

An Analytical Study of the Problems Faced By Street Vendors in Mumbai Region

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Abstract: *Street vending is a major way for many people in Mumbai's informal urban workforce to make a living. The current study seeks to examine the principal challenges encountered by street vendors in their daily operations within the Mumbai region, particularly focusing on the Govandi area. The research utilizes primary data gathered from 60 street vendors involved in the sale of vegetables, fruits, food items, clothing, and tea. Data were gathered through a structured questionnaire and personal interactions, while secondary data were sourced from published research articles pertaining to street vending and the informal sector. The analysis utilized descriptive statistics, including frequency analysis, percentages, means, and standard deviations. The results show that the biggest problems for street vendors are not having enough space to sell, being harassed by the authorities, and not having basic needs like water and sanitation. Threats of eviction, low and unstable income, bad weather, and rising costs of inputs all make their lives even harder. Researcher also found that some vendors were financially excluded, had trouble getting government benefits, and had problems getting licenses. However, the effects of these problems were different for each vendor. The study finds that street vendors face many problems that threaten their survival and long-term success. These problems include economic, infrastructural, administrative, and environmental issues. The study says that to make street vendors' working conditions better in Mumbai, there need to be supportive policies and good implementation of welfare measures.*

Keywords: *Street Vendors, Problems, Urban Livelihoods.*

INTRODUCTION

In cities, street vending is one of the most common ways to work for yourself. Street vendors sell clothes, fruits and vegetables, ready-to-eat food, and small household items. They also do repairs and other services. Street vendors make life easier for many city dwellers, especially working people, students, and low-income families, because they sell small amounts of goods at low prices close to home. Street vending is not just a small business for the vendors; it is their main source of income that supports whole families and helps them survive in an urban economy where there aren't many formal jobs. Street vendors are a big part of the informal economy in India. They help the local economy by meeting people's daily needs and keeping markets busy.

Street vendors are important to city life, but they often work in tough and unpredictable conditions. They do a lot of their work in public places like sidewalks, near train stations, outside markets, or busy road corners. Because many different groups, like the police, local agencies, and municipal bodies, control public space, this is a daily struggle. Many vendors don't have stable legal status, which makes them easy targets for eviction, removal drives, fines, or having their goods taken. When goods are taken or a vendor has to move, it directly affects their income for that day and can also put them in debt because they buy stock every day or week. Not knowing "Where can I sell today?" is a constant source of stress that affects both work and family life.

Harassment and feeling unsafe at work is another big problem. Street vendors may be verbally abused, asked to pay in cash, or threatened with being kicked out, especially when people complain about too much traffic or dirty streets. Vendors also feel unsafe in many cities because they work long hours in open areas, sometimes early in the morning or late at night, and many of them don't have enough light, storage, or protection from theft. Women who sell things in public places may have more safety concerns and social pressures than men. These facts show that street vending is more than just a way to make money. It is also connected to safety, dignity, and the right to work without fear.

Basic infrastructure is another problem that comes up every day. Many places where people can buy food do not have clean drinking water, toilets, places to throw away trash, or shelter from the rain and heat. When basic services aren't available, vendors get tired, dehydrated, and sick, and customers have to deal

with the problems that come with it. Bad infrastructure makes things dirty and causes fights between vendors, residents, and authorities, even when the vendors themselves want a cleaner and more organized place to sell. Also, the lack of storage space means that many vendors have to carry goods every day, which raises the cost of shipping and damages the goods. This makes their jobs harder and cuts into their profits. Street vendors' daily lives are greatly affected by money problems. Many vendors can't get formal credit from banks because they don't have the right paperwork, a stable address, or a business license. Because of this, they have to borrow money informally, which can be risky and expensive. They can't buy a lot of stock, fix up their stall or cart, or get back on their feet after losing money because they don't have enough money. When vendors don't know how much money they'll make each day, it's hard for them to plan for things like rent, school fees, healthcare, and emergencies. These money problems can keep families stuck in a cycle of low savings and high risk.

To deal with these problems, India made policy and legal changes to recognize street vending as a legal way to make a living. The Street Vendors (Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vending) Act, 2014, protects the rights of street vendors in cities and controls street vending through things like surveys, vending certificates, and Town Vending Committees (TVCs). The Act agrees with the idea that vendors shouldn't be kicked out without following the right steps and that vending should be planned through vending zones and local groups that everyone can join. After a lot of work by advocates and policymakers, these measures were put in place to put vendors in a fair regulatory framework instead of treating them as illegal.

However, even when the law recognizes something, it doesn't always work out in practice. In a lot of places, vendors still say they feel unsafe, have to deal with random drives, and have trouble getting recognized or protected. This difference between policy and everyday life is important for research because the real effects of laws and policies depend on how they are carried out at the city and ward levels. Also, urban development projects, traffic problems, and changing city priorities can put more stress on vendors, which can lead to them moving or being restricted more often. When vendors are moved away from customer flow or put in poorly planned areas without facilities, their sales drop and their businesses suffer. Street vendors have a lot of different kinds of problems, not just one. Legal problems, harassment, a lack of facilities, and financial instability all affect each other and make running a business stressful every day. For instance, if a vendor isn't legally recognized, the risk of harassment goes up; if harassment goes up, the vendor's income becomes less stable; if income becomes less stable, the vendor has to borrow more; and if borrowing goes up, the vendor is more likely to be shocked. To comprehend the operational dynamics of street vending and identify potential support or reforms for enhancing safety and sustainability, it is essential to examine the daily challenges faced by street vendors.

The title of this study, "An Analytical Study of the Problems Faced by Street Vendors in Mumbai Region," tells us that it is about finding and looking at the problems that vendors have in their day-to-day work. Street vending is very common, but the problems that vendors face every day, like not having a safe place to work, having to deal with the police on a regular basis, not having enough amenities, not being able to get credit, and not being able to make enough money, don't get as much attention as bigger issues like urban planning or informal employment.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. Indira, D., Prasad, Y. R., & Krishna, P. G. (2018) The study explains that street vending is one of the oldest and most common forms of self-employment in India and provides livelihood to a large number of urban poor. It highlights that street vendors play an important role in supplying affordable goods and services and contribute significantly to the urban informal economy. However, the study reveals that vendors face serious day-to-day problems such as insecurity of vending space, harassment by authorities, lack of legal recognition, and uncertain income. The authors also explain that vendors depend on daily or weekly procurement of goods and finances, which increases their vulnerability to losses. The study concludes that although street vendors use simple but effective business strategies to survive, there is a strong need for better policy implementation and institutional support to improve their working conditions and livelihood security.

2. Arif, T. B. (2023) This study discusses street vending as a vital part of the informal economy and highlights the wide range of challenges faced by vendors in running their businesses. It explains that vendors suffer from lack of proper infrastructure, legal restrictions, social stigma, and limited access to financial services. The study also emphasizes that many vendors work long hours under unsafe and unhygienic conditions, which affects their health and overall well-being. The research points out that

women vendors face additional difficulties due to social and cultural barriers. The study concludes that understanding these challenges is essential for creating supportive policies and improving the sustainability of street vendors' livelihoods.

3. Sinha, P. K. (2023) This study examines the socio-economic conditions and problems faced by street vendors in India. It explains that street vendors are an important source of employment due to low investment and easy entry, but most vendors earn very low daily income and struggle to survive. The study identifies major problems such as lack of basic amenities, poor health conditions, harassment by municipal authorities, and absence of social security. It also highlights that vendors are often unaware of their legal rights and welfare schemes. The study concludes that policy measures and protective interventions are necessary to safeguard the rights and improve the working conditions of street vendors.

4. Priya, A., & Meenachi, T. (2022) This study explains that street vendors are an important part of urban life and provide livelihood to a large number of people who cannot find employment in the formal sector. It highlights that vendors face multiple problems such as financial instability, lack of social security, poor working conditions, and climatic challenges. The study also discusses that despite the existence of laws to protect street vendors, the actual benefits have not reached many vendors. The authors conclude that the problems faced by vendors differ based on location and type of vending, and there is a need for effective policy implementation to improve their socio-economic conditions.

5. Manickavasagam, B. (2018) This study focuses on the challenges faced by women street vendors and explains that they enter street vending mainly as a survival strategy to support their families. It highlights that women vendors face greater vulnerability due to lack of protection, harassment, poor access to credit, and absence of social security. The study also points out that women vendors are often ignored in policy implementation and urban planning. The author concludes that empowering women street vendors through legal protection, awareness of rights, and social support systems is essential for improving their livelihood and dignity.

6. Kumar, B., & Sharma, M. (2019) This study explains that street vending is one of the most visible activities in the informal sector and provides livelihood to a large section of the urban population. It highlights that vendors face several operational problems such as harassment by authorities, lack of storage facilities, income instability, and absence of government support. The study also discusses that despite the introduction of protective laws, vendors continue to face difficulties due to poor implementation. The authors conclude that addressing the problems of street vendors requires inclusive urban policies and recognition of vending as a legitimate economic activity.

7.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Street sellers are important to the urban informal economy, but their daily challenges have gotten little attention and research.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To find out problems faced by street vendors in their day-to-day operations.
2. To understand the review of literature in the related areas.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1. The current study examines street vendors in the Govandi area, situated within the Western Suburban and Harbour railway lines of the Mumbai region, concentrating on the diverse challenges experienced by these vendors in their daily operations.
2. The researcher chose 60 street vendors to be part of the study, including those who sold vegetables, fruits, food, clothes, and ran tea stalls. Only vendors who were 18 years older were included.
3. The primary data were gathered via a structured questionnaire and personal interactions, whereas secondary data were sourced from research articles and other published materials pertaining to street vending and the informal sector.
4. Researcher used descriptive statistics, frequency analysis, percentages, and tables to look at the data we collected and come to useful conclusions.

FINDINGS, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

FREQUENCY ANALYSIS

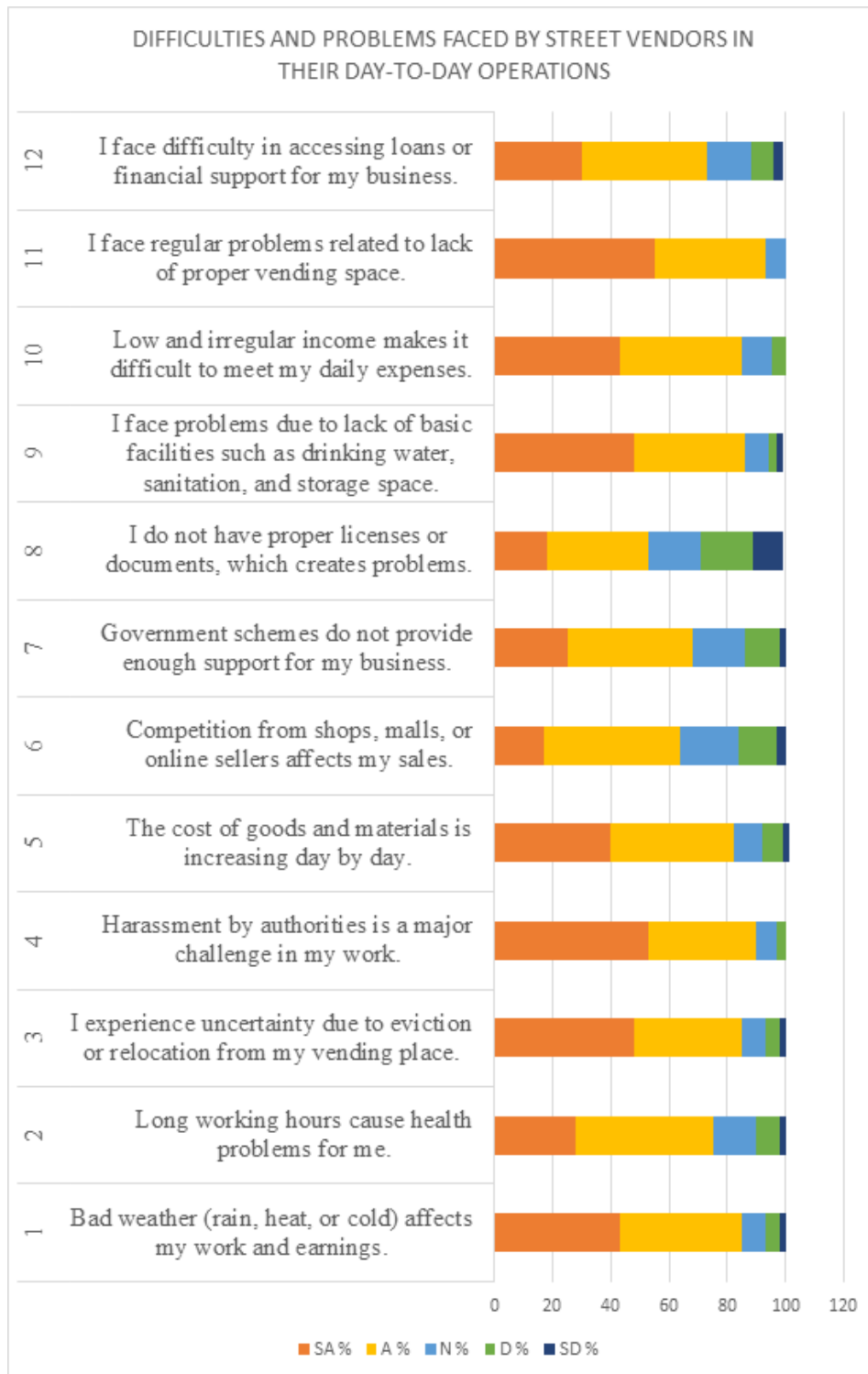
Table No. 1

PROBLEMS FACED BY STREET VENDORS IN THEIR DAY-TO-DAY OPERATIONS

Sr. No.	Questions	SA	%	A	%	N	%	D	%	SD	%
1	Bad weather (rain, heat, or cold) affects my work and earnings.	26	43	25	42	5	8	3	5	1	2
2	Long working hours cause health problems for me.	17	28	28	47	9	15	5	8	1	2
3	I experience uncertainty due to eviction or relocation from my vending place.	29	48	22	37	5	8	3	5	1	2
4	Harassment by authorities is a major challenge in my work.	32	53	22	37	4	7	2	3	0	0
5	The cost of goods and materials is increasing day by day.	24	40	25	42	6	10	4	7	1	2
6	Competition from shops, malls, or online sellers affects my sales.	10	17	28	47	12	20	8	13	2	3
7	Government schemes do not provide enough support for my business.	15	25	26	43	11	18	7	12	1	2
8	I do not have proper licenses or documents, which creates problems.	11	18	21	35	11	18	11	18	6	10
9	I face problems due to lack of basic facilities such as drinking water, sanitation, and storage space.	29	48	23	38	5	8	2	3	1	2
10	Low and irregular income makes it difficult to meet my daily expenses.	26	43	25	42	6	10	3	5	0	0
11	I face regular problems related to lack of proper vending space.	33	55	23	38	4	7	0	0	0	0
12	I face difficulty in accessing loans or financial support for my business.	18	30	26	43	9	15	5	8	2	3

Source: Research Compilation

Diagram No. 1



Source: Researcher Compilation

Analysis and Interpretation:

The percentage analysis shows that 43% strongly agreed and 42% agreed that bad weather affects their work and earnings. This means that 85% of vendors are hurt by bad weather. Only 7% disagreed or strongly disagreed, which shows that weather-related problems are a big worry for most vendors.

The results show that 28% of people strongly agreed and 47% agreed that long hours at work are bad for your health. This adds up to 75% agreement. 15% stayed neutral, and 10% disagreed or strongly disagreed. This suggests that many people have health problems because they work too many hours.

Most vendors said they were worried about being evicted or having to move. 48% strongly agreed and 37% agreed, for a total of 85% agreement. Only 7% disagreed or strongly disagreed, which shows that vendors were very unsure.

The data show that 53% strongly agreed and 37% agreed that harassment by authorities is a big problem,

for a total of 90% agreement. Everyone who answered agreed, which shows how serious this problem is. The percentage analysis shows that 40% strongly agreed and 42% agreed that input costs are going up, which is 82% agreement. Only 9% disagreed or strongly disagreed, which shows that rising costs have a big effect on vendors.

The results show that 17% of people strongly agreed and 47% agreed, which means that 64% of people agreed overall. 20% were neutral, and 16% disagreed or strongly disagreed. This shows that competition affects some vendors but is not a big deal for everyone.

The results show that 25% of respondents strongly agreed and 43% agreed, which means that 68% of people think that government programs are not good enough. 18% were neutral, and 14% disagreed or strongly disagreed, showing that people had different experiences with welfare programs.

The data show that 18% of people strongly agreed and 35% agreed, which means that 53% of people agreed. 18% were neutral, and 28% disagreed or strongly disagreed. This shows that people have different opinions and experiences when it comes to licensing issues.

A lot of vendors said they had problems because they didn't have basic facilities. 48% strongly agreed and 38% agreed, for a total of 86% agreement. Only 5% disagreed or strongly disagreed, which shows how serious this problem is.

The analysis shows that 43% strongly agreed and 42% agreed, which means that 85% agreed. Everyone who answered agreed, which shows that income instability is a common problem.

The data show that 55% strongly agreed and 38% agreed, which means that 93% of people agreed. No one disagreed, which shows that street vendors' biggest problem is not having enough space to set up shop.

The results show that 30% of people strongly agreed and 43% agreed, for a total agreement of 73%. 15% were neutral, and 11% disagreed or strongly disagreed. This shows that getting money is still a big problem for most vendors.

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

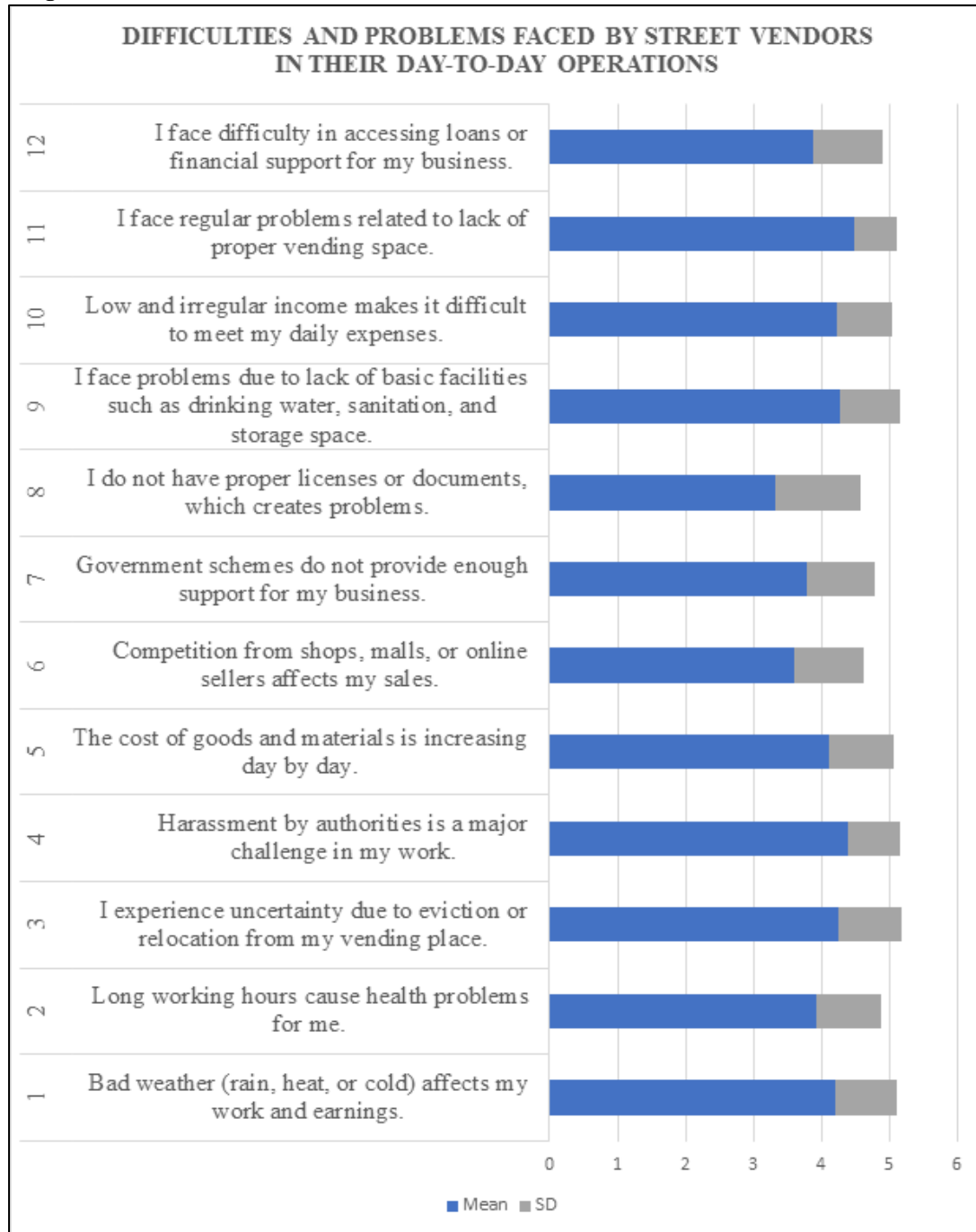
Table No. 2

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF DIFFICULTIES AND PROBLEMS FACED BY STREET VENDORS IN THEIR DAY-TO-DAY OPERATIONS						
Sr. No.	Questions	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
1	Bad weather (rain, heat, or cold) affects my work and earnings.	60	1	5	4.20	0.91
2	Long working hours cause health problems for me.	60	1	5	3.92	0.95
3	I experience uncertainty due to eviction or relocation from my vending place.	60	2	5	4.25	0.92
4	Harassment by authorities is a major challenge in my work.	60	2	5	4.40	0.76
5	The cost of goods and materials is increasing day by day.	60	1	5	4.12	0.95
6	Competition from shops, malls, or online sellers affects my sales.	60	1	5	3.60	1.02
7	Government schemes do not provide enough support for my business.	60	1	5	3.78	1.00
8	I do not have proper licenses or documents, which creates problems.	60	1	5	3.33	1.25
9	I face problems due to lack of basic facilities such as drinking water, sanitation, and storage space.	60	1	5	4.28	0.88
10	Low and irregular income makes it difficult to meet my daily expenses.	60	2	5	4.23	0.82
11	I face regular problems related to lack of proper vending space.	60	3	5	4.48	0.62

12	I face difficulty in accessing loans or financial support for my business.	60	1	5	3.88	1.03
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Source: Research Compilation

Diagram No. 2



Source: Researcher Compilation

Analysis and Interpretation

The highest mean in this study is 4.48, which means that street vendors' biggest problem is not having enough room to sell their goods. This high mean value shows that vendors mostly agree that space is limited, and almost all of them have this problem. The next big problem is harassment by authorities, with a mean value of 4.40. This means that vendors often have to deal with threats, bribes, and constant interference. The lack of basic services like water, sanitation, and storage was seen as a major problem, with a mean score of 4.28. These basic infrastructure problems directly affect the health and daily work of vendors. The most important non-negotiable barriers to daily vending are a lack of space, harassment by the authorities, and a lack of basic amenities. These make vending physically and mentally hard. Vendors were also very worried about the uncertainty that eviction or relocation would bring, with a

mean score of 4.25. This means that fear of being moved is a constant source of stress, but the level of worry changes depending on where you are and how the rules are enforced. Low and unstable income was another big problem, with a mean value of 4.23. This shows that income instability is a common and urgent problem for vendors. Bad weather, especially during the monsoon season, has a big effect on earnings, with a mean value of 4.20. This varies based on the type of vending and the availability of shelter. With a mean value of 4.12, rising input costs make earnings even harder to come by. However, some vendors are able to deal with this problem by changing prices or finding new suppliers.

Problems with mean values that are lower than average show that vendors have had different experiences. The mean value for long working hours and related health problems was 3.92, which means that vendors know about the health risks but many of them accept them as part of their job. The mean value of 3.88 for "difficulty in accessing formal loans" showed that vendors were financially excluded at different levels. The average score for the inadequacy of government programs was 3.78, which shows that people were not fully aware of or using these programs. People thought that competition from formal retail stores was less of a threat, with a mean value of 3.60, because street vendors serve a different group of customers who want cheap and easy options. The licensing issue had the lowest mean value of 3.33, which means that it is the least serious problem on average but also the most divisive. Some vendors have problems because they don't have the right paperwork, while others don't mind not having licenses or prefer to stay informal to avoid taxes and regulations.

CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

The study clearly shows that street vendors in the Mumbai area have big problems that don't go away. The most important problems found are the lack of proper vending space, the constant harassment by authorities, and the lack of basic facilities like water, restrooms, and storage. These issues had the highest average scores and the least amount of variation, which means that they are problems that almost all vendors face. Street vending is very hard both physically and mentally without a safe place to work, freedom from harassment, and basic necessities.

The study also shows that vendors are always stressed out because they don't know if they will be evicted or have to move, and their income is low and inconsistent, which makes their lives very unstable. Environmental factors, like bad weather, especially during the monsoon season, make earnings even lower. Rising costs of inputs put more pressure on already low profit margins, but some vendors are able to adapt by changing their prices or where they get their goods. Vendors also have problems with money and institutions, like not being able to get formal credit and not getting much help from government programs. Licensing issues were the least serious overall, but they caused a lot of disagreement because some vendors would rather stay informal to avoid taxes and paperwork. In general, the results show that street vendors care more about short-term survival than long-term business growth. The study finds that street vending in Mumbai is limited by many structural and administrative problems. Unless these problems are fixed, street vendors' livelihoods and ability to stay in business will continue to be at risk.

The study suggests that urban local governments should make street vending more accessible by setting up designated vending areas with basic services like water, sanitation, and waste management. To stop harassment and protect vendors, there should be clear rules for enforcement and ways to hold people accountable. To make people safer financially and less reliant on informal lenders, the process of getting a license and paperwork needs to be easier, and people need to be able to get formal credit at a low cost. Welfare programs should be made easier to use and put into action so that vendors can get to them without any problems. Overall, organized policy action is needed to protect street vendors' jobs while also making sure they are included in urban planning.

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