

EXPLORING THE OBSTACLES CONFRONTED BY STREET VENDORS SELLING PERISHABLE GOODS

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ABSTRACT

This research explores the vital role that street vendors play in urban economies, especially for those that sell perishable goods. These street sellers, who operate in chaotic areas offer vital access to fresh vegetables, refreshments, and other need. The time-sensitive nature of perishable items and a complicated system of economic, social, and regulatory aspects, however, impose particular obstacles for business operations. Street vendors are an essential part of the unregulated marketplace in a variety of developing nations, generating vital employment opportunities for the economically poor. The objective of the study is to provide insight into the obstacles and opportunities found by street vendors selling perishable goods in Coimbatore City. It includes problems such as exploitation, lack of legal recognition, and resource a shortage.

Keywords: Street vendors, urban economy, economic vulnerability, working conditions, sustainability initiatives

INTRODUCTION

Street vendors that sell perishable goods are vital to the urban economy because they give a wide variety of customers' easy access to fresh food, snacks, and other necessities. These street sellers add to the energy of city life by operating in crowded neighborhoods, busy street corners, and bustling marketplaces. Their efforts are not without serious obstacles, though. Perishable goods, including fruits, vegetables, dairy products, and prepared foods, are inherently time-sensitive and require careful handling to maintain their freshness and quality. Street vendors face unique challenges in ensuring the preservation and sale of these items, navigating a complex web of economic, social, and regulatory factors. By analyzing the complex problems that affect street vendors' livelihoods and the communities they serve, this investigation seeks to offer light on the challenges faced by those who sell perishable goods.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. **Dr. M. Kalimuthu and Ms.Sindhu.S (2021)**, addressed issues like the quality of work life, emphasizing the lack of investment as a major concern. The study offers practical solutions, suggesting the mobilization of capital from individual savings and advocating for legal status to protect vendors from eviction. Notably, the research highlights constraints such as hygienic storage facilities, competition, and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. This study contributes significantly to understanding the multifaceted challenges faced by street vendors and proposes actionable recommendations for improvement.
2. **Dr. G. Jayanthi, Baranipriya.A and Sreenadan (2020)**, identified that gender disparities, with females facing health issues, unsold goods wastage, and employment insecurity. The study urges government intervention to enhance the socio-economic and living conditions of street vendors. This research is a valuable contribution to understanding the nuanced challenges faced by vendors in different demographics and calls for targeted policy measures.
3. **Vitosie vupru and Bakoli. A. Choppy (2020)**, highlighted that impact of seasonal variations on vendors' businesses and underscores the need for basic infrastructure facilities like water, electricity sheds, and public toilets. The study's emphasis on the role of government in providing essential infrastructure contributes to the ongoing discourse on creating a supportive environment for street vendors.
4. **Mr.K. Dhamodharan (2019)**, emphasized that critical concerns of having enough vending space and having local government regulate those spaces. In order to address issues and improve the general working conditions for street vendors in Pondicherry. The study highlighted its significance of the Street Vendors Act's effective enactment. The broader issue on urban marketplaces and the importance of supportive policies obtains understanding from this study.
5. **Dr.A.Amutha Nandhini (2019)**, found that problems of street vendors during Covid-19 and needs for street vendors operating in Erode. Most of the street vendors are facing problems such as difficult to wear mask and use sanitizer and there is lot of fear on this pandemic Covid-19 situation.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In many developing nations, street vendors serve an essential part in the informal economy by providing much-needed opportunities for employment. For many of the poorest and most vulnerable people on the globe, they tend to be only means of income, and if their specific needs do not exist, their livelihoods may be in trouble. For the purpose to better comprehend the needs of perishable street vendors and come up with strategies to support them, this study will analyze the obstacles and opportunities confronting them. It will focus on the obstacles they confront, like resource scarcity, lack of legal recognition, and exploitation. In general, this study tries to provide crucial insights on the obstacles and potential prospects confronting street vendors of selling perishable goods in the Coimbatore City.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the socio-economic conditions of perishable selling street vendors
- To identify the working conditions of perishable selling street vendors
- To determine the problems faced by perishable selling vendors while operating their business

METHODOLOGY

This part provides a description of the research's methodology. The method comprises the following: research design; sampling method; sample size; collection of data methods; analysis tools; and limitations of the study.

Sampling Method	Convenient sampling technique
Sampling size	200 Respondents
Area of the study	Coimbatore City
Methods of Data Collection	Both Primary and Secondary data
Tools for Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage analysis • Weighted Average Score • Rank Analysis
Limitations	The study has been conducted from 200 respondents in a Coimbatore city only however adequate care has been taken while collecting data

ANALYSIS AND INTREPRETATION

Table 1 – Demographic Profile

Demographic Factors		Respondents	
		Number	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	134	67
	Female	66	33
Age	Below25 years	10	5
	26-35years	64	32
	36-45years	81	40.5
	Above45 years	45	22.5
Educational Qualification	No formal education	119	59.5
	SSLC	45	22.5
	HSC	26	13
	Diploma	6	3
	UG/PG	4	2
Marital Status	Married	132	66
	Unmarried	68	34
Type of Family	Nuclear Family	112	56
	Joint Family	88	44
Number of Members in the family	Below2	5	2.5
	3	96	48
	4	47	23.5
	More than 4	52	26
Area of residence	Rural	82	41
	Semi-Urban	78	39
	Urban	40	20
Annual Income	Below Rs. 1,00,000	44	22
	Rs. 1,00,001 – 2,00,000	76	38
	Rs. 2,00,001 – Rs. 3,00,000	34	17
	More than Rs. 3,00,000	46	23

Source: Primary Data

From the above table, it is highlighted that 67% of the respondents are male. 40.5% of the respondents belong to the age group between 36-45 years. 59.5% of the respondents are without any formal education. 66% of the respondents are married. 56% of the respondents are living in a nuclear family. 48% of the respondents have 3 members in their family. 40% of the respondents live in rural area. 33.8% of the respondents earn an annual income of Rs.1,00,001 – 2,00,000.

Table 2 – Reasons for choosing Street Vending as Business

S. No	Factors	Respondents						Total	Weighted Average Score	Rank
		Level	SA	A	N	D	SD			
		Score	5	4	3	2	1			
1.	Lack of Employment	Level	102	85	5	5	3	200	4.39	1
		Score	510	340	15	10	3	878		
2.	Death of Parents	Level	65	59	48	22	6	200	3.78	2
		Score	325	236	144	44	6	755		
3.	Absence of earning members in the family	Level	56	78	20	31	15	200	3.65	3
		Score	280	312	60	62	15	729		
4.	Less skill required	Level	40	47	67	32	14	200	3.34	4
		Score	200	188	201	64	14	667		
5.	Less Investment	Level	29	67	37	29	38	200	3.1	5
		Score	145	268	111	58	38	620		

Source: Primary Data

The above table clearly shows the reasons for choosing Street Vending as Business. The majority of the respondents indicate that the lack of employment opportunity is the main factor influencing people to take street vending as business. This ranks first according to the scores obtained. (Score = 4.39).

Death of parents is the second most influencing factor. This ranks second according to the scores obtained. (Scores = 3.78)

Absence of earning members in the family is the third most influencing factor. This ranks third according to the scores obtained. (Scores = 3.65)

Requirement of less skill is the fourth most influencing factor. This ranks fourth according to the scores obtained. (Scores = 3.34)

Less Investment is the least influencing factor. This ranks fifth according to the scores obtained. (Scores = 3.1)

Table 3 – Type of perishable product dealt by the Vendor

S. No	Type of perishable product	Respondents	
		Number	Percentage (%)
1.	Fruits	67	33.5
2.	Vegetables	75	37.5
3.	Meat	48	24
4.	Other products	10	5
	Total	200	100

Source: Primary Data

The above table depicts that out of total respondents taken for the study, 75 (37.5%) respondents are vegetable vendors, 67 (33.5%) respondents are fruit vendors, 48 (24%) respondents are meat vendors and 10 (5%) respondents are other perishable products like flowers and mushroom vendors.

Table 4 – Type of Business

S. No	Type of Business	Respondents	
		Number	Percentage (%)
1.	Mobile	89	44.5
2.	Stable	111	55.5
	Total	200	100

Source: Primary Data

The above table reveals that out of total respondents taken for the study, 111 (55.5%) respondents are stable perishable vendors and 89 (44.5%) respondents are Mobile perishable vendors

Table 5 – Working hours of the Street Vendors

S. No	Working hours	Respondents	
		Number	Percentage (%)
1.	2-3hours	8	4
2.	3-4hours	32	16
3.	4-5hours	54	27
4.	More than 5 hours	106	53
	Total	200	100

Source: Primary Data

The above table found that out of total respondents taken for the study, 106 (53%) respondents spent more than 5 hours, 54 (27%) respondents spent for 4-5 hours, 32 (16%) respondents spent 3-4 hours, and 8 (4%) respondents spent for 2-3 hours.

Table 6 – Marketing Strategy used by the street vendors

S. No	Marketing Strategy	Respondents	
		Number	Percentage (%)
1.	Word of Mouth	92	46
2.	Social Media	47	23.5
3.	Local events	32	16
4.	Others	29	14.5
	Total	200	100

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows that out of total respondents taken for the study, 92 (46%) respondents use Word of Mouth as their strategy to market their business, and 47 (23.5%) respondents use Social Media as their strategy to market their business, 32 (16%) respondents use local events to market their business and 29 (14.5%) respondents use other ways to market their business.

Table 7 – Methods to attract Customers

S. No	Methods	Respondents	
		Number	Percentage (%)
1.	Calling out loud	114	57
2.	Usage of Loud Speakers	57	28.5
3.	Round and play	22	11
4.	Others	7	3.5
	Total	200	100

Source: Primary Data

The above table depicts that out of total respondents taken for the study, 114 (57%) respondents prefer Calling out loud method to attract customers, and 57 (28.5%) respondents prefer loud speakers to attract customers, 22 (11%) respondents use Round and Play method to attract customers and 7 (3.5%) respondents use other methods to attract customers.

Table 8 – Health related problems of the Street Vendors

S. No	Problems	Respondents	
		Number	Percentage (%)
1.	Allergies	25	12.5
2.	Cough & Fever	79	39.5
3.	Urinary Infection	33	16.5
4.	Hypertension	45	22.5
5.	Food Poisoning	18	9
	Total	200	100

Source: Primary Data

The above shows that out of total respondents taken for the study, 79 (39.5%) respondents suffering from Cough & Fever, 45 (22.5%) respondents suffering from Hypertension, 33 (16.5%) respondents suffering from Urinary Infection, 25 (12.5%) respondents suffering from Allergies and 18 (9%) of respondents suffering from Food Poisoning.

Table 9 – Financial related problems of the Street Vendors

S. No	Problems	Respondents	
		Number	Percentage (%)
1.	Lack of Investment	62	31
2.	Low Income	39	19.5
3.	Problems of obtaining loans	29	14.5
4.	Sudden sickness	14	7
5.	High Interest on Loans	56	28
	Total	200	100

Source: Primary Data

The above table reveals that out of total respondents taken for the study, 62 (31%) respondents are lack of investments, 56(28%) respondents are couldn't bear high interest on loans, 39 (19.5%) respondents have low income, 29 (14.5%) respondents have problems in obtaining loan, 14 (7%) respondents suffering from sudden sickness

Table 10 – Marketing related problems faced by the street vendors

S. No	Problems	Respondents	
		Number	Percentage (%)
1.	Price Fluctuations	39	19.5
2.	Heavy Competition	66	33
3.	Lack of promotion	21	10.5
4.	Limited access to refrigeration	22	11
5.	Transportation	52	26
	Total	200	100

Source: Primary Data

The above table found that out of total respondents taken for the study, 66 (33%) respondents face heavy competition, 52 (26%) respondents face difficulty in Transportation, 39 (19.5%) respondents face difficulty in price fluctuations, 22 (11%) respondents have limited access to refrigeration and 21 (10.5%) respondents face difficulty in promotion.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

The demographic profile suggests that male vendors, particularly in the age group of 36-45 years, dominate the street vending landscape. Lack of formal education is a prevalent issue, impacting the socio-economic status of vendors. The choice of street vending as a business often stems from limited alternative employment opportunities.

The findings reveal variations in work patterns, marketing strategies, and health challenges. While the majority prefers stable business types and uses traditional marketing methods, health issues such as cough and fever pose significant concerns. Lack of investment and intense competition emerge as hurdles, indicating the need for targeted support mechanisms.

CONCLUSION

This study provides an in-depth analysis of the socioeconomic characteristics, working habits, and obstacles confronted by street vendors. The outcomes bring attention to how susceptible that population is and the extent to which particular interventions need to be taken to address vulnerabilities related health, education, and economic security. These outcomes can be implemented by policy makers and stakeholders to formulate initiatives designed to encourage the sustainability and well-being of street vendors in urban as well as rural areas.

SUGGESTIONS

To help to ease the obstacles that street vendors encountered in the research, specific development and training programs can improve their economic opportunities. Furthermore, establishing monetarily supportive initiatives and accessible healthcare efforts may significantly improve street vendors' well-being in general by reducing health issues and financial hardships.

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