

EMPOWERING, PROMOTING AND RECOGNIZING STREET VENDORS A GIANT STEP TOWARDS SOCIAL INCLUSIVENESS (A CASE STUDY OF DISTRICT FARIDABAD)

Dr. Manoj Shukla

Associate Professor
Aggarwal College Ballabgarh, Faridabad, Haryana

ABSTRACT:

Street vending, century old pan India business activity and a source of livelihoods for millions of marginalized poor and unskilled workforce has never been recognized as a quality job hence it remained mired in the ills of informality. Migrants to the metropolitan cities working as labors find street vending as an alternate, safe and reliable source of income as meagre wages from their jobs is too low to survive with their families. The study has chosen districts of Faridabad to highlight the roles and contributions of street vendors in making available food, goods and services round the clock to millions of dwellers and commuters conveniently and economically. Empowering, counseling and recognizing street vendors, involving them in growth process will go a long way in achieving social inclusiveness through promoting entrepreneurship at the bottom of pyramid, which will bring about metamorphic changes in urban, social, economic and cultural life and making street vending a viable, sustainable and productive source of livelihood.

Keywords: Street Vendor, Empowering, Sustainable, Promoting

1. INTRODUCTION

Faridabad, an industrial agglomeration in the state of Haryana and a major constituent of National capital Region–Delhi abuts Uttar Pradesh at three points is situated on the national highway -44 has 2,388.848 inhabitants. Medium. Small and Microenterprise units abounds and provide direct and indirect employment to half a million people and rank as the 9th largest industrial state in Asia. The central government has also shifted many establishments to Faridabad to avoid high density and congestion the capital Delhi. Masses both semi-skilled and unskilled have settled in Faridabad as it provides opportunities for employment and self-employment or both. Beside, a large number of people commute to Faridabad for work every day. Its location of the highway witness round the clock interstate movement of passenger and commercial traffic. Street vending is dire necessity and inevitable, as it is both an escape and opportunity for millions of migrants to earn more for survival as income through labor in other menial job is meager, uncertain and intermittent and provides food and service's to inhabitants and commuters all the time. Street vending as an economic entity has high employment elasticity for unskilled masses, start up with minimum capital and provides high flexibility in terms of space, time and goods and services. Street vendors have been criticized for various issues ranging from squatting public spaces, encroaching footpaths, prepare unhealthy foods under unhygienic condition, using adulterated items, selling leftover food items.. In spite of fact that street vending has been regularized by Hon'ble Supreme Court, street vending has remained a neglected sector and a victim of societal apathy and reckless attitude of local governments. The paper brings out the complexity in Haryana Street vendors (Protection of Livelihood and regulation of street vending) which has empowered the authorities and enfeebled the vendors. The present article aims to highlight following issues.

- 1 To recognize their contributions in making available essential goods, foods and services to commuters and dwellers conveniently
- 2 To understand and unravel the problems affecting street food vendors.
- 3 To suggest policy recommendations for Counseling, training and involving street vendors in development process.

II LITERATURE REVIEW

The persistent of street food is explained by rapid urbanization and the multiple constraint associated with it: distance between workplace and home, poverty, lack of transport and canteens in the work place (Kovane, Gnakon & Yao, 2021). Street food centers into the problem of recognition small market and craft activities in cities (Canet, 1997). Street food vendors training should be prioritized to improve the safety of street to improve food safety knowledge, attitude and behavior of vendors (WHO, 2006). Highlighting that India's street food vendors are the essence of the country's food industry it is essential to understand that the Indian food economy is shaped by the people who serve food on the streets of cities and with changes in perceptions of some citizens and recognition given by the government towards these people it can become more recognizable (Rohan Keni, 2020). The monthly turnover of street vendors is believed to be Rs 2.88 lakh crore on a daily basis, that is estimated to be Rs 8000 crore (Business Standard, 2021). Street food highlights the promise, problems and personalization of the restaurants industry (The Economic Times, 2023) While street food vending is good self-employment opportunity for the urban poor and an important functional element in urban food systems in countries of Global south (Tinker, 1990), it is seen as obsolete, unhygienic disorderly

“in the way” by city authorities and planners. Street vending as a typical form of informal economic activity is a case of defiant entrepreneur in the face of excessive regulations (De Soto, 1990). In India besides migrant from rural area, the retrenched workforce from formal sector has taken to street vending particularly in Mumbai and Kolkata. S. K. Bhowmik (2007). According to FAO (Food and Agriculture organization) 2007, over 2.5 billion people eat street food every day. Street food provide a source of affordable nutrients to the majority of the people especially the low –income group in developing countries (Muzaffar et al, 2009). The Report on the “Conditions of work and Promotion of Livelihoods” by the National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganized Sector states that, “The lack of recognition of the role of street vendors culminates in a multitude of problems faced by them such as obtaining licenses, insecurity of earning, insecurity of place of hawking, gratifying officers and muscle- men, constant eviction threats, fines and harassment by beat constables. In all major metropolises street vendors are being criticized for supplying substandard items or using adulterer raw material.

III METHODOLOGY The study has used both primary and secondary data. Data were collected through field survey, personal interviews and observations and for secondary data articles in journals and reports of various vendors association were consulted. It is exploratory in nature and aimed to provide new insight into vulnerability of street vendors. The respondents were randomly chosen so as to be able to get true and unbiased views. 15 most well established street vending locations sixty street vendors randomly selecting from each vending location were interviewed by author himself were selected both at intrastate borders, popular market places and weekly markets.

IV CLASSIFICATIONS OF STREET VENDORS

The field survey found that there are two broad categories of vendors: Stationary vending and mobile vending. The first category comprise those vendors who have been doing vending at a fixed place in the markets, railway station, metro station, construction sites and near highways. Mobile vendors has chosen a particular route to sell items using carts. There are also cases of dual mode of vending where one of the family members of stationary vending take the items on cart to sell in the nearby localities, offices industrial areas and schools. There are vendors who are stationary during morning and evening hours and are mobile during the day period. However, the number of stationary vending units are very high. The nature of the items sold by these vending also show different pattern. Table 1 shows nature of items sold by the vending units

Table 1: Nature of Vending

Type	%Share	Items Sold
Stationary	72%	Food items, Fast food. Tea cart, Fruit Sellers, Daily need items, Bike/cycle mechanics
Mobile	14 %	Fruit and vegetable sellers
Dual Mode	14%	Fruit and vegetable seller
Total	60	100

Source: Field Work

V Nature of vending

Table 1 shows that 53% vendors were engaged in full time vending. They have no alternate source of employment. The full time vendors do vending in different items at different locations at different time. Part time vendors do vending either in morning or evening and they are rishka puller, auto driver or porters on railway stations or labourers on construction site. Vendors working on weekdays are working in shops or shopping malls, there is another class of vendors which does vending only during particular or on major festivals.

Table 2: Nature of Vending

Period	No of Vendors	%
Full Time	32	53.3
Part-time	12	20
Week Days	8	13.3
Seasonal	6	10
Festive Days	2	3.4
Total	60	100

Source: Field Work

History of vending units

Table 2 reveals that 34% vendors took up vending first time .they have taken up vending either to supplement meagre income in other job or they are unemployed. They were motivated by family members to do vending to supplement the income. Those who inherited from their families are those who have permanent vending place near railway station .bus terminus or near government offices .They have regular income and royal customers, They also opined that one of the members will carry on this trade as it gives an assured income

Table 2:History of vending Unit

First In Family	34	56.7 %
Inherited from family	40	70.2%
Work	26	43.3%
Total	60	100

Source: Field Work

Income from vending

To know their actual income was not an easy task as most of them were not willing to disclose or what are the actual profit after meeting both explicit and implicit cost. The author prepared an estimate on the basis of their daily sales and deducting the cost of inputs which they shared with (Table 3) .The vendors who deals in food preparation from early morning to late evening are able to earn Rs 500 to 1000 per day. However vendors selling fruits and vegetables consumer durables do not have fixed income and their margins are low. They can earn more only when they sell more and change vending place as per demand at different locations

Table 3: Estimated Monthly Income of Street Vendors

Income per month	No of Vendors	%
0---5000	9	15
5000-10000	21	35
10000-15000	19	31.7
15000-20000	5	8.3
20000-above	6	10
Total	60	100

Source:Field Work

Vending: A family Venture

Family participation in street vending is a very common practice, however participation varies depending on timing and nature of vending. (Table 4). The vendor who generate and add values and do business from early morning to late evenings engage their family members. Women of the families do partial preparation at home and the vendors carries semi cooked food to vending place.

Table 4:Family Participation in vending

No. of Worker from Family	No of vendors	%
Only One Member	27	45%
1 – 2 Members	12	20%
Whole Family	21	35%
Total	60	100%

Source: Field Survey

VI POPULAR BRANDS LEVERAGING STREET VENDING

During the survey of interstate borders and popular public places it was found that popular brands are using street vendors as an easy and convenient source of sales outlet. The product ranges from soft drinks (Pepsi & Coke),Tobacco products (Pan Masala &Cigarettes), mineral water,potato chips (Uncle chips&Haldiram) and noodles (NESTLE), ice creams and biscuits. The wholesalers and stockiest of soft drinks admitted they themselves encourage vending and gives various incentives to street vendors to promote sales. Popular brands of ice creamsvizmilkfood, Vadilal,Cream Bell have their own ice cold carts to be parked at popular places and they engage vendors on commission basis. When regular sale is not possible, ice cream vendors do brisk business for popular brands till midnight at India Gate in Delhi, a popular hangout place for families and tourists. At the time of

survey it was found that 150 vendors were selling items during late evening at India Gate. The moot point is whether the vendors are getting their due share when the brand owners are getting bumper sales. The onus lies on local authorities that these vendors should be treated at par with company marketing teams and be provided all rewards and benefits.

VII POPULAR MARKETS PROMOTES STREET VENDING

Most of the popular markets encourage and promote vendors in the markets. Firstly, it attracts the people towards markets for cheap buying. Once buyers reach they may be lured to visit shop for better stuff. Secondly, shopkeepers in collusion with vendors dispose of their old or cheap stuff through putting the tag sale on discount. During the festival seasons and off-season period these vendors do brisk business for shopkeepers. Shopkeepers in lieu provide them free vending place and protection from law-enforcing authorities. A majority of tourists from South and Eastern India who come to Delhi do visits these popular markets for cheap and variety buying for their near and dear ones at home.

VIII Contributions

1 Convenience: Faridabad and particularly street vending ventures survive and thrive because of its migrant population as most of them are single or they have their families at their home states. Besides, thousands of people who travel to Faridabad from far-off places in early morning and return late, street food fulfills all time needs.

2 Fresh local cuisine : Most of the vendors come to the vending place one or two hours before the commuters arrive and prepare local cuisine items like prathas, pooris-bhaji, chola-bhatura, Chola-Kulcha, Rice, biryani at the vending site.

3 Availability: The vending units outside the major railway stations, near the highways industrial areas where workers work in shifts, construction sites run round the clock.

4 Economical: The processed food at these vending units is affordable with myriad varieties.

5 Digitalisation: Demonetization and pandemic has culminated in digitalization of services. Most of consumers use popular financial apps like Paytm, Google Pay and Repay to make payments.

IX critical Issues

- 1 Squatting:** It has been observed and residents also pointed out that street hawkers squat on the footpaths and roadside and on the crossroads cause lot of traffic congestion.
- 2 Unhygienic Food:** Most of the residents and commuters pointed out and also noticed that street vendors are not much conscious about hygiene related to the food and also self.
- 3 Spurious goods:** Most of the vendors selling packaged food items like mineral water, biscuits, beverages deals in expired items and sometime spurious one also.
- 4 Child Labours :** Some of the vending units employ children as labourers which is unethical and illegal.
- 5 Littering:** Street vendors who prepare items at the vending place leave the waste produce at the vending place itself which create foul smell in the area and become health hazard.

X Haryana Street vendors (Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street vending) Scheme 2020: Complex & cumbersome

The Supreme court of India has felt the need for protection, formalization and regulation of street vending as necessity and value driven occupations for marginalized section and in response to that national policy on urban street vendors, 2009, Government of India states that street vendors form a very important segment of the unorganised sector in India. The Supreme Court of India issued an order dated 9th September 2013 that all State governments and UTs will follow NSVP 2009 and constitute town vending committee in every district. Street Vendors (Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vending) Act 2014 is first step towards its formalization. Haryana Street vendors (Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street vending) Scheme 2020 by the department of Urban Local Bodies, Faridabad has the mandate to protect, regulate and promote street vending. However a review of this act highlights its limitations, non-inclusiveness and undemocratic. The survey form for Street vendors have one hundred seventeen questions and many are redundant and personal. The composition of the town vending committee responsible for regulation of street vending should have representation from street vending community. The undertaking by street vendors has unjustified and undemocratic clauses that only unemployed can do vending and vendors can't employ assistants except family members.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS: It is important to acknowledge and understand that Services of street vendors are inevitable and necessary for people. We should not ignore the fundamental rights of vendors for a respectable and quality job and should recognize and empower them through policies and practices. It will provide stability, social reorganization and sustainability to this self-employed occupation and they in turn will provide product variety, improved quality, and street vending will become a respectable and productive source of employment for migrants and this should be integrated and leveraged for smart city initiatives. Non-government organization along with resident welfare association should assist the local government to guide, advice and motivate vendors to adopt health practices.

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