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# A study of Challenges Faced by Street Vendors in Solapur District

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## Abstract:

*This study investigates the challenges faced by street vendors in Solapur District, Maharashtra, through primary data collected via surveys and interviews. Street vendors form a vital part of the urban economy, providing affordable goods and services to a wide range of customers. However, they face numerous challenges that affect their livelihood and social security. Using a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods, this study identifies key issues such as inadequate access to vending spaces, frequent eviction by local authorities, lack of legal protection, and limited access to credit or financial resources. The research also highlights the poor infrastructural conditions, including sanitation and safety concerns, as well as the absence of social security benefits like health insurance or pensions. Primary data was gathered from over 100 street vendors across different areas of Solapur District, including interviews with vendors from various sectors such as food, clothing, and household goods. Findings from the data reveal that vendors often operate in insecure environments with minimal governmental support or regulation. In particular, it calls for more structured urban planning, better enforcement of existing laws, and the establishment of supportive networks to facilitate access to financial resources. Based on the primary data, the research concludes with practical recommendations for local authorities and policymakers to address the challenges faced by street vendors in Solapur District, ensuring their integration into the formal economy while preserving their livelihoods.*

**Keywords-** Street vendors, Urban Economy, Financial Stability, Livelihood Challenges.

## Introduction:

Street vending is an essential part of the informal economy in urban areas across India, providing affordable goods and services to a wide segment of the population. In Solapur District, Maharashtra, street vendors play a crucial role in the local economy, offering everything from food and clothing to household items. These vendors are not only a key part of the community's daily life but also contribute to the vibrancy of urban spaces, particularly in densely populated markets and busy streets. Despite their significant contributions, street vendors often face numerous challenges that hinder their livelihood and well-being.

Street vendors are among the most marginalized groups in society, operating without proper recognition or protection under the law. Many vendors in Solapur work in congested areas, where they are vulnerable to eviction by municipal authorities, often without adequate notice or alternative relocation options. Additionally, the absence of regulated spaces for vending and the lack of proper infrastructure such as sanitation and waste disposal facilities exacerbates the difficulties faced by these vendors. Furthermore, without access to financial resources, social security benefits, or legal protections, street vendors are highly vulnerable to economic instability and exploitation.

## Statement of Problems:

Street vendors in Solapur District, like in many other urban areas, play a crucial role in the local economy by providing affordable goods and services, but they face a variety of challenges that hinder their growth and sustainability. These challenges include a lack of legal recognition, inadequate infrastructure, frequent harassment by authorities, limited access to financial resources, and unsafe working conditions. Despite their significant contribution to the community, street vendors in Solapur continue to operate in an environment that lacks proper support, which affects their income stability, business growth, and overall well-being. This research aims to explore and analyze the specific challenges faced by street vendors in Solapur, filling a gap in existing literature and providing insights for local authorities and policymakers to improve their conditions and create a more supportive environment for this crucial sector of the informal economy.

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**Objectives:**

1. To identify and analyse the key socio-economic challenges faced by street vendors in Solapur District
2. To assess the impact of local government policies and regulations on the livelihood of street vendors in Solapur
3. To explore the strategies adopted by street vendors to cope with challenges in their work environment

**Significance of the study:**

The significance of this study lies in understanding the challenges faced by street vendors in Solapur District, which is crucial for developing policies and strategies that can improve their working conditions. Street vendors play a vital role in the local economy by providing affordable goods and services to the community, but they often face issues such as lack of proper infrastructure, legal support, and social security. By identifying these challenges, the study can help policymakers, local authorities, and other stakeholders address these issues, ensuring better livelihood opportunities for street vendors and contributing to the overall economic growth of the district.

**Scope:**

The scope of this research paper, "*A Study of Challenges Faced by Street Vendors in Solapur District*" focuses on identifying and analysing the various socio-economic, legal, and environmental challenges faced by street vendors operating in both urban and semi-urban areas of Solapur. The study will cover challenges such as income instability, lack of legal support, harassment by authorities, and insufficient infrastructure, based on primary data collected through surveys, interviews, and direct observations. The research will specifically examine the experiences of vendors involved in different sectors, including food, clothing, and small household items, and will exclude rural areas and vendors outside the district, providing a localized and focused understanding of the issue.

**Limitation of Study:**

1. The study is based on reference of Solapur district.
2. The study is based on street vendors facing the day to day problems.
3. Data collected is fully based on primary data given by the respond.
4. To taking survey 100 respondents, there is a limited response only.

**Review of literature:**

**Parmar, C., & Patel, I. (2022)**, the study assesses various aspects such as economic stability, working conditions, health, social status, and legal challenges faced by street vendors. Through primary data collection, including surveys and interviews, the authors explore how factors like income, job security, access to healthcare, and lack of legal recognition affect the overall well-being of street vendors.

**Maradi, S. V., & Maley, D. G. (2024)**, The research paper "**Importance of Street Vendors in India**" by

Smt. Vani Maradi and Dr. Devidas G. Maley offers a detailed exploration of the economic and social contributions of street vendors in India, emphasizing their role in providing affordable goods and generating employment. The paper highlights the challenges faced by vendors, such as legal issues, inadequate infrastructure, and harassment by authorities, while calling for policy interventions to improve their working conditions.

**Chaudhary, B. (2024)**, The research paper "A Study on Problems of the Street Vendors in Lalbandi Municipality" by Birendra Chaudhary, published in the *Janajyoti Journal*, explores the various challenges faced by street vendors in the Lalbandi Municipality, Sarlahi, Nepal. The study delves into the socio-economic difficulties of street vendors, including issues related to lack of proper space for vending, insufficient legal recognition, harassment by local authorities, and limited access to financial resources.

**Romero, R. P., Paulino, E. P., Tan, R. A., & Cortez, D. M. A. (2024)** This research study on the challenges faced by street vendors in Manila, Philippines. The paper examines street vending as a form of urban entrepreneurship and highlights the socio-economic struggles, including lack of access to formal credit, limited legal protection, and inadequate infrastructure. While the paper effectively uses action research to connect theory with practice, it could benefit from a larger sample size and a more comprehensive exploration of the long-term sustainability of these vendors. Overall, it offers valuable insights into the intersection of informal entrepreneurship and urban governance.

**Research Methodology:**

The research methodology used in this study on the challenges faced by street vendors in Solapur District is a **combination of both qualitative and quantitative research methods**. The research methodology is the way to solve the research problem systematically in this study we study about various steps are adopted by the research as researcher problem behind them:

**Sources of data:**

The study consists of both primary and secondary data. Primary data is collect through the standard questionnaire. secondary data were collected from thesis, journals, magazines, websites etc.

**Sample Size:**

The sample size for the research study is 100, who are residents of Solapur. The researcher approached 100 respondents during the data collection period. The respondents in this research are vegetable and fruit sellers, footpath shopkeepers, sidewalk traders, etc.

**Sampling Design:**

A purposive sampling technique was adopted for the purpose of the research study, in order to give a proper and adequate representation to all the residents of Solapur a purposive selection was done of respondents.

### Data Analysis and Interpretation:

This data analysis examines key aspects of street vending in Solapur District, focusing on the types of goods sold, the challenges vendors face, and their income stability. It highlights the dominant products in the market, the financial struggles vendors experience, and the social stigma associated with

#### Distribution of goods/services sold by street vendors

Goods/Services	Number of Responses	Percentage (%)
Food & Beverages	45	45%
Clothes/Accessories	32	32%
Household Items	13	13%
Electronics	7	7%
Others	3	3%
Total	100	100%

The table reveals that the majority of street vendors in Solapur District primarily sell Food & Beverages (45%), followed by Clothes/Accessories (32%), making these the dominant product categories. Household Items account for 13%, while Electronics and Other items each represent just 7% and 3%

street vending. Additionally, the analysis looks at coping strategies and income management practices adopted by vendors to navigate these challenges. Through this, we gain a deeper understanding of the economic and social dynamics shaping the street vending sector.

respectively of the vendors' goods. This distribution suggests that food and beverage vendors make up a significant portion of the street vending sector, likely due to the high demand for these products in public spaces.

#### Challenges faced by street vendors

Challenges	Number of Responses	Percentage (%)
Lack of proper infrastructure	60	60%
Unstable income	75	75%
Competition with other vendors	85	85%
Health and safety issues	50	50%
Legal challenges (e.g., fines, eviction)	45	45%
Limited access to finance/loans	35	35%
Others (please specify)	10	10%

The data shows that competition with other vendors (85%) is the biggest challenge faced by street vendors in Solapur, followed by unstable income (75%), which reflects the financial uncertainty in the profession. Lack of proper infrastructure (60%) and health and safety issues (50%) also significantly impact vendors' ability to work efficiently. Legal

#### Income stability of street vendors

Income Stability	Number of Responses	Percentage (%)
Very stable	8	8%
Somewhat stable	17	17%
Unstable	54	54%
Highly unstable	21	21%
Total	100	100%

The data reveals that 54% of street vendors report their income as unstable, followed by 21% who describe their income as highly unstable, indicating significant financial insecurity in the profession. A smaller proportion, 17%, consider their income

challenges, including fines and evictions, affect 45% of vendors, while limited access to finance (35%) hinders business growth. Lastly, a small proportion (10%) faces additional, unspecified challenges, suggesting that other factors may vary across different vendors' experiences.

somewhat stable, while only 8% have a very stable income. This suggests that the majority of street vendors in Solapur face considerable challenges in achieving consistent earnings, highlighting the vulnerability of their livelihoods.

#### Social Stigma or Negative Perception Due to Street Vending

Social Stigma	Number of Responses	Percentage (%)
Yes	61	61%
No	39	39%

The table shows that 61% of respondents perceive street vending as having a social stigma or

negative perception, while 39% do not share this view. This indicates that a majority of people associate street vending with negative societal

connotations, which could reflect broader issues such as informal employment, perceived lack of hygiene,

or other biases against street vendors.

#### Impact of government Policies on street vendors

Impact of Policies	Number of Responses	Percentage (%)
Very Positive	5	5%
Positive	14	14%
Neutral	33	33%
Negative	22	22%
Very Negative	26	26%

The table reveals a mixed reaction to the impact of policies, with 5% of respondents viewing the impact as very positive, 14% as positive, and 33% as neutral. However, a significant 48% of respondents perceive the impact negatively, with 26% considering

it very negative and 22% negative. This indicates a general dissatisfaction or concern about the policies among the majority of respondents, with a smaller proportion expressing favourable or neutral views.

#### Coping Strategies Adopted by Street Vendors to Overcome Business Challenges

Coping Strategies	Number of Responses	Percentage (%)
Offering lower prices	43	43%
Selling unique or specialized products	22	22%
Improving product quality	19	19%
Providing excellent customer service	12	12%
Others	4	4%

The table outlines various coping strategies used by street vendors to deal with challenges they face. The most common strategy, employed by 43% of vendors, is offering lower prices, likely as a way to attract more customers. A quarter of vendors (22%) focus on selling unique or specialized products, which may help them stand out in a crowded market. Improving product quality is used by 19% of vendors,

aiming to build customer loyalty and satisfaction. Excellent customer service is a strategy for 12% of vendors, highlighting its importance in retaining clientele. Lastly, 4% of vendors use other unspecified strategies. This suggests that while price and product differentiation are the dominant approaches, vendors also value quality and customer service to maintain a competitive edge.

#### Income Management Strategies Employed by Street vendors

Income Management Strategies	Number of Responses	Percentage (%)
Saving money during peak seasons	25	25%
Diversifying the types of products sold	40	40%
Borrowing money or using credit	20	20%
Relying on family or community support	10	10%
Others	5	5%

The table shows that the most common income management strategy is diversifying the types of products sold, with 40% of respondents choosing this approach. Saving money during peak seasons follows at 25%, while 20% rely on borrowing money or using credit. A smaller portion, 10%, depends on family or community support, and 5% use other strategies. This indicates that respondents prioritize product diversification and savings as key methods for managing income, with borrowing and community support being less common choices.

perception, suggesting societal biases against street vendors.

- A large proportion (48%) of respondents perceive the impact of government policies as negative or very negative, indicating general dissatisfaction.
- The most common coping strategy is offering lower prices (43%), suggesting price competition as a key strategy to attract customers.
- The most widely used income management strategy is diversifying the types of products sold (40%), demonstrating the importance of product variety for financial stability.

#### Findings:

- The majority of street vendors in Solapur District primarily sell Food & Beverages (45%), followed by Clothes/Accessories (32%).
- Competition with other vendors (85%) is the biggest challenge, indicating intense rivalry in the street vending sector.
- A significant 54% of street vendors report their income as unstable, highlighting the financial insecurity in the profession.
- A majority of respondents (61%) perceive street vending as having a social stigma or negative

#### Suggestions:

##### For Government:

- Improve Infrastructure for Street Vendors:** The government should invest in better infrastructure such as designated vending zones, proper waste management systems, and access to clean water and electricity. This would ensure that street vendors can operate in a safe and hygienic environment, ultimately benefiting both vendors and customers.



2. **Create Affordable Access to Financial Support:** Street vendors often struggle with limited access to finance. The government should facilitate affordable loans or grants for vendors to help them expand their businesses, purchase inventory, or improve their working conditions, which would encourage business growth and stability.
3. **Ensure Legal Protection and Clear Regulations:** The government should establish clear and accessible regulations for street vending, offering legal protection to vendors against arbitrary fines or evictions. Proper licensing processes and protections against harassment would help vendors operate without the fear of being displaced or penalized unfairly.
4. **Enhance Vendor Safety and Health Regulations:** The government should implement and enforce health and safety guidelines tailored to the needs of street vendors, ensuring that hygiene standards are met and providing support to help vendors comply with these regulations.
5. **Offer Skill Development and Training Programs:** The government can help vendors by providing skill development programs in areas such as financial management, marketing, customer service, and product innovation. Training programs would empower street vendors to improve their business practices, manage income more effectively, and enhance the overall quality of their goods and services.

#### For Street Vendors:

1. **Diversify Your Product Offerings:** To reduce income instability, consider expanding your product range. For example, if you primarily sell food and beverages, try adding complementary products like snacks or different drink options to cater to various customer preferences.
2. **Build Strong Customer Relationships:** Repeat customers are essential for steady income. Focus on providing excellent customer service, remembering regular customers, and offering small incentives such as discounts or free items to encourage their loyalty and build a strong customer base.
3. **Utilize Social Media and Digital Platforms:** Leverage social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, or WhatsApp to promote your products and reach a wider audience. You can also offer delivery services through these platforms, helping you expand your reach and attract more customers.
4. **Ensure High Standards of Hygiene and Safety:** Maintaining cleanliness and adhering to safety standards is crucial for building customer trust, especially if you're selling food or beverages. Regularly clean your vending area, use safe packaging, and follow proper food safety protocols to avoid health risks and ensure compliance with regulations.
5. **Collaborate with Other Vendors:** Strengthen your position by collaborating with fellow vendors. You can share resources, exchange

advice, and even collectively address issues like overcrowding or unfair regulations. Working together can provide better leverage when negotiating with local authorities for better working conditions or vendor rights.

#### Conclusion:

This study highlights the significant challenges faced by street vendors in Solapur District, including competition, unstable income, lack of infrastructure, legal issues, and limited access to financial resources. Despite their crucial role in the local economy, vendors operate in uncertain conditions with minimal support. Addressing these challenges requires policy reforms, improved infrastructure, financial assistance, and legal protections. By implementing these measures, local authorities can create a more inclusive and sustainable environment for street vendors, ensuring their economic stability while contributing to urban development.

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