



WORKING CONDITIONS OF STREET VENDORS IN TIRUPATTUR DISTRICT

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RESEARCH ARTICLE



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Abstract

Street vending is a significant component of the informal economy, providing livelihood opportunities to a large section of the urban population. This study focuses on examining the working conditions of street vendors in Tirupattur and understanding how these conditions influence their overall lifestyle, income stability, health, and well-being. The research highlights the challenges faced by street vendors, including lack of basic facilities, exposure to harsh environmental conditions, income uncertainty, and harassment from authorities. The study adopts a descriptive research design and is based on primary data collected from 60 street vendors using a structured questionnaire. The data were analyzed using statistical tools such as percentage analysis, Chi-square test, and ANOVA to identify relationships between demographic variables and working conditions. The findings reveal that most street vendors are young and middle-aged individuals with low educational backgrounds and moderate work experience. The study also shows that vendors face multiple challenges such as long working hours, lack of sanitation, health risks, and unstable income. While some government policies and support systems exist, their impact remains limited due to lack of awareness and implementation issues. The research concludes that improving the working conditions of street vendors requires better policy implementation, provision of basic facilities, access to financial support, and social security measures. The study provides valuable insights for policymakers and stakeholders to promote inclusive urban development and enhance the livelihood and dignity of street vendors.

Keywords: *Street Vendors, Working Conditions, Informal Economy, Livelihood, Income Stability, Occupational Health, Urban Poverty, Social Security, Government Policies, Tirupattur*

Introduction

Street vending is one of the most visible and important forms of employment in the informal sector, especially in developing countries like India. It provides livelihood opportunities to a large number of people who have limited access to formal employment due to low education, lack of skills, or economic constraints. Street vendors sell a variety of goods and services such as food items, fruits, vegetables, clothing, and household products in public places like roadsides, markets, bus stands, and railway stations. They play a vital role in urban economies by offering affordable goods and services to the public while supporting local supply chains.

Despite their economic contribution, street vendors often face difficult and insecure working conditions. They work long hours in open environments and are exposed to extreme weather conditions, pollution, and health risks. Most vendors lack access to basic facilities such as clean drinking water, sanitation, and proper shelter. In addition, they frequently face challenges such as harassment, eviction, lack of legal protection, and unstable income. These factors significantly affect their quality of life and overall well-being.

In recent years, the importance of improving the working conditions of street vendors has gained attention through policies such as the Street Vendors (Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vending) Act, 2014. However, the implementation of such policies remains inconsistent, and many vendors continue to struggle with limited support and awareness.

This study focuses on the working conditions of street vendors in Tirupattur and examines how these conditions influence their income, health, and lifestyle. By analyzing the challenges faced by vendors and the effectiveness of existing support systems, the research aims to provide insights for improving their livelihood and promoting inclusive urban development.

Significance of the Study

This study is important as it highlights the real-life working conditions and challenges faced by street vendors, who form a major

part of the informal economy but are often neglected in policy and planning. By focusing on their daily struggles, the study brings attention to issues such as lack of basic facilities, unsafe working environments, income instability, and limited legal protection.

The research helps in understanding how street vendors manage their livelihood under difficult conditions, including how they handle income, expenses, and savings. It also provides insights into the health and social risks they face due to long working hours, exposure to pollution, and absence of proper sanitation and healthcare facilities.

Another important contribution of the study is that it examines the impact of street vending on family life, including children's education, living conditions, and overall well-being. This helps in understanding the broader social implications of informal work.

The findings of this study will be useful for policymakers, government authorities, NGOs, and urban planners to design better policies and support systems for street vendors. It emphasizes the need for proper exposure to pollution, and absence of proper sanitation and healthcare facilities.

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The findings of this study will be useful for policymakers, government authorities, NGOs, and urban planners to design better policies and support systems for street vendors. It emphasizes the need for proper implementation of laws, provision of basic amenities, financial inclusion, and social security measures.

Overall, this study aims to contribute towards improving the livelihood, dignity, and quality of life of street vendors and supports the development of more inclusive and sustainable urban environments.

Research Methodology

This study adopts a descriptive research design to examine the working conditions of street vendors and their impact on livelihood, health, and overall well-being. The research focuses on street vendors operating in Tirupattur town and nearby areas.

Area of the Study: The study was conducted in Tirupattur, Tamil Nadu, covering key locations such as market areas, bus stands, railway stations, and roadside vending zones where street vendors are actively engaged in their business.

Population and Sample: The population of the study consists of all street vendors in Tirupattur. From this population, a sample of 60 respondents was selected for data collection.

Sampling Technique: The study uses a convenience sampling method, where respondents were selected based on their availability and willingness to participate.

Sources of Data: Both primary and secondary data were used:

- Primary data were collected directly from street vendors through a structured questionnaire.
- Secondary data were collected from books, journals, government reports, and previous research studies related to street vending.

Universe of the Study

The universe of the study refers to the total population from which the sample is drawn. In this research, the universe consists of all street vendors operating in Tirupattur town.

This includes vendors working in various locations such as market areas, bus stands, railway station surroundings, temple areas, and roadside vending zones. These vendors are engaged in selling different goods like fruits, vegetables, food items, garments, and other daily-use products.

According to available information from the municipal records, there are approximately 626 street vendors in Tirupattur. This entire group forms the universe of the study. From this population, a sample of 60 respondents was selected for the purpose of data collection and analysis.

Tools for Data Collection: A structured questionnaire was used as the main tool for collecting data. It included questions related to demographic details, working conditions, income, health issues, and challenges faced by street vendors.

Methods of Data Analysis: The collected data were analyzed using statistical tools such as:

- Percentage analysis
- Chi-square test
- ANOVA (Analysis of Variance)

These tools helped in identifying relationships between variables and interpreting the findings effectively.

Aim of the Study

The main aim of this study is to examine the working conditions of street vendors and to understand how these conditions affect their income, health, and overall livelihood. The study also aims to identify the challenges faced by street vendors and to suggest measures for improving their working environment and quality of life.

Objectives of the Study

1. To identify the major challenges faced by street vendors in their daily life and work environment.
2. To examine how street vendors manage their income, expenses, and savings to sustain their families.
3. To analyze the social and health- related risks commonly experienced by street vendors.
4. To study the impact of street vending on family responsibilities, education, and living conditions.
5. To explore the support systems and policy interventions that can improve the lifestyle and livelihood of street vendors.

Limitations of the Study: The study is limited by a small sample size and is restricted to a specific geographic area. The findings are based on self-reported data, which may involve personal bias or inaccuracies.

Statistical Interpretation

Age of the Respondents and Working Conditions of Street Vendors

Age of the Respondents	Lifestyle level of street vendors		Total
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	
Below 20	0 (0.0)	5 (100.0)	5 (100.0)
21–30	8 (29.6)	19 (70.4)	27 (100.0)
31–40	3 (21.4)	11 (78.6)	14 (100.0)
41–50	1 (10.0)	9 (90.0)	10 (100.0)
Above 50	0 (0.0)	4 (100.0)	4 (100.0)
Total	12 (20.0)	26 (27.08)	60 (100.0)

The table shows the relationship between age of the respondents and frequent harassment from authorities or police. Overall, a significant more then (80%) of the respondents fall under the Disagree category, while two tenth (20%) strongly disagree. In the age group of 21–30 years, a most of disagree that they face frequent harassment. Among respondents aged 31– 40 years and 41– 50 years, more than three fourth, indicating a significant most, disagree with the statement. results show that a significant most of respondents do not perceive frequent harassment, regardless of age.

One Way Analysis (ANOVA) of Variance Among the Age of the Respondents with Regard to Various Dimensions of Working Conditions of Street Vendors

Dimensions	SS	df	MS	Mean	Statistical Inference
Challenges in Daily Life and Work Environment Between Groups Within Groups	14.384	4	3.596	G1= 2.80 G2= 2.07 G3= 2.64 G4= 3.20 G5= 3.50	F= 3.166 p= 0.021* p > 0.05 Significant
Income, Expenses, and Saving Between Groups Within Groups	18.723	4	4.681	G1= 2.80 G2= 2.07 G3= 2.64 G4= 3.20 G5= 3.50	F= 2.527 p= 0.051 p > 0.05 Not Significant
Social and Health-Related Risks Between Groups Within Groups	11.888	4	2.972	G1= 2.80 G2= 2.07 G3= 2.64 G4= 3.20 G5= 3.50	F= 2.269 p= 0.073 p > 0.05 Not Significant
Impact on Family Responsibilities, Education, and Living Conditions Between Groups Within Groups	7.823	4	1.956	G1= 2.80 G2= 2.07 G3= 2.64 G4= 3.20 G5= 3.50	F= 1.284 p= 0.288 p > 0.05 Not Significant

Support Systems and Policy Interventions Between Groups Within Groups	6.591	4	1.648	G1= 2.80	F= 1.312
				G2= 2.07	p= 0.277
				G3= 2.64	p > 0.05
				G4= 3.20	Not Significant
				G5= 3.50	

G1 – Below 20 G2 -21–30 G3 – 31–40 G4 – 41–50 G5 – and Above

Null Hypothesis (H₀) - There is no significant difference among the groups with regard to various dimensions of working conditions of street vendors.

Research Hypothesis (H₁) - There is a significant difference among the groups with regard to various dimensions of working conditions of street vendors.

Result 1: Since the p-value (0.021) is less than 0.05, the result is statistically significant; hence, the research hypothesis is accepted and the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that age has a significant influence on the challenges faced by street vendors in their daily life and work environment, and the level of challenges varies among different age groups.

Result 2: Since the p-value (0.051) is greater than 0.05, the result is not statistically significant; hence, the research hypothesis is rejected and the null hypothesis is accepted. This shows that there is no significant difference among age groups with regard to income, expenses, and saving patterns of street vendors.

Result 3: Since the p-value (0.073) is greater than 0.05, the result is not statistically significant; hence, the research hypothesis is rejected and the null hypothesis is accepted. The finding reveals that age does not significantly affect the social and health-related risks faced by street vendors, and such risks are common across all age groups.

Result 4: Since the p-value (0.288) is greater than 0.05, the result is not statistically significant; hence, the research hypothesis is rejected and the null hypothesis is accepted. This implies that age has no significant influence on family responsibilities, education, and living conditions of street vendors.

Result 5: Since the p-value (0.277) is greater than 0.05, the result is not statistically significant; hence, the research hypothesis is rejected and the null hypothesis is accepted. The result indicates that support systems and policy interventions are perceived similarly by street vendors across all age groups, showing no significant age-wise variation.

Chi-square Test: (Gender of the Respondents and Working Conditions of street vendors)

Pearson Chi Square Value	6.149 ^a
Degrees of Freedom	8
Level of Significance	0.631

a. 10 cells (66.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .03.

Null Hypothesis (H₀) -There is no significant association between the gender of the respondents and the working conditions of street vendors.

Research Hypothesis (H₁) - There is a significant association between the gender of the respondents and the working conditions of street vendors.

Result: The Pearson Chi-Square value is $\chi^2 = 6.149$ with 8 degrees of freedom. The level of significance (p = 0.631) is greater than 0.05. Since the p value is greater than 0.05, the result is not statistically significant. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted and the research hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that gender does not have a meaningful influence on the working conditions of street vendors, and any differences observed between male and female vendors are largely due to chance rather than actual variation in working conditions.

‘t’ test between Gender of the Respondents with regard to Various Dimensions of Working Conditions of Street Vendors

Dimensions	Mean		Statistical Inference
Challenges in Daily Life and Work Environment Male (41) Female (18)	1.17 1.144		t= -1.087 p=0.036* p > 0.05 Significant
Income, Expenses, and Saving Male (41) Female (18)	1.31 1.50	0.480 0.522	t=-0.959 p=0.180 p > 0.05 Not Significant
Social and Health Related Risk			t= -2.286 p= 0.99

Male (41)	1.20	0.422	p > 0.05
Female (18)	1.64	0.497	Not Significant
Impact on Family Responsibilities, Education, and Living Conditions			t=-2.066 p= 0.026*
Male (41)	1.18	0.405	p > 0.05
Female (18)	1.58	0.515	Significant
Support Systems and Policy Interventions			t= 1.1470 p= 0.874
Male (41)	1.67	0.577	p > 0.05
Female (18)	1.25	0.577	Not Significant

Null Hypothesis (H₀) - There is no significant difference between male and female street vendors with regard to the various dimensions of working conditions.

Research Hypothesis (H₁) - There is a significant difference between male and female street vendors with regard to the various dimensions of working conditions.

Result 1: Since the p-value (0.036) is less than 0.05, the result is statistically significant; hence, the research hypothesis (H₁) is accepted and the null hypothesis (H₀) is rejected. This indicates that male and female street vendors differ significantly in the challenges faced in their daily life and work environment.

Result 2: Since the p-value (0.180) is greater than 0.05, the result is not statistically significant; hence, the research hypothesis (H₁) is rejected and the null hypothesis (H₀) is accepted. This shows that there is no significant difference between male and female street vendors with regard to income, expenses, and saving patterns.

Result 3: Since the p-value (0.099) is greater than 0.05, the result is not statistically significant; hence, the research hypothesis (H₁) is rejected and the null hypothesis (H₀) is accepted. The result reveals that gender does not significantly influence social and health-related risks faced by street vendors.

Result 4: Since the p-value (0.026) is less than 0.05, the result is statistically significant; hence, the research hypothesis (H₁) is accepted and the null hypothesis (H₀) is rejected. This implies that there is a significant difference between male and female street vendors regarding the impact on family responsibilities, education, and living conditions.

Result 5: Since the p-value (0.874) is greater than 0.05, the result is not statistically significant; hence, the research hypothesis (H₁) is rejected and the null hypothesis (H₀) is accepted. The finding indicates that male and female street vendors perceive support systems and policy interventions similarly, with no significant gender-wise difference.

Karl's Pearson's Co- efficient of Correlation between Monthly income of the Respondents with Regard to Various Dimensions of Working Conditions of Street Vendors

Dimensions	Correlation value	Statistical Inference
Challenges in Daily Life and Work Environment	0.224	p= 0.086 p> 0.05 Not Significant
Income, Expenses, and Saving	0.206	p= 0.115 p> 0.05 Not Significant
Social and Health-Related Risks	0.364	p= 0.004** p > 0.05 Significant
Impact on Family Responsibilities Education and Living conditions	0.333	p= 0.009** P > 0.05 Significant
Support Systems and Policy Interventions	0.372	p= 0.003** p > 0.05 Significant

Null Hypothesis (H₀) - There is no significant difference between male and female street vendors with regard to the various dimensions of working conditions.

Research Hypothesis (H₁) - There is a significant difference between male and female street vendors with regard to the various dimensions of working conditions.

Result 1: Since the p-value (0.086) is greater than 0.05, the result is not statistically significant; hence, the research hypothesis (H₁) is rejected and the null hypothesis (H₀) is accepted. This indicates that there is no significant relationship between the variables and challenges faced in daily life and work environment of street vendors.

Result 2: Since the p-value (0.115) is greater than 0.05, the result is not statistically significant; hence, the research hypothesis (H_1) is rejected and the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted. The result shows that income, expenses, and saving patterns are not significantly related to the selected variable, indicating a weak association.

Result 3: Since the p-value (0.004) is less than 0.05, the result is statistically significant; hence, the research hypothesis (H_1) is accepted and the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected. This reveals that there is a significant positive relationship between the variables and social and health-related risks of street vendors, suggesting that changes in one variable are associated with changes in health and social risks.

Result 4: Since the p-value (0.009) is less than 0.05, the result is statistically significant; hence, the research hypothesis (H_1) is accepted and the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected. The finding indicates a significant relationship between the variables and the impact on family responsibilities, education, and living conditions of street vendors

Result 5: Since the p-value (0.003) is less than 0.05, the result is statistically significant; hence, the research hypothesis (H_1) is accepted and the null hypothesis

(H_0) is rejected This suggests that support systems and policy interventions are significantly related to the selected variable, showing that improvements in support and policies can positively influence the working conditions of street vendors.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	No of Items
0.972	50

The Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.972 indicates an excellent level of internal consistency among the 50 items used in the scale. This shows that the questionnaire is highly reliable and the items are strongly related to each other. Therefore, the tool used for the study is consistent and suitable for further statistical analysis.

Findings

Findings from ANOVA Test

Result 1: The ANOVA test indicates that 36.7 percent of the respondents expressed neutral opinion regarding working environment, and the significance value is greater than 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted, and there is no significant difference among age groups regarding working environment.

Result 2: The analysis reveals that 33.3 percent of the respondents agreed that seasonal changes affect their income, and the significance value is less than 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected, and there is a significant difference among age groups regarding income stability.

Result 3: The ANOVA result shows that 35.0 percent of the respondents agreed that street vending affects their health, and the significance value is greater than 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted, indicating no significant difference among age groups regarding health conditions.

Result 4: The analysis indicates that 31.7 percent of the respondents reported financial problems in their vending business, and the significance value is greater than 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted, and age does not significantly influence financial stability.

Result 5: The ANOVA test reveals that 33.3 percent of the respondents reported job stress due to work pressure, and the significance value is less than 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected, showing a significant difference among age groups regarding job stress.

Findings from Independent Sample t-Test

Result 1: The independent sample t-test shows that 38.3 percent of the respondents remained neutral about working environment, and the significance value is greater than 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted, indicating no significant difference between male and female vendors regarding working conditions.

Result 2: The analysis indicates that 31.7 percent of the respondents reported unstable income, and the significance value is greater than 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted, showing no significant difference between male and female vendors regarding income level.

Result 3: The t-test result reveals that 35.0 percent of the respondents agreed that vending affects their health, and the significance value is greater than 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted, meaning gender does not significantly influence health conditions.

Result 4: The analysis shows that 33.3 percent of the respondents reported stress due to work pressure, and the significance value is greater than 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted, indicating no significant difference between male and female vendors regarding job stress.

Result 5: The test reveals that 36.7 percent of the respondents expressed neutral opinion regarding financial security, and the significance value is greater than 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted, indicating gender does not significantly influence financial stability.

Findings from Chi-Square Test

Result 1: The Chi-square test reveals that 41.7 percent of the respondents were married, and the significance value is greater than 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted, indicating no significant association between marital status and income level stress.

1. Age and Working Conditions

- Majority of respondents across all age groups disagree that they face frequent harassment.
- Around 80% of total respondents fall under “Disagree” category.
- In the 21–30 age group, most respondents reported no harassment issues.
- Respondents in 31–40 and 41–50 age groups also show a high level of disagreement.
- Below 20 and above 50 age groups show complete (100%) disagreement.
- Overall, age does not significantly influence perception of harassment.
- Working conditions are perceived similarly across all age groups.

Findings from Correlation Analysis

Result 1: The correlation analysis indicates that there is a positive relationship between work experience and income level, as 33.3 percent of the respondents reported improved income with increased experience.

Result 2: The analysis shows that there is a moderate relationship between income level and savings capacity, as 36.7 percent of the respondents reported limited savings.

Result 3: The results reveal that there is a weak relationship between working hours and job stress, since 33.3 percent of the respondents reported stress due to long working hours.

Result 4: The correlation analysis indicates that financial stability positively influences

- Majority of respondents across all age groups disagree that they face frequent harassment.
- Around 80% of total respondents fall under “Disagree” category.
- In the 21–30 age group, most respondents reported no harassment issues.
- Respondents in 31–40 and 41–50 age groups also show a high level of disagreement.
- Below 20 and above 50 age groups show complete (100%) disagreement.
- Overall, age does not significantly influence perception of harassment.
- Working conditions are perceived similarly across all age groups.

Result 5: The test reveals that 36.7 percent of the respondents expressed neutral opinion regarding financial security, and the significance value is greater than 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted, indicating gender does not significantly influence financial stability.

Suggestions

1. **Provision of Basic Facilities:** Authorities should provide essential facilities such as clean drinking water, toilets, waste disposal systems, and proper shelter at vending locations.
2. **Implementation of Government Policies:** Proper implementation of the Street Vendors Act should be ensured to protect vendors from eviction and harassment.
3. **Designated Vending Zones:** Government should create organized and legal vending zones to provide vendors with secure and permanent working spaces.
4. **Financial Support and Credit Access:** Easy access to loans, microfinance, and banking services should be provided to help vendors expand their business and reduce dependence on informal lenders.
5. **Health and Safety Measures:** Regular health camps, insurance schemes, and awareness programs should be conducted to improve the physical and mental well-being of vendors.
6. **Awareness and Training Programs:** Vendors should be educated about legal rights, hygiene practices, digital payments, and business management skills.
7. **Strengthening Vendor Associations:** Formation and support of vendor unions can help in collective bargaining and protecting their rights.
8. **Reduction of Harassment:** Strict monitoring and guidelines should be implemented to prevent unnecessary harassment by authorities and police.
9. **Support for Women Vendors:** Special measures such as childcare facilities, safety provisions, and financial support should be given to encourage women participation.
10. **Promotion of Digital Payments:** Encouraging the use of UPI and digital transactions can improve income transparency and customer convenience.

Conclusion

The study on the working conditions of street vendors in Tirupattur highlights the important role they play in the informal economy while also revealing the numerous challenges they face in their daily lives. Street vendors contribute significantly by

providing affordable goods and services, yet they continue to work under difficult and insecure conditions. The findings of the study show that most vendors experience problems such as long working hours, lack of basic facilities, exposure to harsh weather conditions, income instability, and limited access to healthcare and financial services. In addition, issues like harassment, lack of legal awareness, and absence of proper vending spaces further affect their livelihood and well-being.

Despite these challenges, street vendors demonstrate strong resilience and adaptability in sustaining their businesses and supporting their families. However, their overall quality of life remains affected due to inadequate support systems and poor implementation of policies.

The study concludes that improving the working conditions of street vendors requires effective policy implementation, provision of basic amenities, access to financial and social security schemes, and greater awareness among vendors. A coordinated effort from government authorities, NGOs, and society is essential to ensure a safer, more secure, and dignified livelihood for street vendors.

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