

Socio-Economic Condition, Health Status, and Working Profile among the Street Vendors (Hawkers) in Mahuadanr Block of Latehar

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ABSTRACT

The informal sector in developing economies, including India, significantly contributes to economic growth. 83% of the workforce is employed in the unorganized sector, while the organized sector employs only 17%. India's urban poor, primarily migrants from rural areas, predominantly engage in informal labour including street vending. Individuals who lack formal education and marketable skills sell goods on the streets. 15 crore Indians have links to street vending or hawking, based on a NASVI survey. In this industry, marginalized groups find significant sources of employment and income. Authorities often overlook the economic significance of street vendors, failing to recognize them as legitimate businesses. This research aims to comprehensively understand the socio-economic situation, health status, and occupational profile among street vendors in the study area. The study focuses on Mahuadanr, a village Panchayat in Latehar. Data was collected using anthropological methods such as observation, interviews (both structured and unstructured), and case studies. 120 street vendors were surveyed. The study reveals that the number of female vendors is higher compared to male vendors. The largest age group among the respondents is 36-59 years, comprising 57.5% of the sample. Most of the female hawkers have completed their schooling till 10th standard (63.89%). Additionally, 45.02% of the respondents earn between INR 1000-6000 daily. Accounting for 31.66%, most of the female hawkers sell vegetables. Most of them work full-time, varying between 8-12 hours, 20.83% of respondents are taking this profession due to poverty, and 14.16% of the respondents are facing the problem of transportation during market time. The prevalence of typhoid and malaria are very high among all health concerns accounting for 22.5% and 15%. The habits of alcohol, tobacco, and gambling were present in 30.83%, 21.66%, and 21.66% of the total. The study also reveals that many government schemes like Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maan-dhan (PM-SYM), E-Shram Portal, PM SVANidhi: Micro Credit Scheme for Street Vendors are not successful in the study area due to a lack of awareness and literacy among the vendors.

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KEYWORDS: Street Vendors, Socio-Economic, Health Status, Quality Life

INTRODUCTION

The Indian economy's significant employment source is the unorganized sector. 92.4% of the economy's workforce comprises informal workers without written contracts, paid leave, or other benefits. Around 43.99 crores of people were employed in the unorganized sector in 2019-20, according to the

Economic Survey of 2021-22. British economist Keith Hart introduced the term "unorganized sector" in 1971. It concerns an unorganized sector. Around 2-2.5% of urban Indians are street vendors, roughly one-third of whom are women. The National Sample Survey Organization's report reveals a notable

inconsistency in India's labor market since 2000: an unstable increase in the number of casual workers contrasted with a downward trend in the number of permanent employees.

Predominantly rural migrants composing India's urban poor largely participate in informal work, such as street vending. Street vending entails selling merchandise directly to the public via methods like sidewalk sales, markets, and mobile hawking (Monga & Dzvimbo, 2019). The surge in street vendors in India can be linked to the global economic crisis, urban employment limitations, and rural-to-urban migration of the unskilled population (Doibale et al., 2019), affecting approximately 15 crore Indians. According to ILO (2018), the largest group within the informal economy comprises street vendors who seldom access government programs or bank loans. Approximately 12 million Indians operate as street vendors (as of 2021, June). Street vendors, who are the largest subgroup of the informal workforce (Monga & Dzvimbo, 2019), are highly visible in public locations, with most poor people attempting to make a living through this easily accessible means.

In public spaces such as parking lots, crosswalks, and construction sites, independent street vendors establish their businesses. They also offer goods and services as well. Mahuadanr's tribal and rural communities rely on this profession for ample self-employment and minimal investment. Shopkeepers prioritize placing them at the storefront. Street vendors play a significant role in marketing and selling household goods, contributing to the nation-building process. This matches the new India's vision. **Street vendors embody the spirit of the streets, animating each corner where they set up shop.**

The research encompasses economic, legal, policing, health, environmental, and business stability concerns regarding street vending. Failure to move frequently enough while standing or sitting for extended periods as a vendor can cause both musculoskeletal problems and weight gain. In Mahuadanr block of Latehar district, a study was conducted among street vendors who did not sell ready-to-eat cooked foods, focusing on their socio-demographic profiles, health status, and work habits.

Objectives of the Research:

This study encompasses the street vendors surrounding the Mahuadanr market. The specific objectives that follow are stated below.

- The study was conducted to assess the socio-economic standing of street vendors in the given area.

- The employment status, living conditions, and health of Mahuadanr block's street vendors in the Latehar district will be assessed.
- Proposing inclusive growth policies and enhancing residents' living conditions in the area under investigation.

Literature Review:

This review delineates the specific research areas addressed by various scholars and academics, thereby aiding comprehension of the current study's issues, and revealing potential research gaps. The literature review for my study areas is derived primarily from published research papers, respected journal articles, books, Government reports, and research agency reports.

In the Malda District, **Areful Hoque** observed the daily long-hour work of street hawkers to sustain their livelihood. He pointed out the challenges street vendors encounter, including storage and stock issues, transportation hurdles, the risk of eviction by municipal and PWD authorities, and extortion from local police and ne'er-do-wells. The study indicates that poverty, minimal investment, and the lack of required skills are reasons why people choose hawking as a career. They are also afflicted with additional diseases including Dust Allergies, Cough and Cold, and Asthma. **Preeti Singh** (March 2020) reported a significant portion of the population in the study area was unemployed and without social security, which the Government Scheme failed to address. These workers' wages keep them in poverty. The government should expand access to essential services like healthcare, education, and sanitation for vulnerable populations. **Parikshit Chakraborty and Samarpita** (January 2018) examined the socio-economic condition of Jamshedpur's street vendors. The research revealed precarious working conditions and vendors with concerning health statuses. Male street vendors had slightly better income and living conditions than their female counterparts. The study revealed that many street vendors lived below the poverty line due to their meagre earnings. Additionally, vendors were informed of the potential risks and bribes they could be forced to pay to local officials. In February 2024, **K N Prasad, Mr M Puttaswamy, and Dr Maheshwari M** studied the socio-demographic information, health condition, and lifestyle practices of street vendors in Bangalore City. 275 individuals aged 20-70 were surveyed, with 62.5% being male. Over half (52.3%) of the subjects were aged 41 and older, and a substantial number were uneducated. These street vendors work between 4 and 10 hours a day. 30.2% smoke, 14.5% chew tobacco, and 14.2% consume alcohol were common habits among them. Among the vendors, prevalence

of preexisting conditions like hypertension and diabetes was high. They encountered continuous exposure to environmental pollutants, mental stress, sedentary lifestyles, and poor dietary habits. Based on these results, the researchers propose effective treatment and monitoring strategies for addressing the health needs of street vendors. **Pavul Raj and Dr Lydia J** (July 2023) analyzed the socio-economic situations and living standards of street vendors in Tiruchirappalli's Gandhi Market. The study revealed intense competition among male and female sellers, who work long hours selling a diverse range of goods. Female street vendors significantly contribute to the nation's informal economy. The survey revealed that fruit merchants earn more profit than vegetable vendors on average. Street vendors found joy in their earnings, enough to sustain their families despite the challenges. According to a study by **Seepana Prakasam** in November 2021, street vendors' socio-economic improvement post-migration decreases their desire for reverse migration. Mobile vendors generally have a stronger economic position than their stationary counterparts. The study found that street vendors' monthly per capita household income exceeds India's urban monthly per capita

consumption expenditure, while lower- and middle-income individuals supported granting conditional licenses to these vendors. According to **Srinivasu Bathula and Manvi Aggarwal** (January 2022), street vending is now a financially viable choice for many. The report states that 5% of individuals are graduates, 54% fall between the ages of 26 and 45, and 3% are illiterate. The vendors are identified in the national records. The administration should implement its policy plans.

A Geographical Outlook of the Study Area - Mahuadanr, a backward area in Latehar district, Jharkhand state, predominantly inhabited by tribal communities, lags educationally, health wise, and in infrastructure development. Mahuadanr is located at 23.3965° North, 84.1066° East longitude. In this area, there are numerous tourist attractions including Lodh and Mirchia waterfalls, Netarhat hill station, and forest areas. 106 villages populate this block. The Koel River, Burha River, Kanhar River, and Aksi River are among the numerous rivers. Hindi, Kurukh, Nagpuri, and Santhali are the dominant languages in this region. 37,915 males and 36,817 females comprised the 2011 census population of 74,732, with a literacy rate of 69.62 percent and a sex ratio is 971.

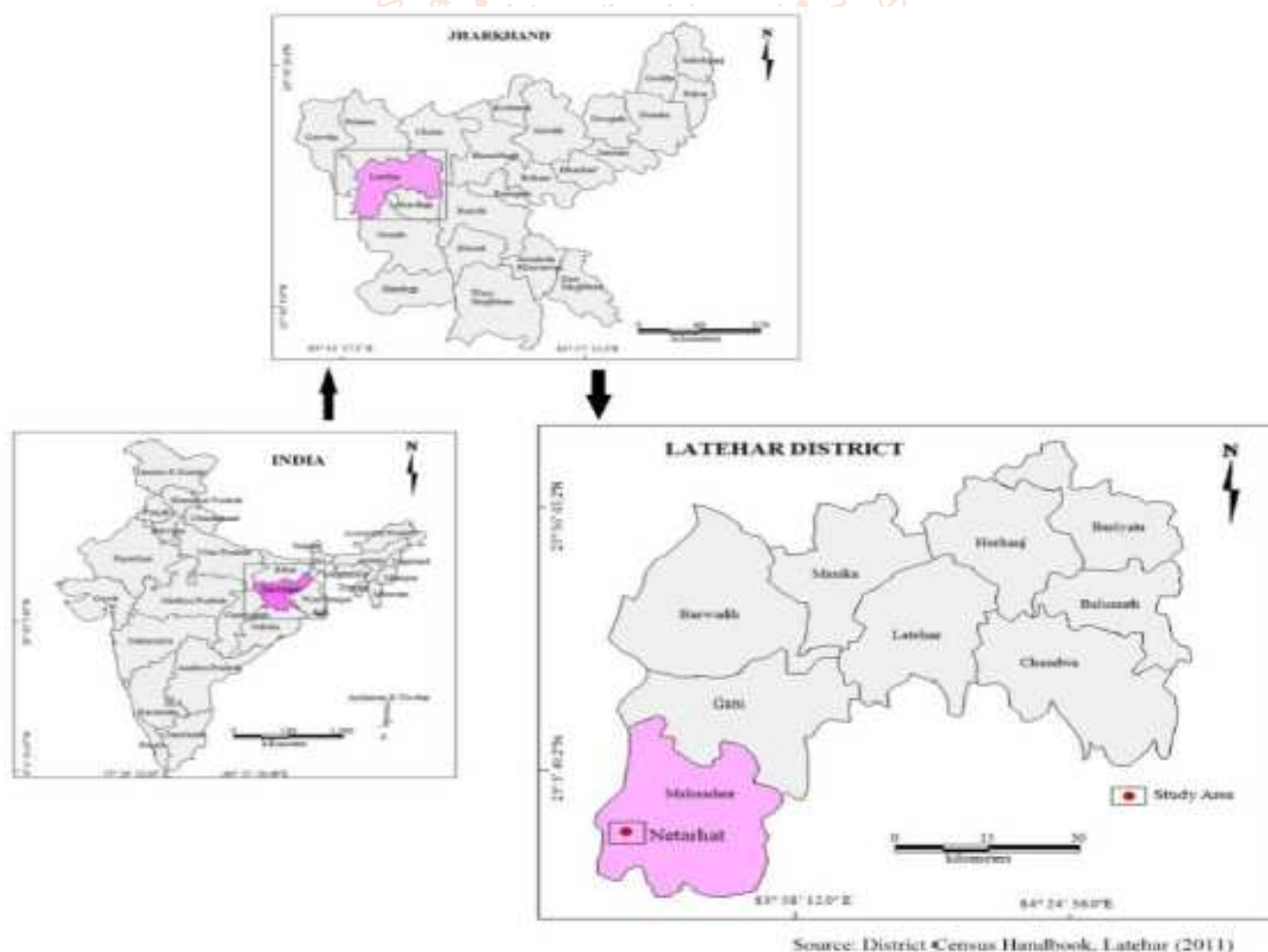


Figure 1 Location map of the study area

Data Base and Research Methodology: The data was gathered from primary and secondary sources. The interview schedule, structured around a well-designed questionnaire, was used to gather primary data directly. 120 street hawkers were randomly selected for primary data collection using the purposive sampling method. Data was sourced from various platforms including Jharkhand Economic Survey 2022-23, Ministry of Minority Affairs Government of India, Indian Council of Social Science Research, Indian Express, Books, Research Paper, Journals, Newspaper, ResearchGate, Google Scholar, and Websites. The Simple Percentage Method, and Computer Cartography were employed after collecting the necessary data.

Result and Analysis:

Table 1.1: Gender-wise Sampled Street Vendors / Hawkers in Mahuadanr, Latehar

S. No	Gender Wise	Hawkers (Respondents)	Percentage
1	Female	72	60%
2	Male	48	40%
Total		120	100.00

Source: Computed by Researcher from Field Survey Mahuadanr, December 2023

Table 1.1. shows that 60% of the respondents during the field survey were female and 40% were male.

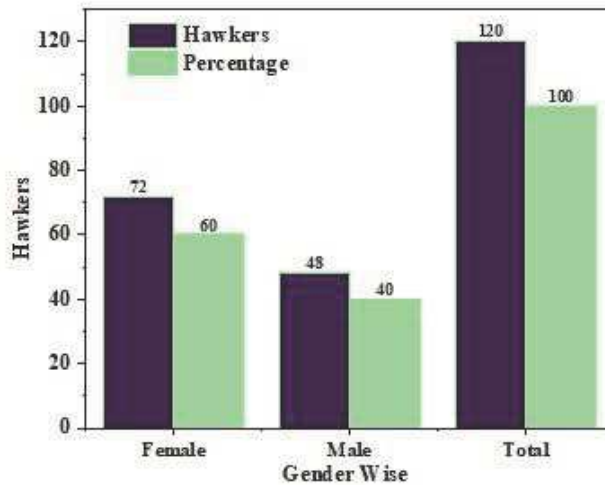


Figure1: Gender-wise Sampled Street Vendors / Hawkers in Mahuadanr, Latehar

Table 1.2: Age-Group of Sampled Street Vendors / Hawkers in Mahuadanr, Latehar

Sl. No.	Age-Group	Hawkers (Respondents)	Percentage
1.	25-35 Year	41	34.16
2.	36-59 Year	69	57.5
3.	Above 60 Year	10	8.3
Total		120	100

Source: Computed by Researcher from Field Survey Mahuadanr, December 2023

Table 1.2 57.5% of Street Vendors are aged 36-59, while only 8.3% are aged above 60.

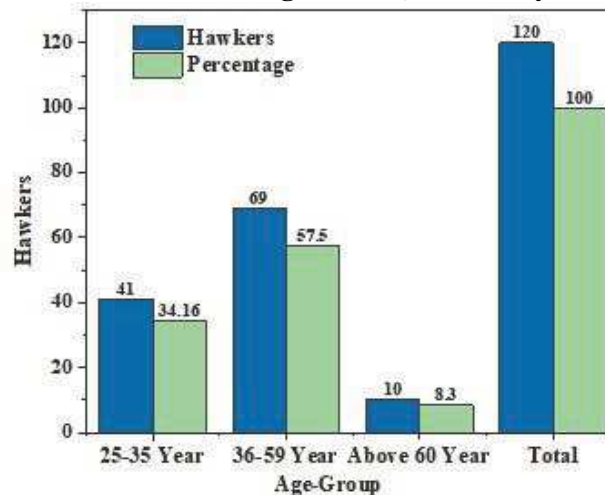


Figure 2: Age-Group of Sampled Street Vendors / Hawkers in Mahuadanr, Latehar

Table 1.3: Marital Status of Sampled Street Vendors / Hawkers in Mahuadanr, Latehar

Variables	Female	Percentage (%)	Male	Percentage (%)
Marital Status:				
Married	57	79.16	37	77.09
Unmarried	8	11.11	11	22.91
Widow	7	9.73	-	-
Total	72	100	48	100

Source: Computed by Researcher from Field Survey Mahuadanr, December 2023

Table 1.3 79.16% of women street vendors are married, 11.11% are unmarried, and 9.73% are widows.

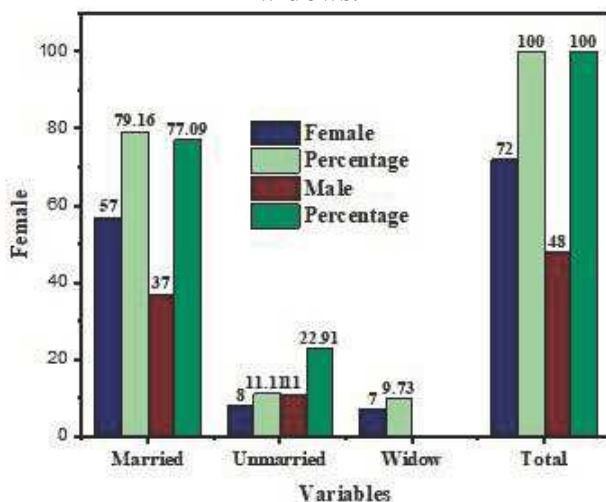


Figure 3: Marital Status of Sampled Street Vendors / Hawkers in Mahuadanr, Latehar

Table 1.4: Educational Level of Sampled Street Vendors / Hawkers in Mahuadanr, Latehar

Variables	Female	Percentage (%)	Male	Percentage (%)
Educational Status:				
Illiterate	12	16.66	5	10.41
Primary	8	11.11	6	12.5
Secondary	46	63.89	14	29.17
X-XII	2	2.78	8	16.66
ITI	-	-	9	18.75
Degree	4	5.56	6	12.5
Total	72	100	48	100

Source: Computed by Researcher from Field Survey Mahuadanr, December 2023

Table 1.4 Among women street vendors, their educational attainment is predominantly low. 16.66% of the women street vendors are illiterate. 11.11% have achieved primary-level education, while 63.89% have attended secondary school, and only 5.56% hold a graduate degree.

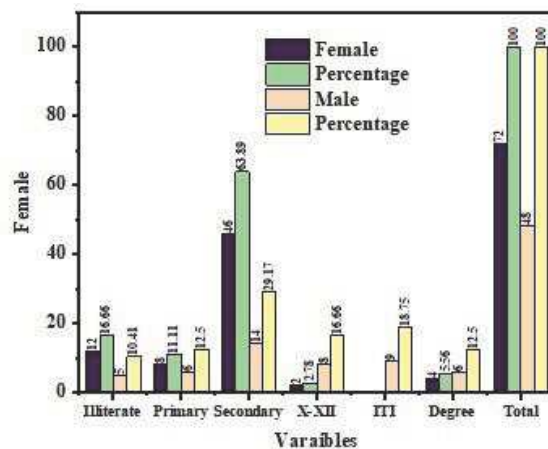


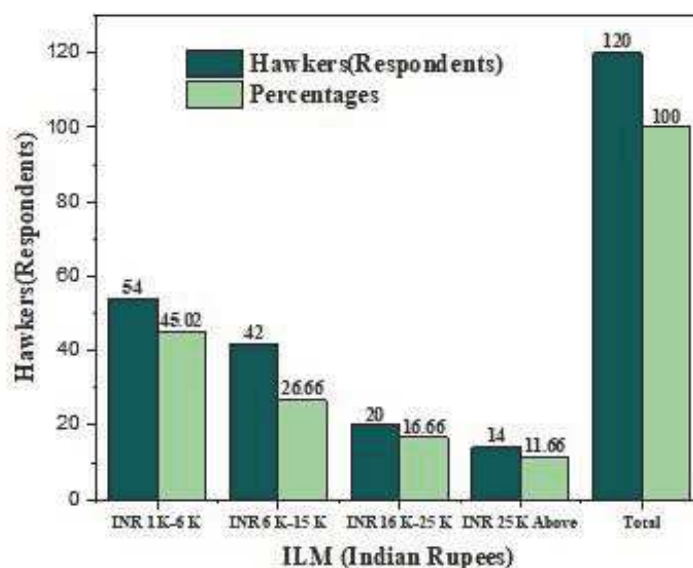
Figure: 4 Educational Level of Sampled Street Vendors / Hawkers in Mahuadanr, Latehar

Table 1.5: Income Level of Sampled Street Vendors / Hawkers in Mahuadanr, Latehar

S. No	Income Level Monthly (Indian Rupees)	Hawkers (Respondents)	Percentage (%)
1	INR 1000-6000	54	45.02
2	INR 6000-15000	32	26.66
3	INR 16000-25000	20	16.66
4	INR 25000 Above	14	11.66
Total		120	100

Source: Computed by Researcher from Field Survey Mahuadanr, December 2023

Table 1.5 45.02% of Street Vendors earn Rs. 1000-6000 monthly while 11.66% earn more than Rs. 25000 due to business investments.

**Figure 5: Income Level of Sampled Street Vendors / Hawkers in Mahuadanr, Latehar****Table 1.6: Types of Profession of Sampled Street Vendors / Hawkers in Mahuadanr, Latehar**

S. No	Types of Profession	Hawkets (Respondents)	Percentage (%)
1	Vegetable Seller	38	31.66
2	Fruits Seller	7	5.83
3	Shoes Seller	6	5
4	Readymade Garments Seller	11	9.16
5	Fast Food Seller	12	10
6	Household Implements	7	5.83
7	Plastic Items	5	4.16
8	Chai Wala	3	2.5
9	Cosmetic Seller	6	5
10	Electronic Item Seller	7	5.83
11	Masala Seller	2	1.67
12	Cooked Food	4	3.33
13	Ice cream	12	10
Total		120	100

Source: Computed by Researcher from Field Survey Mahuadanr, December 2023

Table 1.6 31.66% of Street Vendors in the survey were vegetable sellers while only 1.67% were masala sellers.

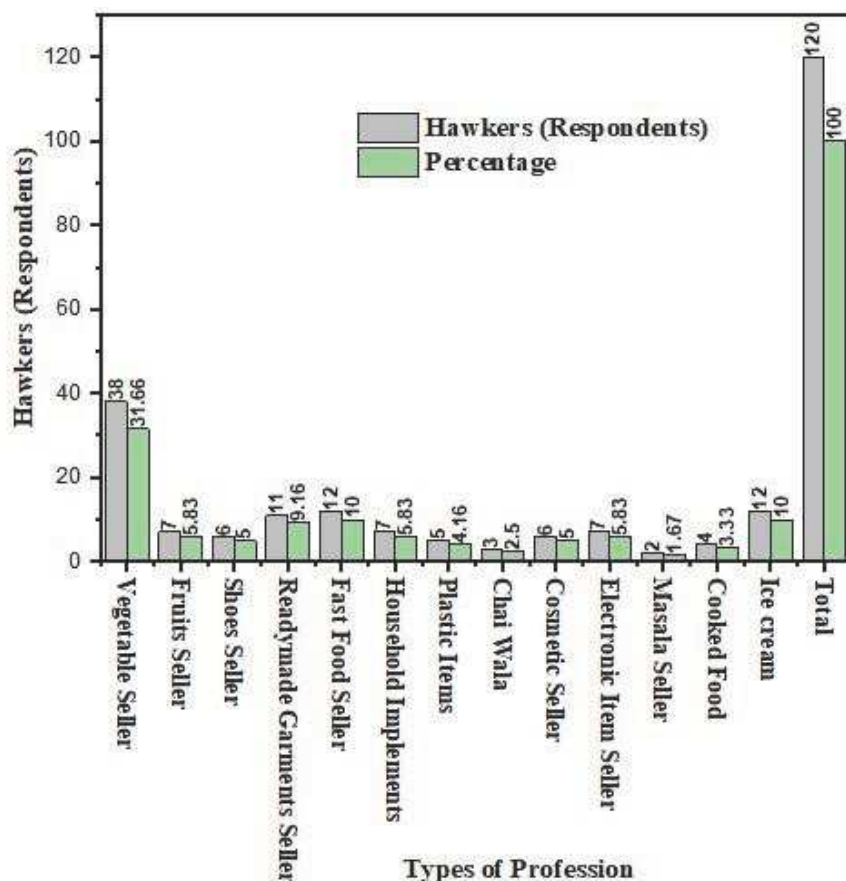


Figure 6: Types of Profession of Sampled Street Vendors / Hawkers in Mahuadanr, Latehar

Table 1.7: Causes of Pursuing Street Vendors / Hawkers Profession in Mahuadanr, Latehar

S. No	Causes	Hawkers (Respondents)	Percentage (%)
1	Poverty	25	20.83
2	Surviving for their Livelihood	14	11.66
3	Lack of Employment Opportunities	13	10.83
4	To take care of Children Studies	11	9.16
5	Self-Employment	9	7.5
6	More Land Holdings with Crops	16	13.33
7	Family Business	9	7.5
8	No Education and skill are required	11	9.16
9	High head Count in Family	12	10
Total		120	100

Source: Computed by Researcher from Field Survey Mahuadanr, December 2023

Table 1.7 20.83% of Street Vendors have this profession due to poverty, while only 7.5% do so because of family business or self-employment.

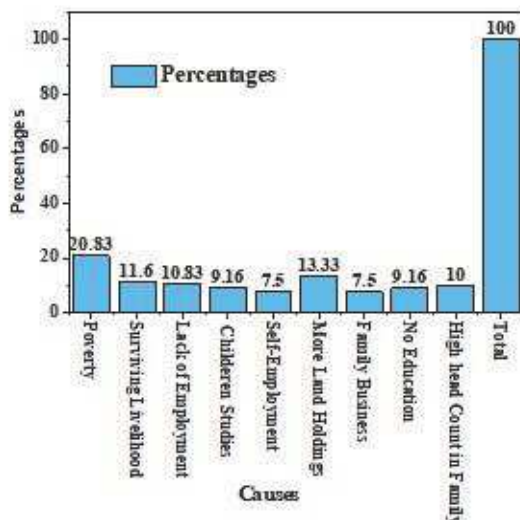


Figure 7: Causes of Pursuing Street Vendors / Hawkers Profession in Mahuadanr, Latehar

Table 1.8: Problems and Challenges faced by Street Vendors / Hawkers in Mahuadanr, Latehar.

S. No	Problems Faced by Hawkers	Hawkers (Respondents)	Percentage (%)
1	Weather Change (Rainfall, Heat Waves, Cold Air)	11	9.16
2	Lack of Transportation Facility	17	14.16
3	Getting low rate of vegetables due to stock seller	5	4.16
4	Auto fare is high	13	10.83
5	Extortion by Shopkeeper	11	9.16
6	Long Working Hours	7	5.83
7	No Electricity facility in the Market	10	8.33
8	Insufficient area for vendors as compared to the population	7	5.83
9	Absence of Storage	9	7.5
10	Black Marketing of Seeds	8	6.66
11	Unhygienic Area	10	8.33
12	Lack of Public Toilets	12	10
Total		120	100

Source: Computed by Researcher from Field Survey Mahuadanr, December 2023

Table 1.8 shows that 14.16 % of the Street Vendors face a lack of transportation facilities on the market time and 4.16 % of the Street Vendors face problems of getting low rates for their vegetables due to stock sellers.

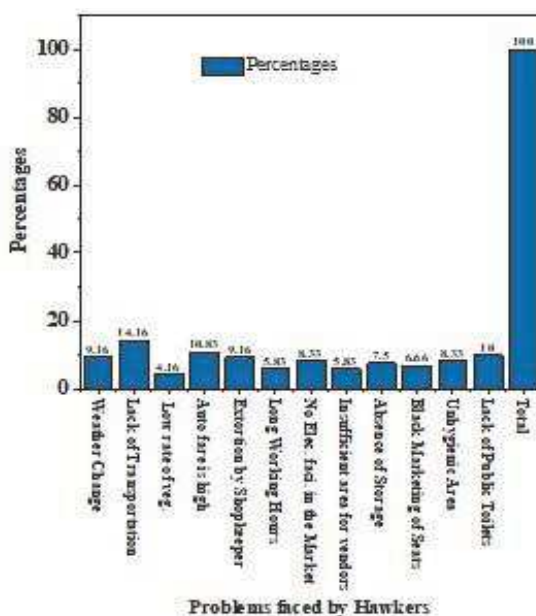


Figure 8: Problems and Challenges faced by Street Vendors / Hawkers in Mahuadanr, Latehar.

Table 1.9: Habits present in Street Vendors / Hawkers in Mahuadanr, Latehar.

S. No	Habits of Hawkers	Hawkers (Respondents)	Percentage (%)
1	Alcohol	37	30.83
2	Tobacco	26	21.66
3	Smoking	16	13.33
4	Gambling	26	21.66
5	Lottery	15	12.5
Total		120	100

Source: Computed by Researcher from Field Survey Mahuadanr, December 2023

Table 1.9 30.83% of Street Vendors consume alcohol, while 12.5% engage in lotteries (Table 1.9).

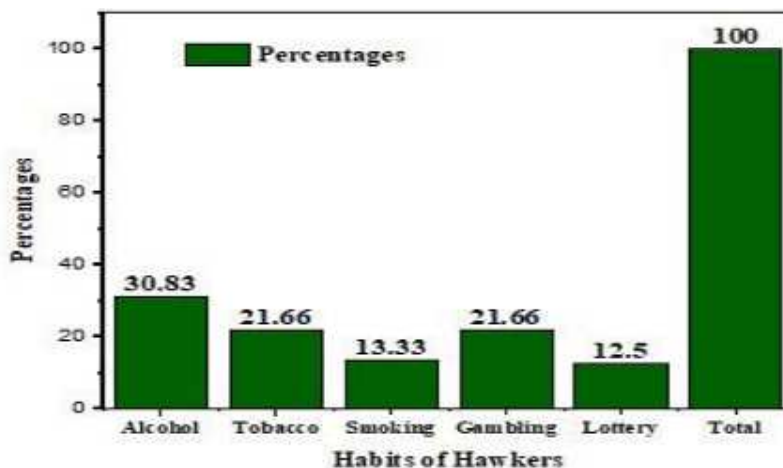


Figure 9: Habits present in Street Vendors / Hawkers in Mahuadanr, Latehar.

Table 1.10: Health-related problems faced by the Street Vendors / Hawkers in Mahuadanr, Latehar.

S. No	Health-related problems faced by Hawkers	Hawkers (Respondents)	Percentage (%)
1	Fever	12	10
2	Malaria	18	15
3	Cough and Cold	14	11.66
4	Typhoid	27	22.5
5	Hypertension	15	12.5
6	Dust Allergies	10	8.33
7	Asthma	8	6.66
8	Eye Irritation	16	13.33
Total		120	100

Source: Computed by Researcher from Field Survey Mahuadanr, December 2023

According to Table 1.10, Typhoid and Malaria account for 22.5% and 15% of health concerns respectively among Mahuadanr's street vendors.

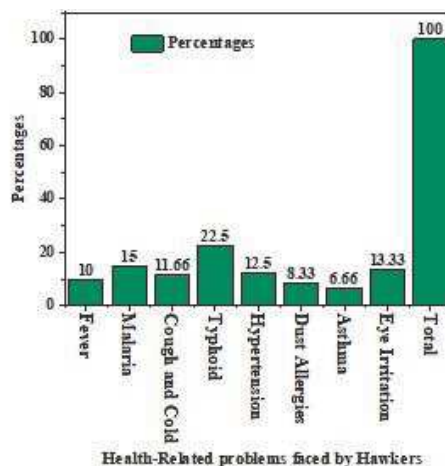
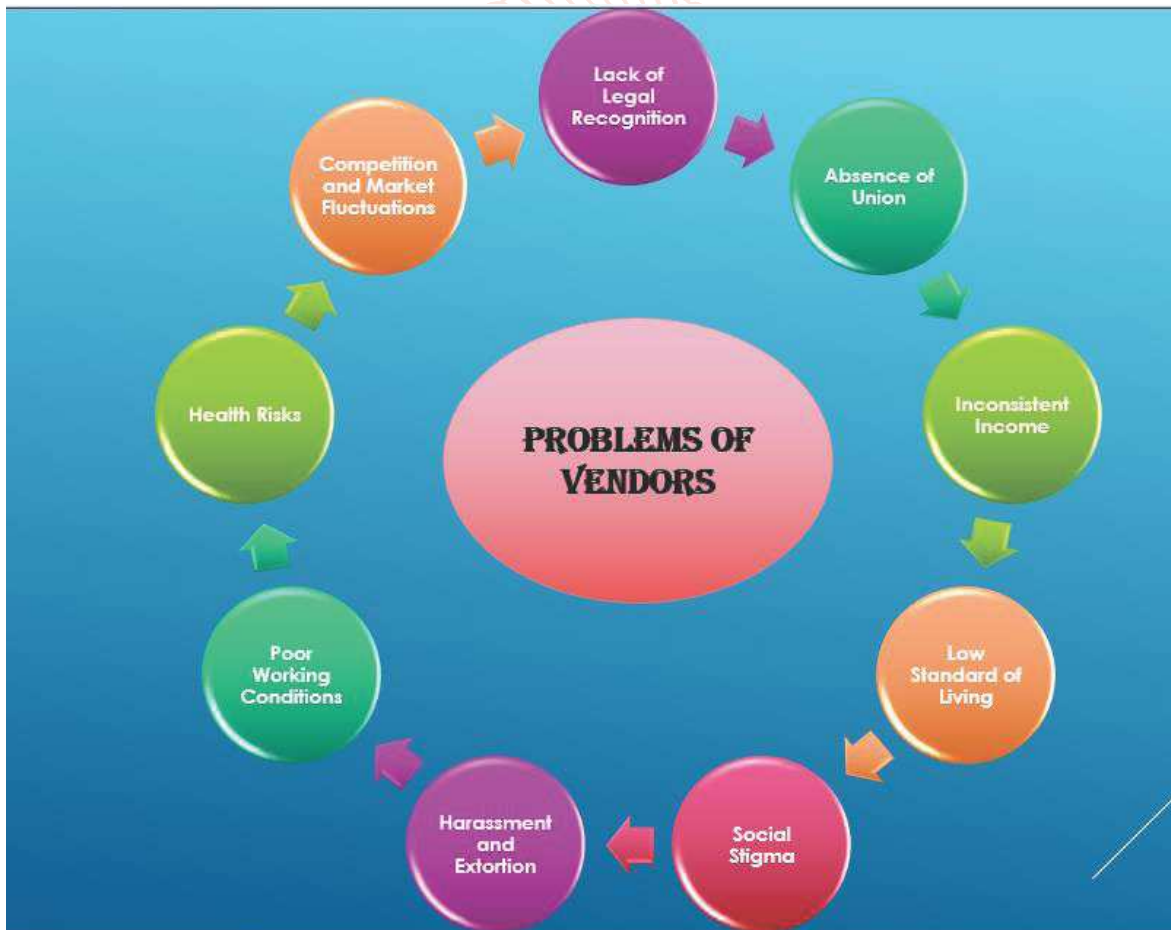


Figure 1.10: Health-related problems faced by the Street Vendors / Hawkers in Mahuadanr, Latehar

Major Findings

1. The majority of Street Hawkers or Vendors are female.
2. In the study area, most Street Vendors or Hawkers work long hours daily to earn a living.
3. About half of the vendors in the study area made Rs 1000 to 6000 monthly
4. In the study area, street vendors face numerous challenges including issues with transportation facilities on the market day, high auto fares, lack of public toilets, absence of storage, no electricity, etc.
5. Most street vendors or hawkers are drawn to this occupation because of poverty, surviving for their livelihood, lack of employment opportunities, family business, and more land holdings with crops.
6. Many diseases including Typhoid, Malaria, Cough and Cold, Hypertension, Fever, and Eye irritation affect most Street Vendors or Hawkers.
7. The vast bulk 31.66% of those surveyed sell veggies. It claims that most vegetable vendors are rural residents who market their grown goods. They choose not to assume any retailer-related risks.
8. Street sellers in the research region drink a lot of alcohol and participate in lotteries and gambling.
9. In case of a medical emergency, street vendors seek medical attention from doctors instead of relying on local remedies.
10. Most of the Street Vendors are unaware of the e-Shram portal or any government schemes for vendors.



Government Initiatives for Unorganized Sector in India

- Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maan-dhan (PM-SYM).
- E-Shram Portal.
- Labour Code.
- Pradhan Mantri Rojgar Protsahan Yojana (PMRPY).
- PM SVANidhi: Micro Credit Scheme for Street Vendors.
- Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan.
- PM Garib Kalyan Ann Yojana (OMGKAY).
- World Bank Support to India's Informal Working Class.
- Aatmanirbhar Bharat Rojgar Yojana (ABRY)

Conclusions and Recommendations

The current study looks at the socio-economic and demographic characteristics of street vendors in Mahudanr, a tribal community-dominated area in Jharkhand state's Latehar district that is underdeveloped about of infrastructure, health care, and education. The survey unequivocally shows that poverty is the primary motivator for many people who become street vendors, with the majority being from surrounding rural areas. Every day, they deal with several obstacles, including unfavourable working conditions, hazardous and unhygienic surroundings, and other issues. Transportation and storage facility shortages are the biggest problems Mahuadanr street merchants face. They put in long hours working without access to toilets. Street vendors who are women are especially at risk. The results also show that most street vendors have low monthly incomes, which is indicative of their subpar lifestyle.

Both the federal government and state governments have created a plethora of programs. When these programs are most needed, the government, however, frequently fails to carry them out successfully. To guarantee that safety and health regulations are followed, the government should control informal economic activity. Expanding the availability of essential services like health, education, and sanitation is a responsibility of the government.

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