

PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS OF THE STREET VENDORS: A STUDY OF JAMMU CITY

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ABSTRACT

In India as well as in other developing countries, the unorganized sector plays a significant role in providing employment in rural as well as urban areas. About 90 per cent of the workforce in India is engaged in the informal sector. Street vendors are one of the considerable parts of the employment in the urban areas so far as informal sectors are concerned. Street vendors are an important part of urban economies throughout the country, offering easy access to a wide range of goods and services in public spaces. Even though street vendors are considered as informal, they are the vital contributors to urban economies. They have poor economic and social protection and their working conditions on the streets expose them to a variety of safety and other issues. The Jammu city is not an exception. The street vendors are not recognized and regulated by state, and therefore, they do not get any support from government to operate their activity. Though the government of India passed the street vendors Bill 2013 in order to improve their standard of living. Still they face several problems like harassment, storage of unsold stock, social security, financial and economic problems, pressure by police department, municipality authorities, etc. In this circumstance, the aim of the study is to find out the problems faced by the street vendors and prospects needed, in order to protect their rights and do their street vending business in Jammu city. The study is based on primary data and based on the observations; the study suggests some of the solutions for policy measures for regulating these informal entrepreneurs.

KEYWORDS: *Street Vendors, Problems, Prospects*

Article History

Received: 08 Feb 2019 | Revised: 13 Feb 2019 | Accepted: 26 Feb 2019

INTRODUCTION REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The retail sector is the fast-growing emerging sector and the second largest sector in providing employment after agriculture in India. Street vending is one of the major form retail trades. Despite street vending being one of the oldest forms of retail in the country, this sector providing a vital link to the supply chain in the formal sector. Street vending is a most visible aspect of the informal sector and also a global phenomenon. Street vending like the other informal sector involves large number of people and is characterized with low level of income, self-employed, and lack of social security etc. Street vendors are very significant part of the informal sector in the Jammu city as well as in the country. Street vendor not only earn their living by vending operations but also provide convenient services to a majority of the population residing in the urban areas. Street vendors are often those who have very low level of education and other skills. They try to earn their livings through their own meagre financial resource. Street vendors are the main distributor of a variety of products for daily consumption like vegetables fruits, shoes, readymade garments, toys, stationery, newspapers etc. Thus, they are in fact the solution to some of the problems of the urban woe-stricken people. Therefore, the importance of this

sector cannot be ignored. They play a very significant role in local economic growth and development of the urban economies throughout the world. Some time they face harassment from the local authorities, social security problem, storage problem and several others. Protection from local authorities and the state government can help these poor people to earn their livelihood without fear. Despite their contributions, street vendors face many challenges, are often overlooked as economic agents and unlike other businesses, are hindered rather than helped by municipal policies and practices.

Street vending is one of the most visible aspects of the informal sector. Street vending involves large number of people and is characterized by low level of income, easy of entry, self-employed etc. Millions of the people around the world earn their living by the way of selling various goods and service on the street. There is a general belief that street vending will recede as economies develop, it is in reality on increase in many place, Amod K (2000). Basically, Street vendors those people who are unable to get regular jobs on account of their low level of education who sells fruits, vegetables, shoes, readymade garments, toys, newspapers, and stationery and so on. Elimination of these people from the urban markets would lead to a severe crisis for farmers such as fruit and vegetable sellers which cannot afford to sell products through expensive distribution networks in the formal sector McGee (1971). Government does not have the capacity to provide jobs to the millions of unemployed people in the country, therefore the importance of this sector cannot be ignored. Generally, the employment in the organized sector is actually showing a declining trend, Srivastava, (2008). Thus, it is necessary that the people in India have to fend for themselves. Nowadays, vending is an important source of employment for a large number of poor people as it requires small financial inputs as well as low skills. Unlike other sections of the urban population, the people engaged in vending tries to solve their problems through their own meagre resources. They do not demand that government create jobs for them, nor do they engage in begging, stealing or extortion. It appears that irrespective of the location and type of vendors, they try to live their life with dignity and self-respect through regular vending activities. Hemalata Sharma (2015) in her study found that the Street Vendors are requested to keep their region clean, however a noteworthy issue, particularly for ladies' vendors, is shortage of toilets in a large portion of the zones. Ikechebelu (2008) conducted a study on female road sellers in two urban settlements (Awka and Nnewl) in Anambra state, Nigeria. The study found that 69.9% of the female sellers experienced in any event some type of sexual mishandle while selling. Street viding operations also affects the quality of life of the vendors. Mangaleswaran (2013) conducted a study on Quality of Life among Street Vendors in Tiruchirappalli City of Tamil Nadu. The study was based on the four dimensions of quality of life namely mental health, physical health, social relations and environment factor. The results of the study revealed that about 51.8 percent had low level of mental health, 55.4 percent of the respondents had low level of physical health, 73.2 percent had low level social relationship and 55.4 percent of the respondents had low level of quality of life in terms of environmental factor.

PROBLEMS OF THE STREET VENDORS

According to (CUE Report, 2014) taking into account both preparation time and the time for selling on an average street vendor spend about 15 hours every day in their activities in order to earn a hundred or two hundred rupees. During their working time vendors face many problems from the public and police personnel. Street Vendors are vulnerable population and faces many problems as they are neither protected by any organisation, labour union, government nor by any labour law. Mc Gee, T.G. conducted a study in 1971 and found that street vendors are deprived by the laws made by government in respect of labour union. They are not protected from the harmful weather conditions like heat, rain, dust and lack of storage facilities. Many a times they face harassment by police officials for occupying important traffic junctions

(Karthikeyan, R., & Mangaleswaran, R., 2013). Street vendors survive without government support and even government does not recognize their contributions towards economic and social well-being of the urban population. Though the government of India has passed “Street Vendors Bill 2013”, which protects their rights but still it is far away from the reality when it comes to practical vending operation. Street vending is related with uncertainty in income (Kumar, R., & Singh, A. 2013). Their incomes are minimal and their sales often fluctuate. Yeung (1977) in his study found another reason for low income of street vendors is that they are forced to pay 15 to 20 percent of their daily income as bribes to local police. Movement of the carts from one place to another on the damaged roads is also a problem. Further street vendors face problems of lack of storage space and shelters (Kurniawati, W. 2012). Many of such problems are the result of non-consideration of street vendors while planning urban streets. The street vendors always suffer competition with other street vendors because of fluctuation in market prices, insecure and irregular employment.

OBJECTIVES

Keeping in view the above information an attempt has been made to identify the different kinds of problem faced by the street vendors in Jammu City. The study analyses the data to understand the problems that are impacting the street vending operations in the city. The study also aims to study their socio-economic conditions. The outcome of the present study may be relevant for the policy makers to structure the right policies to keep the interests of the street vendors.

METHODOLOGY

The objective of the present study is to explore the problems faced by street in Jammu city. To fulfill the objective of the study the researcher has used primary data. The study is descriptive in nature. The researchers used random sampling method to select 60 respondents for the study from the Jammu city. The information related to the present study was collected through the well-structured interview schedule. Each sampling unit for this study is either permanent or temporary street vendor.

TOOLS FOR DATA COLLECTION

The information for the present study was collected through self-structured interview schedule.

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

The socio-economic status of the street vendors in Jammu city was collected through interview schedule. After the data was calculated the variables of age, gender, marital status, types of family, education status, religion, types of products, types of vendors and working hours a day through SPSS 20 version.

Table 1: Socio-Economic Conditions of the Street Vendors

| S. No. | Variables | Respondents | Percentage |
|--------|-----------------------|-------------|------------|
| 1 | Age (in years) | | |
| | Below 20 | 04 | 6.67 |
| | 20-40 | 21 | 35 |
| | 40-60 | 29 | 48.33 |
| | 60 Above | 06 | 10 |
| | Total | 60 | 100% |
| 2 | Gender | | |
| | Male | 54 | 90 |
| | Female | 06 | 06 |
| | Total | 60 | 100% |

Table 1: Contd.,

| | | | |
|----|---------------------------|----|-------|
| 3 | Marital Status | | |
| | Married | 48 | 80% |
| | Unmarried | 07 | 11.67 |
| | Widow | 02 | 3.33 |
| | Divorced/ Separated | 03 | 05 |
| | Total | 60 | 100% |
| 4 | Type of Family | | |
| | Joint | 07 | 11.67 |
| | Nuclear | 53 | 88.33 |
| | Total | 60 | 100% |
| 5 | Type of House | | |
| | Kuccha | 07 | 11.67 |
| | Pucca | 41 | 68.33 |
| | Semi- Pucca | 12 | 20 |
| | Total | 60 | 100% |
| 6 | House Status | | |
| | Own | 49 | 18.33 |
| | Rented | 11 | 81.67 |
| | Total | 60 | 100% |
| 7 | Educational Status | | |
| | Illiterate | 06 | 10 |
| | 1-5 th | 29 | 48.33 |
| | 6-8 th | 21 | 35 |
| | 9-12 th | 03 | 05 |
| | Graduation | 01 | 1.67 |
| | Total | 60 | 100% |
| 8 | Religion | | |
| | Hindu | 38 | 63.33 |
| | Muslim | 17 | 28.33 |
| | Christian | 03 | 05 |
| | Sikh | 02 | 3.33 |
| | Total | 60 | 100% |
| 9 | Address | | |
| | Local | 14 | 23.33 |
| | Non local | 46 | 76.67 |
| | Total | 60 | 100% |
| 10 | Type of Products | | |
| | Fruits | 19 | 31.67 |
| | Vegetables and Fruits | 14 | 23.33 |
| | Mixed Products | 07 | 11.67 |
| | Readymade Garments | 03 | 05 |
| | Food Cart Vendors | 05 | 8.33 |
| | Shoes | 03 | 05 |
| | Drinking Water and Juice | 06 | 10 |
| | Cobbler | 02 | 3.33 |
| | Electronic Appliances | 01 | 1.67 |
| | Total | 60 | 100% |
| 11 | Type of Vendor | | |
| | Permanent | 26 | 43.33 |
| | Temporary | 34 | 56.67 |
| | Total | 60 | 100% |
| 12 | Working Hours | | |
| | Less than 8 hours | 07 | 11.67 |
| | 8-10 hours | 09 | 15 |
| | 10-12 hours | 18 | 30 |
| | More than 12 hours | 26 | 43.33 |
| | Total | 60 | 100% |

Table 1: Contd.,

| 13 | Daily Earning (in rupees) | | |
|----|---------------------------|----|-------|
| | Less than 300 Rs | 04 | 6.67 |
| | 300-400 Rs | 13 | 21.67 |
| | 400-500 Rs | 28 | 46.67 |
| | More than 500 Rs | 15 | 25 |
| | Total | 60 | 100% |

Source: Field Survey

The above table shows the socio-economic conditions of the street vendors operating in Jammu city. The panel 1 shows the age group of the respondents. Majority of the respondents are in the age group of 40-60, followed by 35% in the age group of 20-40 years. Only 10% respondents are above 60 years; however, 6.67% respondents are less than 20 years. The panel 2 examine the gender of the respondents, where 90% of the total is male vendors and only 10% female vendors. The panel 3 shows the marital status of the respondents, 80% of are married, 11.67% of the respondents are unmarried, 05% of the vendors are either divorced or separated and 3.33% of the respondents are living widow. The panel 4 shows that the 88.33% of the respondents are living in nuclear family system and the remaining 11.67% of the respondents are living in a joint family system. The panel 5 shows the type of house among the respondents, majority of the respondents (68.33%) are living in the Pucca house, 20% are living in Semi-Pucca type house and only 11.67% respondents are living in Kuccha house. The panel 6 shows majority of the respondents (81.67%) are living in the rented house and the only 18.33% having their own house. The panel 7 shows the educational status of the respondents, the majority of the respondents (48.33%) attained education upto the primary level, 35% studied upto the middle level, 10% are found illiterate, 05% studied upto the secondary or higher secondary level and only 1.67% are graduate. The panels 8 shows religion of the respondents, majority of the respondents (63.33%) are found Hindu, 28.33% belongs Muslim religion, 05% belongs to Christian and only 3.33% belongs to Sikh religion. The panel 9 shows whether the respondents are local (Jammu) or non-local (outside the Jammu city). The majority of the respondents (76.67%) are found non-local either from Kashmir region or from the states other than J&K and the remaining 23.33% respondents are local. The panel 10 explains the type of the business of the respondents, as shown in the above table 31.67% of the total sample are found fruit sellers, 23.33% are selling mixture of fruit and vegetables, 11.67% are mixed product seller, 10% are selling drinking water and juice, 8.33% are food cart vendors, 05% are shoe seller, 3.335 are cobbler and only 1.67% are found selling electric appliances. The panel 11 shows the type of vendors, as shown in the table majority of the respondents (56.67%) are temporary vendors and the remaining (43.33%) are permanent vendors. The panel 12 examine the working hours of the respondents, the majority of the respondents (43.33%) are found who spend more than 12 hours to their business activity, 30% respondents spend 10-12 hours in a day, 15% spends 8-10 hours and the only 11.67% respondents are found who spend less than 8 hours to their business activity. The panel 13 of the above table shows the average daily earnings of the respondents. It is found that majority of the respondents (46.67%) are found who earn 400-500 rupees in a day, followed by the 25% respondents who earn more than 500 rupees, 21.67% earns 300-400 rupees, and 6.67% earns less than 300 rupees respectively.

PROBLEMS FACED BY STREET VENDORS IN JAMMU CITY

Despite their contributions to human society, street vendors face many problems, are often overlooked as economic agents and unlike other businesses, are hindered rather than helped by municipal policies and practices. The street vendors face many problems, but the researchers due to the time constraint are focused to explain the four dimensions of their issues. These are lack of storage facilities, lack of basic facilities at the vending place, social security problem, and financial and

economic problem faced by the street vendors. The water utilized for drinking, cooking, washing of leafy foods vegetables, hand washing, and so forth was observed to be polluted.

Table 2: Lack of Storage Facilities among the Respondents

| S. No | Variables | Respondents | Percentage |
|-------|------------------|-------------|------------|
| 1 | At Home | 28 | 46.67 |
| 2 | At Rented House | 17 | 28.33 |
| 3 | At Vending Place | 03 | 05 |
| 4 | At Cold Store | 02 | 3.33 |
| 5 | Any other | 10 | 16.67 |
| 6 | Total | 60 | 100% |

Source: Field Survey

The above table shows the status of the storage facilities among the respondents. The majority of the respondents do not have the storage facility to store the unsold stock and due to which many a times the products gets wasted. About 46.67% respondents store unsold stock at their own house where they live, 28.33% of the respondents hired separate house to store the unsold stock. Whereas, 05 % respondents store at the vending place and only 3.33% respondents are having the cold storage facility. Further 16.67% respondents store either at neighbor's place or at their relative's house etc. Street vendors' especially selling fruits and vegetables face lot of problems to store the residuals. Thus, the lack of storage facility for the street vendors affects their income level because many a time vegetables and fruits go bad and they suffer losses especially during summers. Further, those who pay rent to store the inventory stock do not have the cold storage facility. They are provided only the space to store without the proper storage facilities.

Table 3: Obstacles for the Street Vendors in Jammu City

| S. No. | Variables | Respondents | Percentages |
|--------|--|-------------|-------------|
| 1 | Lack of Basic Facilities | | |
| | No Problem | 03 | 05 |
| | Lack of Sanitary facilities | 19 | 31.67 |
| | Lack water facility | 16 | 26.67 |
| | Lack of Power facility | 17 | 28.33 |
| | Any Other | 05 | 8.33 |
| | Total | 60 | 100% |
| 2 | Social Security Problems | | |
| | No Problem | 05 | 8.33 |
| | Harassment by authorities' | 10 | 16.66 |
| | Problem of theft | 04 | 6.67 |
| | Harassment by Police | 16 | 26.67 |
| | Bribe to Police | 07 | 11.67 |
| | lack of business freedom | 18 | 30 |
| Total | 60 | 100% | |
| 3 | Financial and Economic Problems | | |
| | No Problem | 09 | 15 |
| | shortage of working capital | 15 | 25 |
| | lack of credit | 13 | 21.67 |
| | Non- profitability of business | 23 | 38.33 |
| Total | 60 | 100% | |

Source: Field Survey

The above table shows the different types of obstacles faced by the street vendors in the city. The panel 1 shows the lack of basic facilities at the vending place. About 31.67% respondents face the lack of sanitary facilities nearby the vending place. Due to the lack of toilet facilities, especially the female vendors face lot of trouble. Also, the authorities

and the local people stop the vendors to defecate in the open. If the toilet facility is there then it will not happen and the surrounding area will remain neat and clean. Further, 26.67% respondents face the lack of water facility. Also, 28.33% respondents face the problem of electricity facility which is very helpful especially for the juice sellers and also for the other sellers during the summers. Whereas 05% respondent says that they do not face any such problem. The panel 2 of shows the social security problem faced by the respondents. 26.67% respondents mentioned that they face harassment by the police and 11.67% says they bribe the police whenever they harass them. Also, 16.67% respondents face harassment by the local authorities such as municipal committees and others. About 30% respondent says that there is lack of business freedom and 6.67% respondents face the problem of theft. The very few respondents are of the opinion that they do not face such problems while operating their business. The panel 3 shows the status of financial and economic problems among the respondents. The majority of the respondent says non-profitability of the business is the main problem. About 25% respondents face the shortage of working capital, 21.67% face the lack of credit and 15% respondent says that they do not face any financial problem.

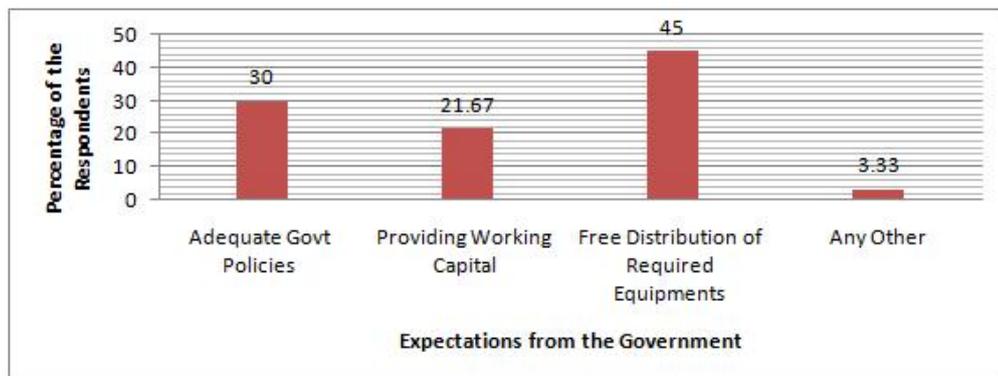
EXPECTATIONS OF THE STREET VENDORS



Source: Field Survey

Figure 1: Expectations of the Street Vendors from the Customers.

The above figure shows the opinions of the street vendors regarding their expectations from the customers. Majority of the respondents (81.67%) want the customers to come again and again, 8.33% respondents mentioned that the customers should respect them, whereas only 5% respondents expect bigger purchase. They mentioned that bigger purchase would not get more profit to them, that is why most of the vendors do not want to sell bigger quantity.



Source: Field Survey

Figure 2: Expectations of the Street Vendors from the Government.

The above figure shows the opinions of the respondents regarding their expectations from the government. Majority of the respondents (45%) said that the government should provide free required equipments such as storage facility, etc. so that the probability of getting unsold products waste could be minimized. About 30% respondents said that the government should frame adequate polices so that they can perform their business without facing harassment and other kinds of hurdles from the local authorities. Some of the respondents mentioned that the government should provide some sort of help in the form of working capital so that they could continue their business throughout the year.

MAJOR FINDINGS

The majority of the respondents do not have the storage facility to store the unsold stock and due to which many a times the products gets waste. Street vendors, especially selling fruits and vegetables face lot of problems to store the residuals. Thus, the lack of storage facility for the street vendors affects their income level because many a time vegetables and fruits goes bad and they suffer losses especially during summers. Further, those who pay rent to store the inventory stock do not have the cold storage facility. They are provided only the space to store without the proper storage facilities. Due to the lack of toilet facilities, especially the female vendors face lot of trouble. Also, the authorities and the local people stop the vendors to defecate in the open. If the toilet facility is there then it will not happen and the surrounding area will remain neat and clean. Further, the respondents face the lack of water facility, electricity facility which is very helpful especially for the juice sellers and also for the other sellers during the summers. Respondents mentioned that they face harassment by the police and bribed them. Also, respondents face harassment by the local authorities such as municipal committees and others. The very few respondents are of the opinion that they do not face such problems while operating their business. The majority of the respondent says non-profitability of the business is the main problem. About 25% respondents face the shortage of working capital, 21.67% face the lack of credit and 15% respondent says that they do not face any financial problem.

CONCLUSIONS & SUGGESTIONS

Street Vendors make major contribution to the wellbeing of the urban population by providing the goods and services at cheaper rates. The contribution of street vendors to the overall economy of the J&K UT cannot be ignored. This study investigated the 60 respondents of street vendors randomly selected in Jammu City to address the problems faced by them. It is found through direct interview that the most of the respondents are faced problems by police personnel, local authorities, storage problem, and toilet facilities especially for the female vendors, etc. Most of the respondents mentioned that they bribed the police personnel for the smooth running of business. Government provides street vending policies for street vendors; however, the street vendors are not aware of such policies. Government of India has passed Street Vendors Act, 2014. In June 2020, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) unveiled the Pradhan Mantri Street Vendor's Atma Nirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi) scheme to support street vendors in regaining their livelihoods. Nevertheless, the street vendors are not aware about such policies. Therefore, there is a need to aware them about the laws and policies related with street vending operations, so that they could know their rights and consequently the local authorities and police couldn't make them fool. The provision of appropriate vending zones for selling can protect the vendors from being harassed by the local authorities. The proper location of Hawking zones will be fruitful to both the customers as well as the vendors. This will help the vendors to increase their sales and hence profits. District courts should come forward to provide the cheap and speedy justice in case of harassment of vendors by the local authorities.

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