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## The Challenges Faced by Street Vendors in India Inefficacy of Urban Governance and Development

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**Abstract:** Challenging and impossible to experience the dynamicity of cities. Owing to their centrality in cities, several descriptive terms have been attached to them, for example, in the English language they have been to as hawkers, street sellers, travelling merchants, street vendors, itinerant traders, Vagrants, street criers, proletariat, costermongers, petty chapmen, packmen, pack carriers and hucksters. This diversity of terms connotes the abundance of denotation, activity and experience, and a combination of different trades and specialisation, which makes it challenging to place vending under any specific category. They have Often been proven to be pioneers of expansion, opening up markets in unknown goods and services, as well as in poorly serviced areas (Indorewala 2017).

**Key words:** Street Vendors, hawkers, street sellers, travelling merchants, street vendors, vagrants.

**Street Vending in India: An Overview** - A major part Of the population depends on these vendors for affordable goods and services. They constitute one Of the largest segments Of self-employed workers, which is around 14% of urban informal employment, with a daily turnover of 20 crore. In India, approximately 14 crore people are engaged in various activities related to street vending as well as creating entrepreneurship opportunities in the country (Chadha 2020). Most of them are immigrant and laid-off workers, who work for around 10 to 12 hours daily and continue to remain marginalised (AES 2015).

A street vendor is generally defined as a person who offers goods or services to the public without a stable built-up structure but with a temporary immobile or mobile stall. Street vendors may stay or travel between locations, carrying their goods on push cars, cycle driven carts or on buses, etc. They may be mobile Or occupy space on the sidewalks or Other public/private places. Street vending involves various activities catering to both goods and services, ranging from selling fruits, vegetables and water on carts, stalls, and mobile trolleys for selling affordable clothes and street food (Bhowmik 2001).

Given that a significant portion of the country's population resides below the poverty line, street vending represents the most viable opportunity for self-employment, requiring minimal capital investment and offering flexible working hours. The median monthly income from street vending in India is approximately V.000 (Bhowmik 2007). Additionally, street food contributes to food security for a significant segment of the impoverished population. Despite being an integral component of India's extensive informal economy, the challenges faced by street vendors have intensified amid rapid urbanization. Incidents of vendor harassment by local authorities and law enforcement are prevalent throughout the nation (Singh and Kumar 2017).

Moreover, to protect the vendor's rights like any Other citizen of the country some sections of the hold salience: Article 14, which guarantees equality before law; similarly, according to Article every citizen has the right to practise or perform any profession they want to, which grants the street vendor the right to carry out their business or trade; also, Article 21, which guarantees the protection of life and liberty. Despite these aspects in the Constitution, street vending is still considered as an illegal activity across the country, referred to as lawlessness ("violations"), filthy ("eyesores"), and risky ("menace") as well as an obstruction or an annoyance (SEWA 2014). Over the years, Street vendors have Struggled to get their right to livelihood recognised, having fought legal and social battles, yet the situation has not improved even after the enactment Of the Street Vendors (Protection Of Livelihood and Regulation Of Street Vending) Act, 2014 by Parliament, to regulate street vendors in public areas and protect their rights. This follows the inadequate implementation of relevant laws but also means that some structural issues affecting street vending have come to the fore (Lal 2015).

**Legal Discourse** - Post-independence, the Indian government fundamentally retained legislations such as the Bombay Provincial Municipal Corporations Act of 1949, the Bombay Police Act of 1951, and the Improvement Trust Acts, which were established during British Rule. Many of these statutes are antiquated and, more significantly, restricting in nature. Their main duty is to oversee and supervise the development of indigenous businesses; yet, they rendered vending largely illegal.

Following the case of *Bombay Hawkers Union and Others v. Bombay Municipal Corporation and Others* (1985), which commenced in 1982, the Bombay Hawkers Union contested the Bombay Municipal Corporation Act of 1988, asserting that it conferred excessive discretionary power to municipal corporations



regarding the renewal or issuance of street vending licenses, a critical policy matter in 1985. The municipal corporation asserted that adulteration and street vending must be rigorously regulated.

The legalisation of street sellers was significantly influenced by the Supreme Court's ruling in *Bombay Hawkers Union and Others* (1985), which called for the implementation of a system to enforce hawker licences and delineate hawking and no-hawking zones, accompanied by specific directions from the Court. The Supreme Court determined that in Greater Bombay, a hawking zone must be established for every two adjacent wards, with the municipal commissioner designating a no-hawking zone in collaboration with the Bombay Municipal Corporation. The seller is required to pay a charge to acquire a license for conducting business outside the no-hawking zone. Prior to suggesting any future enhancements to the plan, the municipal commissioner should engage with all stakeholders, including hawkers, the police commissioner, and public representative organizations (Amis 2016).

Despite the Supreme Court's ruling in *Bombay Hawkers' Union and Others* (1985), these street sellers faced numerous challenges, primarily stemming from eviction efforts pursuant to Sections 67 and 102 of the Bombay Police Act, 1991. Any obstruction to the free circulation of traffic is liable to detention and removal, as stipulated in these articles. Consequently, street merchants must function under the apprehension of being marginalized from their marketplace. Their belongings are seized or misplaced during eviction proceedings. Officials are embroiled in disputes and possess divergent perspectives on their roles. The street sellers faced challenges due to the incongruity in responsibilities between local authorities and the police, as the municipality is tasked with issuing hawker licenses, whilst the police are responsible for removing obstructions from pedestrian pathways, sidewalks, and public spaces. Furthermore, if local councils designate specific areas as street vending zones, law enforcement may evict street vendors from these locations. The police and local municipalities are consistently compelled to respond (SEWA 2014).

In *Sodan Singh v. New Delhi Municipal Committee*, the Supreme Court affirmed that street vendors possess the right to conduct their business under a constitutional article. Conversely, merchants are not permitted to independently select locations for street trading, as this may infringe upon the rights of other people to pass freely under Article. It is the responsibility of the state to allocate areas for street commerce. The Supreme Court determined that the government's failure to interfere would invalidate the fundamental right to trade (Navya 2015).

The Bellagio International Declaration of Street Vendors, endorsed by India in 2019, advocates for the establishment of a national policy aimed at enhancing the living conditions of hawkers and vendors through legal recognition via registration, encouragement of self-regulation, access to the judicial system, and provision of credit facilities, among other measures. Subsequent to the Bellagio meeting, street vendors and associated organizations in India established a national association to raise global awareness of the sellers' challenges (Sinha and Roever 2011). In 1998, the National Association of Street Vendors of India (NASVI) was created. Since then, NASVI has been striving to transform the conditions for street vendors nationwide. Subsequently, in 2001, the Government of India, responding to significant pressure from civil society organizations, established a task team to examine and formulate a feasible marketing strategy. Representatives from street vendor organizations, including NASVI and the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA), together with top officials from the former Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation, participated in the drafting committee (Amis 2016).

Additionally, significant judicial decisions encompass *Olga Tellis and Others v Bombay Municipal Corporation and Others* (1985), *Municipal Corporation of Delhi v Gurnam Kaur* (1988), and *Gulamali Gulamnabi Shaik v Municipal Commissioner* (1986), all of which substantially influenced subsequent discussions regarding street vendors.

From the aforementioned cases, significant issues arose, including regulations governing the locations where vendors may conduct their business; the categories of goods permissible for sale by vendors; protocols and procedures concerning vendor eviction; matters of extortion, bribery, and harassment of street vendors; as well as concerns regarding relocation and rehabilitation. It was believed that addressing these concerns would assist vendors by offering them cleaner and less congested roads, while simultaneously alleviating their daily challenges in earning a livelihood. Ultimately, the diligent efforts of NASVI and SEWA culminated in the national policy established in 2004, whereby the union government formulated a National Policy for Urban Street Vendors (NPUV) to address the concerns and apprehensions of vendors (Sinha and Roever 2011).

This program, like many others in the country, encountered limitations due to the lack of significant improvements in the circumstances for street vendors, attributed to the policy's guidelines. Although the



policy addresses various issues such as land allocation, professional legalization, and registration obligations, it lacks a specified timeline and roadmap. The policy neglects to assess the feasibility of the insurance program or its procedures. Although the schemes seemed to represent a commendable initial effort to recognize the property rights of vendors and their merchandise, they ultimately proved ineffective; the policy was ineffectual upon implementation and relied on self-help groups and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) for execution, highlighting the scheme's inefficiency. A structured long-term remedy for the identified difficulties was necessary. To enhance the efficacy of the guidelines, it was necessary to amend Sections 283 and 431 of the Indian Penal Code and municipal regulations, which are detrimental to vendors, as law enforcement can exploit these provisions to extort money from them (Sundram 2008).

**The 2014 National Legislation** - Several years later, SEWA advocated for and endorsed the National sellers (Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vending) Act (hereafter referred to as the SVA) to alleviate the constraints placed on street sellers. SEWA also presented this before the parliamentary standing committee on urban development. In 2014, the Street Vendors Act (SVA) was enacted to safeguard and regulate the livelihoods of street vendors by establishing town vending committees (TVCs) that comprise 50% of vendors and their organizations, ensuring a minimum of one-third representation of women, with the objective of creating a national framework to protect the interests of urban street vendors and regulate their activities. The SVA additionally delegates regulatory and decision-making authority to state governments and municipalities. The SVA delineates principles such as participatory impact on livelihoods, eviction prior to surveying and accommodating all current vendors, ensuring displacement is a last resort by considering vendors' economic circumstances, and prioritizing natural markets when designating vending zones (Chandra and Jain 2015).

Regrettably, despite seven years since its introduction, the WA has not been fully implemented nationwide. According to the report, seven states-Assam, Haryana, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Puducherry, and Uttarakhand-have not notified schemes, while two states, Telangana and Uttarakhand, have yet to establish rules for the same. In certain cases, the regulations and schemes established by the states may contradict or exceed the authority of the SVA, as observed in several states where such regulations and schemes lack clear guidance on executive action. In several states, legislation and programs confer authority to state governments and municipal entities that exceed the scope and intent of WA. Delegated legislation also imposes supplementary duties that are not delineated in the primary statute (Bedi and Narang 2020).

A concern regarding the SVA is that numerous questions designated for resolution by the TVC are being appropriated by the municipality, particularly in areas such as conducting surveys, sales fees, issuing certificates, and the self-regulation charter for vendors. The municipality's ratification is the sole focus here.

This is an innovative solution to the challenge of reconciling the livelihood rights of hawkers with the rights of pedestrians and vehicular traffic to move freely. The legislation establishes four essential provisions: first, a survey of all current hawkers will be conducted; second, certificates of vending will be issued to all hawkers identified in the survey instead of licenses; third, vending and non-vending zones will be delineated, with all hawkers accommodated in the designated vending zones; and fourth, no hawker shall be evicted from their location until the survey has been completed and certificates of vending have been issued.Eight

The central element of the SVA is the TVC, which will include representatives from street vendors, traffic police, law enforcement, resident welfare associations (RWAs), market organizations, and the planning authority, among others, and will be led by the municipal commissioner. The TVC is responsible for conducting the survey, designating vending and non-vending zones, issuing certificates, determining vending fees for hawkers payable to the municipality, and publishing the street vendor's charter.<sup>9</sup>

The SVA allocates power among several TVC stakeholders, which is presently centralized in the police and municipality. The SVA stipulates that a minimum of 40% of the TVC shall consist of street vendors. The street sellers, as the primary stakeholders, have their livelihoods at stake; therefore, the law must safeguard their interests.

**Missing Subject in Law and Policy** - Have the many laws, acts, and initiatives resulted in any alterations to the daily life of vendors? Should individuals not routinely confront harassment and discrimination? If not, then what is the reason? The primary reason is because the SVA is not a model law; thus, state governments are not obligated to implement corresponding legislation for it to take effect. Consequently, despite the existence of a national law, the harassment and worsening of the vendor's situation—both socially and economically—by local authorities, law enforcement, and civilians persist.



It is paradoxical that the research to far has concentrated on the broader ramifications of laws, rules, and plans pertaining to vendors as a singular subject. We have consistently classified vendors as a one category, namely, the vendor. However, the actual situation is glaringly evident, since many sellers encounter distinct challenges under varying circumstances. For example, the most detrimental encounters encountered by children, women, and Dalit sellers. Policy briefs frequently analyze the geographical and legislative aspects of street vending. Nevertheless, there is no indication that themes such as the SVA are ineffective in enhancing the lives of vendors by alleviating their marginalization. The present SVA is predominantly geographical rather than social. It does not, for instance, consider the internal hierarchies within the street vending industry. We contend that this assertion in the policy text warrants examination and robust public discourse by acknowledging the social and economic hierarchies within this sector. This article addresses significant difficulties and challenges, examining how various vendors encounter distinct obstacles.

**Case Study in Ghaziabad District** - For this study, we conducted a survey of approximately 600 streets in weekly markets in Ghaziabad, specifically in Indirapuram, Vasundhara, and Vaishali, over a duration of three months. The study is exploratory and their circumstances have been elucidated using qualitative paradigms. This ethnographic qualitative research study utilized data collection approaches such as open-ended conversational conversations, focus groups, and one-on-one interviews. This study primarily relies on a primary survey, examining the socio-demographic and economic characteristics of 600 individual street vendors. It specifically addresses the issues and challenges faced by street sellers, with a particular focus on women, children, and Dalit vendors. Consequently, we formulated targeted inquiries to elucidate the complex equations among vendors and the dynamics that affect their daily operations.

**Habitual practice** - We selected Ghaziabad as the location due to its proximity to Delhi and its status as one of the districts under the National Capital Region. To minimize the redundancy of responding vendors, we selected three distinct locations. In that instance, each of our responding vendors was distinct. Quantitatively, of the total respondents, children and women identified as Dalits (such as Chamar/Jatav, Dhobi, Gadiya/Pal, and Khatik), while the rest respondents were categorized as Other Backward Classes (OBCs) (including Ahir/Yadavs, Kumhar, and Mali). Jatavs comprised almost 80% of the total Dalit vendors surveyed, while Yadavs represented 60% of the OBC category. In the study, those under the age of 18 were classified as children. Among the total responders, a portion was ignorant, 60% had completed their primary education at a public school, and none were graduates.

To our knowledge, no study has been conducted in any Uttar Pradesh (UP) district that examines the issues faced by street vendors based on caste, age, and gender. Researchers have predominantly concentrated on urban areas such as Mumbai and Bengaluru. This research would further the discourse on inclusive development and the issues of rural-urban development. The respondents were queried through surveys and questionnaires, facilitating the researcher's comprehension of prevalent issues and the analysis of the current situation. The first-hand collection of data ensures its high accuracy in accordance with study objectives. In general, we inquired: What is your experience as a street vendor, and how does it impact your personal life? What are the primary challenges you are encountering? What motivated your decision to become a vendor? What was the process via which you become a vendor? What measures should the government implement to enhance the working conditions of vendors?

**Findings: Examining Vendor's Marginalisation** - We were moved to tears while recounting their hardships. Their lives were characterized by perpetual hardships, systemic marginalization, and discrimination.

**Respondent's apprehension of detection:** Many first declined to respond due to apprehension of harassment from local police and thugs who extort money from them everyday. Banti, a 24-year-old shoe vendor, stated, "Sir, this concerns our livelihood; you will depart after your studies." However, we shall inevitably confront the repercussions subsequently. Nitin Kumar, aged 34, inquired, "Why are you disrupting the tranquility?" If apprehended, we will be assaulted by the extortionist and his accomplices. Who will rescue us then? Who will attend to our children? Satish, aged 45, recounted the brutal assault on a fellow vendor by an extortionist. The police failed to assist him promptly, resulting in a temporary loss of eyesight that rendered his family's situation wretched and lamentable.

Extortion complicates the lives of vendors and renders women's time intolerable. Most vendors lack understanding of the reasons and purposes for which they are disbursing funds. Who is soliciting funds? What is its destination? The extortion amount is contingent upon the type of product sold in the market and the extent of space utilized. The cost varies from Rs 20 to Rs 200 per day for each table. Ashu, a 37-year-old



cosmetics vendor, stated, "I pay Rs 200 daily for the space, Rs 30 for electricity, and Rs 00 for cleaning services." It incurs an expense of 8000 each month. To bolster Ashu's arguments, another merchant stated, "At times, we expend significantly more than our daily earnings, yet we cannot decline to remit daily payments to these individuals." The majority of extortionists are local individuals from villages such as Makanpur, Bhovapur, and Kanawani, situated near the markets, stated Bhim Singh (56 years). All sellers assert that vending is an illicit activity, hence necessitating payment to law enforcement or municipal authorities, as well as local thugs or extortionists, to remain operational in the market if the daily fee is not remitted. Dharmendra (40 years, a cloth vendor) stated, "It has become our daily routine; without it, the police would expel us summarily from our marketplaces, and those who fail to pay rent are consistently disturbed and harassed." Ultimately, we will be regarded as lawbreakers of industrious self-employed individuals striving to support their families.

Ironically, 98% are unaware of SVA or TVCs. We informed them that pursuant to the Street Vendors (Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vending) Act, 2014, the government is obligated to establish a Town Vending Committee (TVC) comprising officials from the local corporation and other representatives nominated from the traffic police, health department, resident welfare associations, law enforcement, and the street vendors' association, among others. Netaji, a 47-year-old carpet vendor, stated, "We have never encountered such matters, nor has anyone ever visited us for this purpose." The Patwari, aged 60, informed us that there exists a strong connection between the police and extortionists, with the police receiving their payments weekly. Every police officer aspires for a position in Indirapuram solely to accrue substantial financial gains, ranging from the rank of constable to that of Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP). Mohar Singh, in support of Patwari's statement, stated that this has been occurring here for about 20 years. Following the acquisition of land from peasants and the subsequent construction of large buildings, there has been significant migration from Bihar and other regions of Uttar Pradesh and India. Bhola Jatav states that "we learned from these vendors that there was scarcely any meeting of the TVC." Numerous merchants, who endeavored to have their grievances addressed, were unable to sustain their efforts due to a lack of organization and insufficient resources to effectively promote their cause.

**Requesting financial support:** Numerous street vendors seek financial support to initiate a new enterprise or maintain their existing operation. The financial resources accessible to street vendors are contingent upon their business volume and the products they provide. Street vending is a multifaceted profession. Vendors receive funds from various sources for diverse objectives. However, it is primarily devoid of support from relatives, predominantly lenders, friends, and wholesalers (Saha 2011). This survey revealed that 70% of vendors obtained loans from moneylenders at exorbitant interest rates, as accessing funds from them is more straightforward than from alternative sources. A wholesaler represents the second-best alternative, offering financial assistance to clients at minimal costs, albeit it is challenging to obtain. Due to their substantial debt levels, street vendors frequently find themselves ensnared in debt traps. The study indicates that money lenders favor female sellers over male merchants when providing financial assistance for several reasons. Nazim, a 28-year-old wooden product vendor, stated that in many instances, the individual responsible for collecting daily payments or extorting vendors on behalf of the moneylender is well-acquainted with the location of each vendor, their demands, and the methods for recovery. In instances involving women, failure to repay the loan punctually results in the sexual exploitation of the women as compensation for the borrowed sum. Sita, 42 years old, recounted a harrowing tale of her involvement with a moneylender, stating that seeking assistance for her daughter's school tuition two years prior rendered her equivalent to a prostitute in the marketplace. She stated, "My greatest error was accepting money from him." They have distorted my image and irrevocably damaged my reputation. My husband abandoned me on these perilous, unattractive roadways; nonetheless, what alternatives did he possess? The error was mine. He endured worse societal atrocities than I did. I comprehend.

**Women as recipients of social and economic peril:** In comparison to other vendor sectors, a woman is undoubtedly more susceptible to social and economic peril. Champa, a 45-year-old cosmetic vendor, described her daily existence as "a struggle against a fate ordained by God." "Daily, we are subjected to obscene remarks from pedestrians, unsavory individuals, and sexually depraved men," stated Rekha (43 years). Rekha recounted an incident in which she was pursued by boys as she exited her area in the Tuesday market to urinate, and was "rescued by benevolent individuals only after they heard my cries." The investigation also revealed that vendors have not been afforded safe restroom facilities at all surveyed locations. They frequently visit isolated locations, often filthy and unsanitary, exacerbating the hardships



faced by women and children, as many vendors utilize the same area. Basanti (57 years) stated that women are frequently stalked by male vendors.

**Females in a predominantly male industry:** The data indicates that this industry is predominantly male, with women dedicating at least 75% of their daily working hours to sustain themselves and earn their living. It is clearly discernible, allowing one to identify the goods offered at a particular stall. Women are observed to sell low-investment commodities such as vegetables. Women are observed to sell lesser quantities of things.

compared to their male counterparts, and the notable fact that in the case of a female vendor, each lady was accompanied by her son or daughter. The condition of the female seller is dire, as she fulfills two roles daily: homemaker and breadwinner. Neelam Rani (42 years) stated, "The day commences with household responsibilities, subsequently compounded by the necessity to earn a livelihood, and further complicated by gender bias, as they are compelled to undertake all tasks in a male-dominated environment." Satyawati (49 years old, a toy vendor) stated, "female vendors attempt to attend to their children by bringing them along while selling their products, which diverts their focus and leads to diminished earnings and poor sales." Consequently, they are ensnared in a state of poverty, lacking a respectable means of subsistence and hope, with limited capacity to effect change.

**Substandard working conditions and extended work hours:** It was determined that poor working circumstances and extended hours are an inherent aspect of vendors' existence, which every vendor must endure, regardless of the sort of goods sold; nonetheless, children are particularly vulnerable. Illusions, however, have predominantly been seen to function effectively for extended periods in unpleasant environments, which negatively impacts their well-being. Leela, aged 48, inquired, "What actions can we undertake?" We must endure in this location. What are our potential destinations? We departed from our villages in Bihar and relocated to Delhi for sustenance. At a minimum, our situation is improved here. We harbor no apprehension towards Thakur or Bhumihar, who exploited our family for minimal compensation to cultivate their farms. We are content, if not affluent. Geeta, aged 47 and a widow, stated, "Sir, Delhi is a costly city." Survival here is challenging; as the sole breadwinner of my family, I must exert considerable effort and work extended hours to provide for myself and my family. Following my husband's premature death attributed to his alcoholism, I endured significant hardship due to the uncertainties of my career, including poor and intermittent pay, as well as familial and societal obligations. Debulal Saha (2011) found in his study on the working life of Mumbai street vendors that the majority of urban informal sector workers reside in impoverished regions, lack access to fundamental healthcare and welfare services, lack social protection, and operate in unhealthy and unsafe working conditions. Their unfavorable working conditions also render them susceptible to diseases and poor health, in addition to necessitating excessively long hours of labor. The life of a street vendor is often fraught with hardship" (Saha 2011: 17).

**Selection of vending options for women:** Our study revealed that numerous women engage in the vending sector due to factors such as alcoholic and unemployed spouses or recent migration from remote communities. Rita stated, "By becoming a vendor, I provide support for my husband and family." What is the earning potential of an individual male? Our family has seven individuals. I began selling momos and eggs, as it was getting increasingly difficult to subsist on my husband's wages. Roshni, aged 42 and a migrant from Nepal, states, "During the day, I perform household tasks in the colonies, and in the evening, I aid my husband in selling noodles at the market." It is noteworthy that 95% of the total women vendors are from the Dalit caste, including Jatav, Khatik, and Ravidasia.

**Juvenile Merchants:** Child sellers, akin to women, occupy the lowest tiers among street vendors. As previously noted, each lady in every instance was accompanied by a tiny kid, primarily for security reasons, but more significantly to signify her status as a married woman to society. The plight of child vendors is as severe as that of women, however it is exacerbated by their tender age. The children engaged in market activities appear more sophisticated, as they communicate confidently with clients to encourage them to purchase their items, and in some instances, manage the entire firm independently. Ninety percent of children evade school owing to their arduous daily regimen. They arrive late at night, around 2 or 3 am, making it impossible for them to awaken during school hours. An intriguing case is that of Sonu. Sonu, a five-year-old son of a shoemaker, said us, "I attend school daily because I genuinely enjoy being there." Studying significantly enhances my well-being and invigorates me as I engage with my peers in class. I enjoy visiting the market; yet, if I do not attend, my father will withhold my monthly school tuition. I am in Class 10, and I strive to maximize my productivity throughout my market hours. I keep my book with me at my stall and read during periods of no customers. Every day I rise at around 8 a.m., and then come back at p



m, take my lunch and then for the market by riding my full of shoes to the market. Then, we organize our wares on the stalls. nis takes at least three to I always carry my bag with me as I am there in the all time aryl eventually. reach home by a m and sleep by 2 a m every day. This is my routine.

This is just one case. Numerous further examples were identified. Numerous children develop the habit of chewing tobacco by observing other adult vendors. The street market exemplifies a situation in which children are compelled to engage in unpaid or low-paid labor, so forfeiting their education, a joyful childhood, and a prosperous future. The high strain and arduous nature of contemporary family child labor or slavery for children as young as 14 years results in their deprivation of the fundamental delights of adolescence.

**Caste dynamics:** When discussions surrounding us are based on fallacies rather than facts, caste is portrayed as an archaic phenomenon, and caste is no longer a reality in modern environments. Street sellers, integral to metropolitan environments, present a markedly different narrative. Local market caste dynamics and village dynamics, but with minor variances. This study revealed that 50% of street sellers are from the Dalit group, with 80% of them being migrants.

Additionally, 20% comprised local residents. The migrating Dalits had numerous challenges in contrast to the local Dalit sellers, who were likely in a more favorable situation due to their residence in the surrounding hamlet and their long-standing presence there. Non-Dalit vendors sell more expensive products than Dalit vendors and, in many instances, do not even pay rent to the extortionists who collect money under the protection of the police and municipality. Rajinder, a 56-year-old Dalit seller, stated that "customers do not discriminate on any grounds; however, fellow vendors frequently directed casteist insults during disputes." Satish (51 years) stated, "Recently, a conflict occurred between two vendors from distinct castes- Jatav and Thakur." The Jatavs were severely assaulted after a Thakur employed derogatory language against them and attempted to intrude into their territory; nevertheless, the authorities apprehended just Ravi Jatav, neglecting the opposing party. Subsequently, we discussed that the Thanedar of the Indirapuram Thana was a Thakur himself. The placement of a stall in a marketplace is crucial as it determines the potential sales volume. An advantageous market location facilitates sellers in selling their products with ease. A marketplace can be categorized into three segments: the inner core, outer core, and peripheral. Ravikant (35 years) stated that "the majority in the core are upper caste individuals and longstanding vendors who have been in business for generations." Being newcomers, we must initially occupy the periphery; nevertheless, one may acquire a central location at a premium price, as stalls are available for purchase. Stalls operated by Dalits and other lower castes are frequently located in urban areas. It was determined that the majority of workers who relocated to metropolitan areas in pursuit of employment had many motivations. The absence of lucrative employment alongside poverty in rural regions has compelled some to leave their villages. Secondly, these migrants lack the requisite skills and education to gain better-paying, stable employment in the official sector, compelling them to accept positions in the informal sector; additionally, caste discrimination persists in their villages. Girish Yadav, a purveyor of snacks, stated, "I departed from my residence in eastern Uttar Pradesh after being assaulted by Thakurs." My village is predominantly inhabited by the Thakur caste, and hence, when one speaks, any attempt by others to interject is met with hostility. Following the incident, Pinru Kumar, a Dalit trader from the Chamar caste, recounted how his family was compelled to relocate when his sister was subjected to harassment by upper-caste Bhumihars in Bihar. He stated, "Following the incident, we were not subdued and sought retribution, yet we recognized that pursuing this course would render us unable to remain here; thus, we resolved to send the women of the family to Delhi first, enabling us to exact our revenge, which we ultimately did." It was discovered that Pintu and his family abandoned all their ancestral lands and properties to pursue a dignified and respectful existence in the city.

**Potential Policies and Inclusivity** - The promotion of street vending necessitates a series of proactive measures, ranging from land use planning to state regulations. Most urban planners regard street sellers as a nuisance and take a "tolerate, regulate" approach.

Our survey indicates that about street sellers obtained loans from moneylenders at outrageous interest rates. Numerous vendors, who retain only a fraction of their earnings while allocating the remainder to interest or rent, are perpetually indebted due to these predatory lenders. The debt spiral erodes the minimal compensation that merchants have received. The discrimination faced by street vendors is exacerbated by health hazards. This group, due to their constant travel throughout the workday, is prone to numerous health issues, including chronic migraines, hyperacidity, hypertension, and elevated blood pressure, largely attributable to pollution. The absence of access to toilets adversely affects women's health,



leading to a prevalence of urinary tract infections and renal complications. Security concerns predominantly impact female street vendors. There is an urgent requirement for optimal working conditions for street vendors, including access to clean drinking water, sanitary restrooms, electricity, and storage facilities. These amenities will enhance vendor production and aid in maintaining sanitary conditions in the area.

The allocation of land is essential for enhancing urban design. Consequently, it can address urban poverty issues while also enhancing possibilities for the urban impoverished. A comprehensive comprehension of the local context will facilitate the on-site execution of contemporary street vending designs while addressing existing issues in space allocation for vendors. Institutions should be established to effectively mitigate bribery directed towards the police and other agencies. Members of the TVC should proactively engage with vendors to address their concerns. TVCs ought to assume a proactive role in this context. No vendors would prefer to pay legal fees over offering unlawful bribes to various parties. Marginal vendors, including women, children, and Dalits, should get particular consideration when designating vending locations. Permanent land should be designated in urban areas whenever feasible. The Ministry of Housing Affairs and Urban Development, in collaboration with other ministries and departments, should focus on rehabilitating children by providing them with free education and stipends to support their families.

The urban informal sector have the capacity to significantly alleviate urban poverty and serve as the cornerstone of a revitalized urban economy. If the government prioritizes integrating the informal sector into the formal economy, it should be capable of creating additional employment opportunities and alleviating poverty. The present state of the informal economy is fraught with limitations that hinder the sector from achieving this role. Governments must develop strategies to enhance it in order to empower the informal labor.

The primary conclusion from India's experience is that a rights-based strategy alone is inadequate to safeguard the most destitute individuals and informal economies. Effecting change takes more than only establishing the requisite legal frameworks. The rights-based approach significantly enhances the standing of the working class, however it necessitates political backing and reinforcement. Official culture and perspectives about the informal sector must undergo transformation. Legal protections represent a crucial advancement, however they do not constitute the ultimate objective. However, in formulating policies for the informal sector, regulatory reforms represent an excellent starting point.

Ultimately, it is essential to recognize that growth is not truly development unless it is inclusive in character. The state must use a more expansive approach to enhance urban governance and development, considering the requirements of vendors who are often marginalized, while formulating urban development policies. With appropriate governmental laws, popular support, efficient governance, and institutional backing, street vendors can serve as pivotal catalysts for economic growth and employment in metropolitan areas.

## REFERENCE

1. Bombay Hawkers union and Others v Bombay corporation and 1985 AIR 1206.
2. Sodan Singh, etc v New Delhi Municipal Committee and Another, 1989 AIR 1988.
3. Bellagio International Declaration of Street Vendors, which called for national policies for street vendors and follow up by individual vendors, vendors associations, city governments, and international organisations. The Bellagio Declaration identified six common problems of around the world, namely: lack legal Status and right to Lack Of space poor location, on licensing, cost regulation, harassment. Confiscation and evictions, lack of services infrastructure, and lack of representation or voice.
4. Street Vendors of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Act, 2014, p.7,
5. <https://legislative.gov.in/sites/default/files/A2014-7.pdf>.
6. Olga Tenis and Ors v Bombay Municipal Corporation and Others, 1986 AIR 180.
7. Street Vendor Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vending) Act, 2014, p.8, <https://legislative.gov.in/sites/default/files/A2m4-7.pdf>.

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