agree	17	35.4%



Most of the respondents like *The Big Issue*, but those who strongly agree with this statement are less than those who agree.

21. I think buying *The Big Issue* can help the homeless financially.

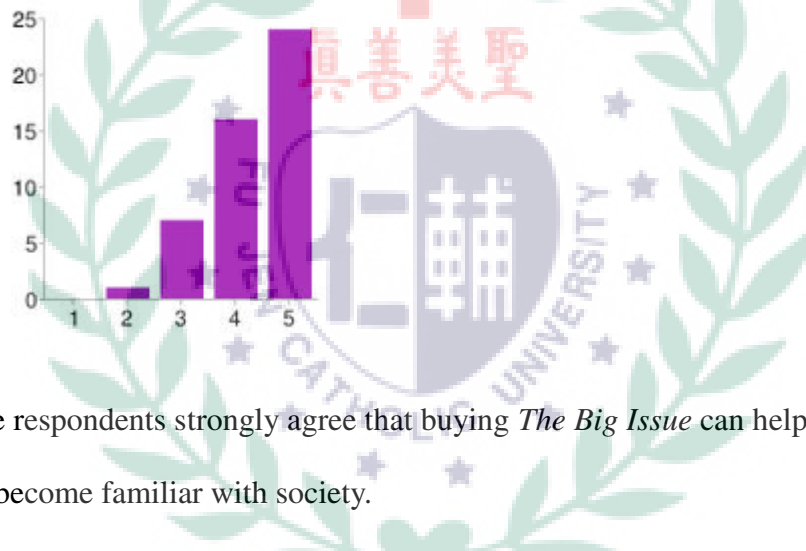
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Disagree	1	2.1%
Neutral	2	4.2%
Agree	20	41.7%
Strongly Agree	25	52.1%



Most of the respondents agree that buying *The Big Issue* can help them financially, and most of them strongly agree.

22. I think buying *The Big Issue* can help the homeless become familiar with society.

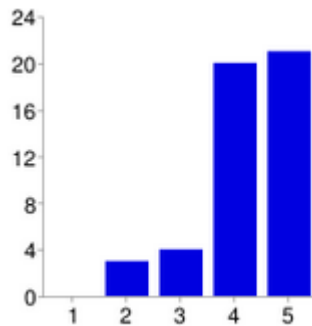
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Disagree	1	2.1%
Neutral	7	14.6%
Agree	16	33.3%
Strongly Agree	24	50%



Half of the respondents strongly agree that buying *The Big Issue* can help the homeless become familiar with society.

23. I think the content in *The Big Issue* is interesting.

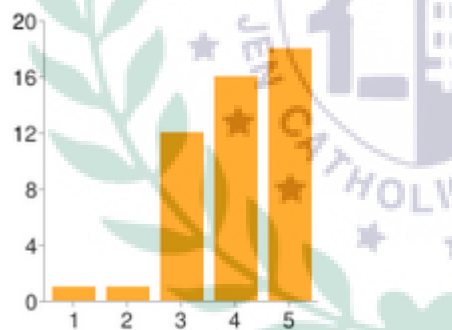
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Disagree	3	6.3%
Neutral	4	8.3%
Agree	20	41.7%
Strongly Agree	21	43.8%



Over 80% of respondents agree that the content in *The Big Issue* is interesting.

24. I think buying *The Big Issue* is like doing charity.

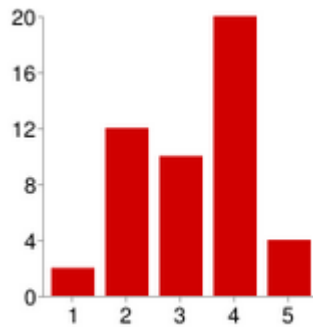
Strongly Disagree	1	2.1%
Disagree	1	2.1%
Neutral	12	25%
Agree	16	33.3%
Strongly Agree	18	37.5%



Over 60% of respondents agree that buying *The Big Issue* is like doing charity. There are about 30% people who choose the option of a “neutral” or a “disagree.”

25. I think buying *The Big Issue* is fashionable.

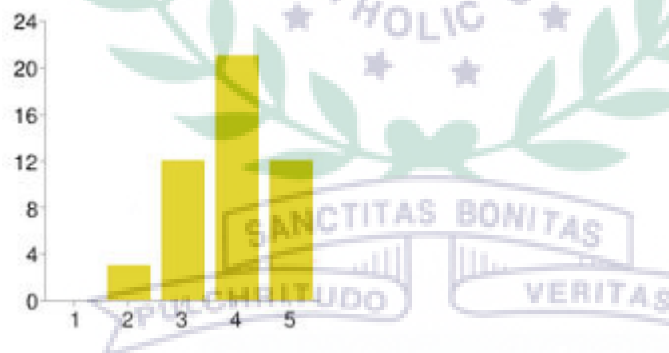
Strongly Disagree	2	4.2%
Disagree	12	25%
Neutral	10	20.8%
Agree	20	41.7%
Strongly Agree	4	8.3%



41.7% of respondents agree that buying *The Big Issue* is fashionable, but there are about 30% who disagree, and about 20% of respondents who choose to be neutral.

26. I think the content in *The Big Issue* should include more stories about the homeless.

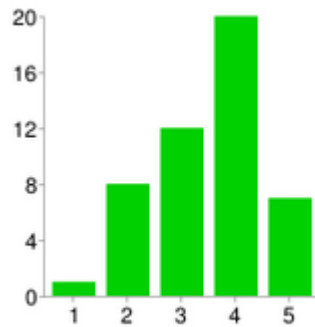
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Disagree	3	6.3%
Neutral	12	25%
Agree	21	43.8%
Strongly Agree	12	25%



More than 65% of respondents agree that they hope the content in *The Big Issue* should include more stories about the homeless.

27. I want to understand the vendors who are selling *The Big Issue*.

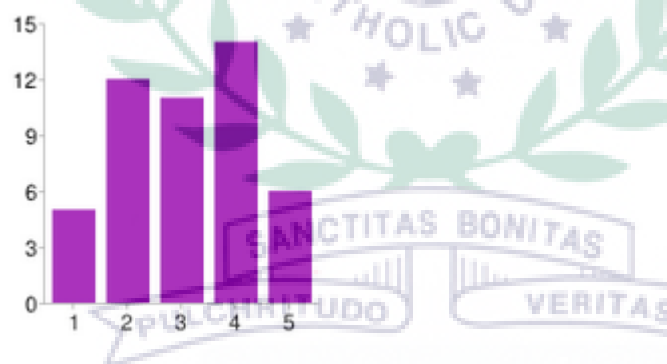
Strongly Disagree	1	2.1%
Disagree	8	16.7%
Neutral	12	25%
Agree	20	41.7%
Strongly Agree	7	14.6%



41.7% of respondents want to understand the vendors who are selling *The Big Issue*, but only 14.6% of respondents who strongly agree.

28. I think buying *The Big Issue* can help me understand homeless people and homelessness.

Strongly Disagree	5	10.4%
Disagree	12	25%
Neutral	11	22.9%
Agree	14	29.2%
Strongly Agree	6	12.5%



The number of those who agree that buying *The Big Issue* can help them understand about homeless people and homelessness is similar to the number of those who disagree, and it is also close to the number of respondents who are neutral.

Appendix D: Interview Questions

I. The possible interviewees

1. The vendor at MRT Taipei Main Station (Mr. Tsai)
2. The vendor at MRT Ximen Station (Mr. Xie)
3. The vendor at MRT FJU Station (Mr. Liu)
4. The vendor at MRT Gongguan Station (Mr. Xie)
5. The vendor at MRT Songjiang Nanjing Station (Mr. Ho)

II. Questions:

1. When did you become a vendor of *The Big Issue*? Do you always stay in the same spot to sell the magazine?
2. How did you become the vendor? Please share the process that you went through to get this job.
3. Were you homeless before? Why were you homeless?
4. Does this job help your financial situation? (What is your current situation?)
5. Does this job help you get rid of the label of being a homeless person?
6. What do you think about yourself as a homeless person?
7. How do you interact with customers? (How do you feel about the way you interact with customers?)
8. How do you cooperate with The Big Issue Company?
9. Do you have any complaints about this job?
10. How do you think the problems associated with the job can be solved?

Appendix E: Transcripts of the Interview With Mr. Tsai at MRT Taipei Main Station

Q1. When did you become a vendor of *The Big Issue*? Do you always stay in the same spot to sell the magazine?

A1. I became a vendor of TBI before the first magazine was published on April 1, 2010. From then on, I have sold the magazine at MRT Zhongxiao Xinsheng Station for a while, and then I moved to Taipei Main Station.

Q2. How did you become the vendor? Please share the process that you went through to get this job.

A2. When the workers of TBI went to churches to hold a recruitment orientation, I was a homeless person who coincidentally stayed at one of the churches. Later on, The Big Issue Company held three seminars to teach us how to sell the magazines. They gave us the initial 30 issues for free to sell. After we sold them, we could use the money we earned to buy other issues for 50 NTDs per issue. In this way, we can sell them for 100 NT dollars to earn 50 NTDs per issue for ourselves.

Q3. Were you homeless before? Why were you homeless?

A3. I was a taxi driver in southern Taiwan before, but after I had a stroke, I could not work anymore. I could hardly walk and move, but I could only do the jobs that require physical labor, so nobody wants to hire me. Unluckily, I had no family by my side and my child did not want to take care of me because I did not take care of him when he was young. Without a stable income, I could only rely on the compensation from the government, but it was not enough for me to live a normal life. That's why I had no place to live.

Q4. Does this job help your financial situation? (What is your current situation?)

A4. Yes. I'm currently living in the house that is provided by the government because of my health condition. However, this job allows me to buy things to eat. Before I

joined TBI, although I was helped by social workers because of my special situation, I could hardly afford three meals a day—I could not even buy a bottle of drink such as the green tea that I am drinking. Furthermore, this job helped me to improve my health condition because I have to walk and stand when I sell the magazine, which means I can do the rehabilitation. However, it also allows me to take a rest for health reasons because I'm not expected to stick to a certain schedule, so my health is getting better and better.

Q5. Does this job help you get rid of the label of a homeless person? Do you think the selling strategy of TBI is actually using people's pity on the homeless to earn money?

A5. Yes, I agree that the original idea about selling TBI to rely on people's pity on the homeless people to attract them to buy the magazine. It's impossible to say that TBI never exploits people's kindness for the homeless. However, if TBI continues to sell the magazine using this strategy, it cannot survive for long. The content is very important. It should be attractive, so that readers want to buy it.

Q6. What do you think about yourself as a homeless person?

A6. Normal. I think I am an optimistic person. I never thought I was pitiful or poor. I didn't care how other people thought about me. However, I once was very upset and thought I was useless and a burden to other people.

Q7. How do you interact with customers? (How do you feel about the way you interact with customers?)

A7. Sometimes we talk about our daily lives, but I seldom tell them my own story.

Q8. How do you cooperate with The Big Issue Company?

A8. Good. They treated me very well.

Q9. Do you have any complaints about this job?

A9. Yes. I agree exactly that those who buy TBI for the first time are curious and want

to help the homeless like us, but the reason why TBI can exist for over 5 years is the content

Q10. How do you think the problems associated with the job can be solved?

A10. I told them to deal with these problems. However, it didn't work, so now I don't want to care about this.



Appendix F: Transcripts of the Interview With Mr. Xie at MRT Ximen Station

Q1. When did you become a vendor of *The Big Issue*? Do you always stay in the same spot to sell the magazine?

A1. I joined TBI when the 4th issue was published. I have sold the magazine at other MRT stations, such as Taipei City Hall MRT Station.

Q2. How did you become the vendor? Please share the process that you went through to get this job.

A2. I was at the church, and the workers of TBI went there to hold orientations to recruit vendors.

Q3. Were you homeless before? Why were you homeless?

A3. Yes. I became homeless after I was unemployed by Foxconn Technology Group because the whole industry moved to China. I am disabled so when I worked in Foxconn Technology Group, I was guaranteed to get that job. After I became unemployed, nobody was willing to hire me. They thought because I was once an employee of Foxconn Technology Group, I was fired and I definitely had bad habits.

Q4. Does this job help your financial situation? (What is your current situation?)

A4. Yes.

Q5. Does this job help you get rid of the label of a homeless person?

A5. I did not think of the label of a “homeless person.” However, the whole situation now is different from how they were treated when wandering the streets.

Q6. What do you think about yourself as a homeless person?

A6. I do not think about this.

Q7. How do you interact with customers? (How do you feel about the way you interact with customers?)

A7. I sometimes chat with them.

Q8. How do you cooperate with The Big Issue Company?

A8. Good! We have a reunion every month.

Q9. Do you have any complaints about this job?

A9. Yes, I think the management is not quite good.

Q10. How do you think the problems associated with the job can be solved?

A10. I told the headman about this.



Appendix G: Transcripts of the Interview With Mr. Liu at MRT FJU Station

Q1. When did you become a vendor of *The Big Issue*? Do you always stay in the same spot to sell the magazine?

A1. I became the vendor before the first issue was published. I have changed so many places to sell the magazine, such as MRT Xi-men Station, MRT Zhongxiao Xinsheng Station, and Huashan Park. Finally I came here (MRT FJU Station) one year ago.

Q2. How did you become the vendor? Please share the process that you went through to get this job.

A2. I was staying in a church when the recruiters came. I thought it sounded great, so I decided to join this company.

Q3. Were you homeless before? Why were you homeless?

A3. I was kicked out from my family because they think I should not reject to have political power and money like them. I fought with them and tried to build my own business through the Internet, but finally my family interrupted my career, stole my money away and did not allow me to go home again. I lost my career, all my money and my family. Later on, I found a job as a security guard, but I had a fight with other employees, so I was fired and became homeless.

Q4. Does this job help your financial situation? (What is your current situation?)

A4. Definitely it helps me to earn money. What's more, it provides opportunities for me to talk with others. It makes me very happy.

Q5. Does this job help you get rid of the label of a homeless person?

A5. As what I just said, I think this job helps me talk to passersby and customers. Through the process, I can tell them who I am, so there is no label any more.

Q6. What do you think about yourself as a homeless person?

A6. I thought I was different because I tried to have my own career all the time.

Q7. How do you interact with customers? (How do you feel about the way you interact with customers?)

A7. I talked with them about my cat, my life, and the career I always want to do. I often tried to discuss current issues with them because I want to be knowledgeable so that I can build my career online again. Furthermore, I think I learned who good guys are and who bad guys are by selling the magazine.

Q8. How do you cooperate with The Big Issue Company?

A8. Sometimes I had complaints about them because the management was not good enough. I was once robbed and stolen by other vendors in Hua-Shan Park, but finally I was not allowed to stay at that spot any more, and I don't know why. I guess it's because that person went to the company and told them I had a fight with him, so the company decided to punish me.

Q9. Do you have any complaints about this job?

A9. Just as what I said in the last question.

Q10. How do you think the problems associated with the job can be solved?

A10. I think the company should spend more time dealing with this problem. The management should be improved.



Appendix H: Transcripts of the Interview With Mr. Xie at MRT Gongguan Station

Q1. When did you become a vendor of *The Big Issue*? Do you always stay in the same spot to sell the magazine?

A1. I joined this company five years ago. Yes, I always stay in this spot.

Q2. How did you become the vendor? Please share the process that you went through to get this job.

A2. The recruiters of this company went to the church I often visited to recruit the vendors, and I coincidentally needed this job, so I decided to be trained.

Q3. Were you homeless before? Why were you homeless?

A3. I was not homeless. I am a retired civil servant. After I retired, I took a bad investment and lost all of my money. To live, I had to find a job.

Q4. Does this job help your financial situation? (What is your current situation?)

A4. Yes. I can now live in Taipei.

Q5. Does this job help you get rid of the label of a homeless person?

A5. I am not a homeless person.

Q6. What do you think about yourself as a homeless person?

A6. I am not a homeless person.

Q7. How do you interact with customers? (How do you feel about the way you interact with customers?)

A7. I asked their schools, ages at first, and then we talk about the content of the magazine.

Q8. How do you cooperate with The Big Issue Company?

A8. I like the company! We have a reunion every month when we buy the new magazines for sell. At that time, the editor-in-chief would talk to us and encourage us.

Q9. Do you have any complaints about this job?

A9. Not really. I think everything is great.

Q10. How do you think the problems associated with the job can be solved?

A10. No.



Appendix I: Transcripts of the Interview With Mr. Ho at MRT Songjiang Nanjing
Station

Q1. When did you become a vendor of *The Big Issue*? Do you always stay in the same spot to sell the magazine?

A1. I joined TBI when the 9th issue was published. I have sold the magazine at other MRT stations, such as Taipei City Hall MRT Station.

Q2. How did you become the vendor? Please share the process that you went through to get this job.

A2. One of my best friends joined *The Big Issue* first, and he recommended me to join. However, he found another job and he is not in the company now.

Q3. Were you homeless before? Why were you homeless?

A3. Yes. I was initially a security guard in CTV, but I was fired when I encountered some financial problem in CTV.

Q4. Does this job help your financial situation? (What is your current situation?)

A4. Yes.

Q5. Does this job help you get rid of the label of a homeless person?

A5. Yes. Furthermore, I think it gives me a lot of support and makes me feel confident.

Q6. What do you think about yourself as a homeless person?

A6. I was lonely and depressed. I lost all my confidence. However, I didn't think people would judge me or despised me.

Q7. How do you interact with customers? (How do you feel about the way you interact with customers?)

A7. I seldom talked with them. However, if I talked to them, I often talked about the content of the magazine.

Q8. How do you cooperate with The Big Issue Company?

A8. Everything is good.

Q9. Do you have any complaints about this job?

A9. No.

Q10. How do you think the problems associated with the job can be solved?

A10. No.

