

A Study on Issues and Challenges Faced by the Street Vendors in Mysore City

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Abstract: Street trading is the oldest mode of trading form of retail business in the country, though it was considered illegal in independent India for six decades. In the year 2014, the parliament agreed to the Street Vendors Act (to protect livelihood to regulate street vending), this act legally enables providing a prosperous atmosphere. In the present day, many street vendors primarily work to raise income to provide basic needs like food for their family members and to pay the school fees of their children. This would become the source of income for unemployed persons, especially middle-aged women who have limited education. In this context, through objective model methodology studies, this study selected 110 street vendors of Mysuru city to know their socioeconomic status along with the challenges and problems faced by them. 38.18 % of vendors were illiterate, 58.18% belonged to backward classes, and 28% of vendors had 251 to 350 rupees of daily income. 48.18% of traders face low-income problems and 40.9% of traders face a low range of competition in the market. Likely 40% of people facing medium-level challenges related to the environment, and 36.36% were confronting intermediate-level social security challenges. Around 46.37% were encountering a medium level of issues from the local committees. The study shows that 42.73% of traders were confronted with low levels of market fluctuations in prices. Hence, it is significant that this study helps to solve the problems of street vendors.

Keywords: Street vendors; Socio-economic status; Problems and challenges

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1. Introduction

The word “street vendors” is a mandatory component of urban civilization. According to the National Policy for Street Vendors 2004 Act, “street vendor” means a person engaged in vending of articles, goods, wares, food items, or merchandise of everyday use or offering services to the general public, in a street, lane, sidewalk, footpath, pavement, public park or any other public place or private area, from a temporary built-up structure or by moving from place to place. Indian government categorized the street vendors into three basic groups such as stationary, peripatetic, and mobile classes of street vendors. Street trading has attractive aspects such as low

barriers to entry, limited start-up costs, and convenient timings. Many people will enter street trading due to unemployment in the formal economy. However, a street vendor needs a specific skill to sustain. There is great competition between the vendors to occupy space that has strong access to customers in the cities.

Street vendors are enumerable in major cities around the world, especially in Asia, Latin America, and developing countries of Africa. In India, 4.948 million street vendors were recognized. The highest numbers include 0.849 million in Uttar Pradesh, 0.704 million in Madhya Pradesh, 0.584 million in Maharashtra, 0.502 million in Telangana, and 7.2457 million street vendors in Delhi. In Sikkim, no street vendors were recognized. Currently, in Karnataka state, around 0.3 million registered street vendors are working. Similarly in the study area of Mysuru, according to the survey of Mysuru Metropolitan Corporation (MMC), there were more than 20,000 street vendors.

In the economic activities of the country street vendors play an important role such as providing resources for the continuous development and economic growth of the cities. The street vendors are serving all sections of society and all classes of life at affordable prices. In the year 2014, the Government framed the Street Vendors Act to protect the lives of street traders. In addition, the Supreme Court has given the judgment that the infrastructure should be provided to them and steps to be taken for orderly business transactions. The state government has directed all the corporations to implement it. Apart from this, the Government of India has implemented several schemes like PM Suraksha Bhima Yojana, PM Jeevana Jyothi Bhima Yojana, PM Shramayogi Manadhan Yojana, One Rashtra One Ration Yojana, PM Svanidi Loan for the social and economic progress of street vendors and the educational upliftment of their children^[1]. This study was undertaken to find out what problems the street vendors are facing in earning a living amid all these schemes.

2. Literature review

The study by Bhowmik, "Street Vendors in Asia: A Review", analyzed the scope and mode of operation of street vendors in different countries^[2]. The study has selected different countries like Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Bangkok, Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia (Kuala Lumpur), Vietnam (Hanoi), the Philippines (Manila), Cambodia, Seoul, and India. The study analyzed most of the street vendors in these countries. The study evaluated that Asian countries are places worth visiting so there are more street businesses here^[2]. A report by Anjaria, "Revealing of Life Experiences of Street Vendors", draws attention to primary research data. The report examines how traders perceive, interpret, and interact with state officials daily^[3]. Nidan published a paper titled "Study on street vendors at Patna." This study was based on 600 street vendors in 72 wards of Patna. Many have chosen street trading as a career because of easy access and low investment. The study reveals that the protection of women street vendors and the lack of basic facilities like toilets and nurseries for their children were major constraints^[4]. Debdulal Saha stated the term "street hawkers" is an integral part of urban culture as these hawkers are among the most deprived sections of the self-employed in Mumbai. The occupation of street vendors is illegal so they cannot enjoy the right to work with dignity. So, the government should simplify the rules and regulations that restrict the activities of the sellers by law^[5]. Jaishankar et al. studied the problems faced by street vendors of Tiruchirapalli who were often unable to get skill-based jobs due to their illiteracy and low level of education. Therefore, with their little financial resources, they are selling vegetables and household products^[6]. Christina Parmar et al.'s "A Study on Quality of Life of Street Vendors of Vadodara City" reported that the street vendors are poor and self-employed in the informal sector. Hence, their socioeconomic factors

include impact on working conditions and quality of life. There are several problems faced by street vendors related to access to finance and sales facilities which leads to the psychological transformation of their minds having fear, depression, anxiety, and unstable mental states ^[7]. A study on problems faced by street vendors concerning Coimbatore districts by Priya A et al. states that street vendors contribute to the well-being of the urban and rural population by providing goods and products at affordable prices, but they are facing health problems due to climate change conditions. There is a lack of awareness and understanding of the policies provided by the government to the street vendor ^[8].

2.1. Objective of the study

The objective of this study is to study the socioeconomic status of street vendors and address problems and challenges of street vendors.

2.2. Significance of the study

An attempt has been made in this study to explore the situation of street vendors in Mysuru city. The results of the study will provide a better understanding of the street vendors and provide awareness to the policymakers to design an effective and efficient policy for the improvement of the livelihood of the street vendors. This study will also serve as a stepping stone for research interest on street vendors and it will also help policymakers as a source of information on the livelihood outlook of street vendors.

3. Methodology

3.1. Data collection

Street vendors are a large and visible workforce in the city even though the numbers are difficult to estimate accurately. In this background, 110 people who hawk on the roadsides of Mysuru city were selected for the study through a purposive sampling method. This study relies on primary and secondary information. First, the primary information was collected through a scientifically prepared interview schedule and it was subjected to pre-experiment, so the errors found were corrected after taking expert advice and the errors were corrected through questionnaire, interview schedule, and observation. The secondary information was collected through articles, research reports, government orders, newspapers, and internet networks.

3.2. Data analyses

Data collected from primary sources were analyzed using appropriate statistical methods and classified according to their characteristics. The classified information was expressed scientifically through tables and figures.

Table 1 represents the age group of street vendors, among them, 31.82 % are in the age group of 16–25 years, 59.09% are in the age group of 26–59 years and 9.09% of vendors are in the age group of more than 60 years. Regarding marital status, 71.08 % are married, 18.18% are unmarried, 6.36% are widows/widowers, 0.91% are separated, and 2.73% are divorced people who were involved in street trading. Regarding educational status, 38.18% were illiterates, 16.36% could do their signature, 18.18% were educated from class 1 to 4, and 23.64% were educated from 5th standard to 10th standard. Additionally, 3.64% of vendors were degree holders engaged in street trades in Mysuru city. Regarding the caste of street vendors, 15.45% belonged to the general category, 10.91% belonged to scheduled caste, 15.46% belonged to scheduled tribes, and 58.18% belonged to backward classes.

Table 1. The socio-demographic profile of the vendors

Particulars	Variables	Male	Female	Total
Age distribution	16–25	24 (29.27%)	11 (39.29%)	35 (31.82%)
	26–59	51 (62.2%)	14 (50%)	65 (59.09%)
	60 and above	7 (8.53%)	3 (10.71%)	10 (9.09%)
	Total	82 (74.55%)	28 (25.45%)	110 (100%)
Marital status	Married	62 (70.06%)	17 (60.71%)	79 (71.82%)
	Unmarried	15 (18.29%)	5 (17.86%)	20 (18.18%)
	Widow	3 (3.66%)	4 (14.29%)	7 (6.36%)
	Separated	1 (1.22%)	0	1 (0.91%)
	Divorced	1 (1.22%)	2 (7.14%)	3 (2.73%)
	Total	82 (74.55%)	28 (25.45%)	110 (100%)
Education Status	Non – literate	35 (42.68%)	7 (25%)	42 (38.18%)
	Ability to Sign	13 (15.85%)	5 (17.86%)	18 (16.36%)
	1–4	14 (17.08%)	6 (21.43%)	20 (18.18%)
	5–10	17 (20.73%)	9 (32.14%)	26 (23.64%)
	Graduate	3 (3.66%)	1 (3.57%)	4 (3.64%)
	Total	82 (74.55%)	28 (25.45%)	110 (100%)
Caste status	General	10 (12.20%)	7 (25%)	17 (15.45%)
	SC	9 (10.98%)	3 (10.71%)	12 (10.91%)
	ST	11 (13.41%)	6 (21.43%)	17 (15.46%)
	OBC	52 (63.41%)	12 (42.86%)	64 (58.18%)
	Total	82 (74.55%)	28 (25.45%)	110 (100%)

Figure 1 shows the daily income of street vendors, 10% of vendors earn 150 INR, 6% earn 151 to 250 INR, 28% of traders earn 251 to 350 INR, 19% earn 351 to 450 INR, 14% earn 451 to 550 INR, 9% earn 551 to 650 INR, 6% earn 651 to 750 INR, and 6% of vendors earn 751 to 850 INR. Only 1% of street vendors earn 851 to 950 INR, and the other 1% of street vendors earn 951 to 1000 INR per day.

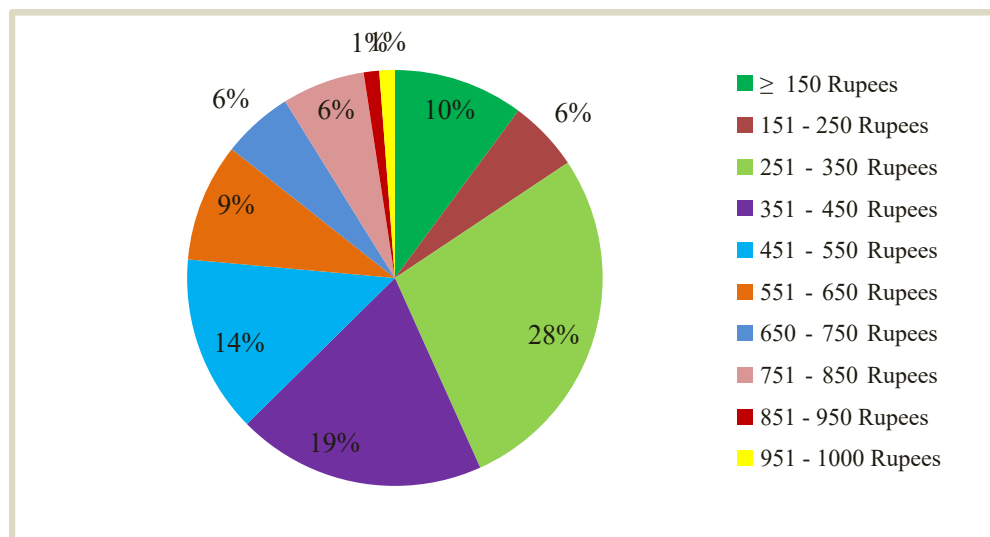


Figure 1. Street vendor's daily income (Indian Rupees)

According to the studies, Figure 2 represents the daily working hours of street vendors. 9.09% of traders work for 4 hours, 20.91% of vendors work for 5 to 6 hours, 31.82% of traders work for 7 to 8 hours, 26.36% work for 9 to 12 hours, and 11.82% do their business for more than 12 hours.

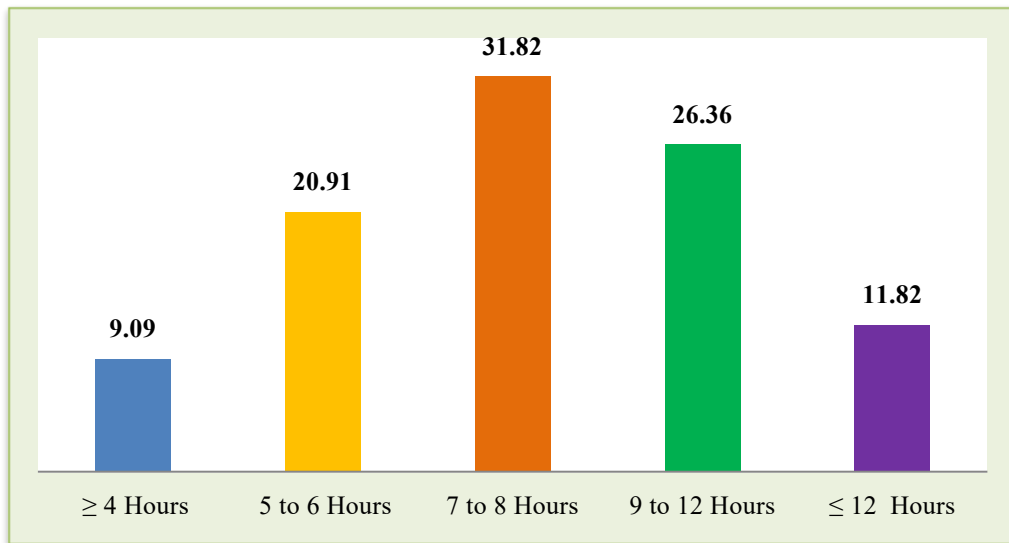


Figure 2. Street vendor’s working hours per day

Figure 3 represents the products sold by street vendors, they sold different types of items (**Figures 4–7**). For the types of items sold, 27.27% sold fruits and vegetables, 5.45% sold tender coconut water, 11.82% were flower trading, 13.64% sold consumer goods, 32.73% were sales of prepared food like pani puri and others, 6.36% sold clothes, and 2.73% sell old books.

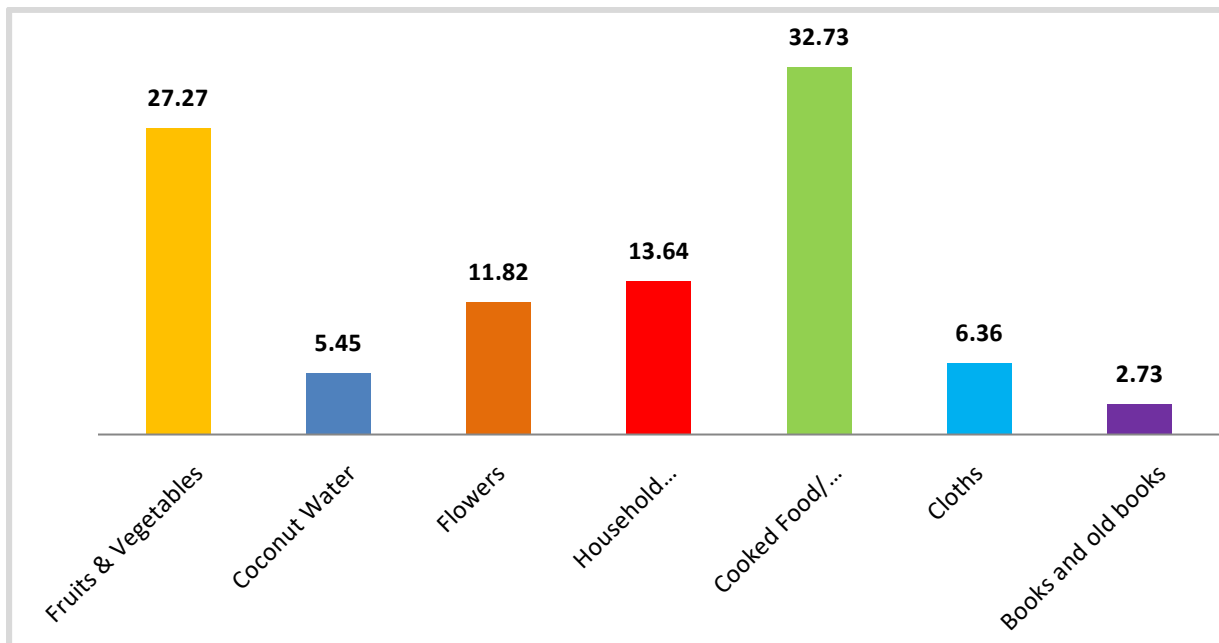


Figure 3. Vending Products

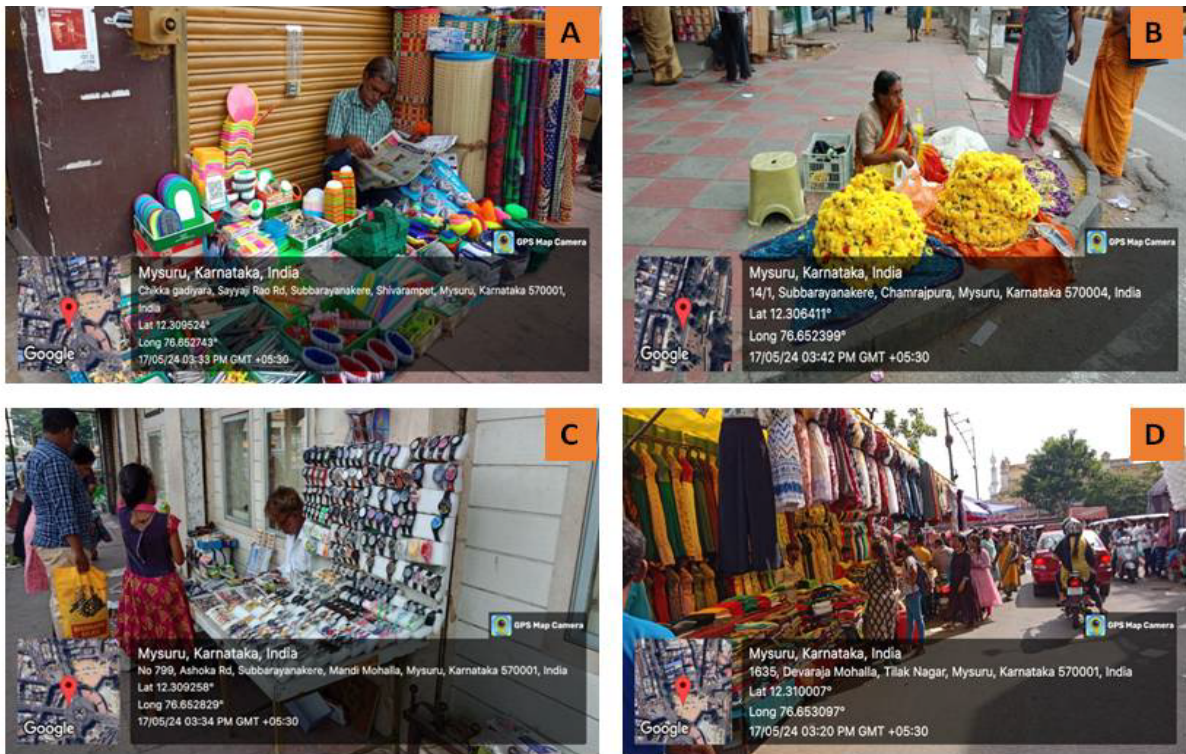


Figure 4. A. Selling bangles, B. Flowers selling, C. Watch selling, D. Cloth selling



Figure 5. A. Selling Pani puri and Churumuri, B. Selling Home decor items, C. Fast food selling, D. Selling food and other items

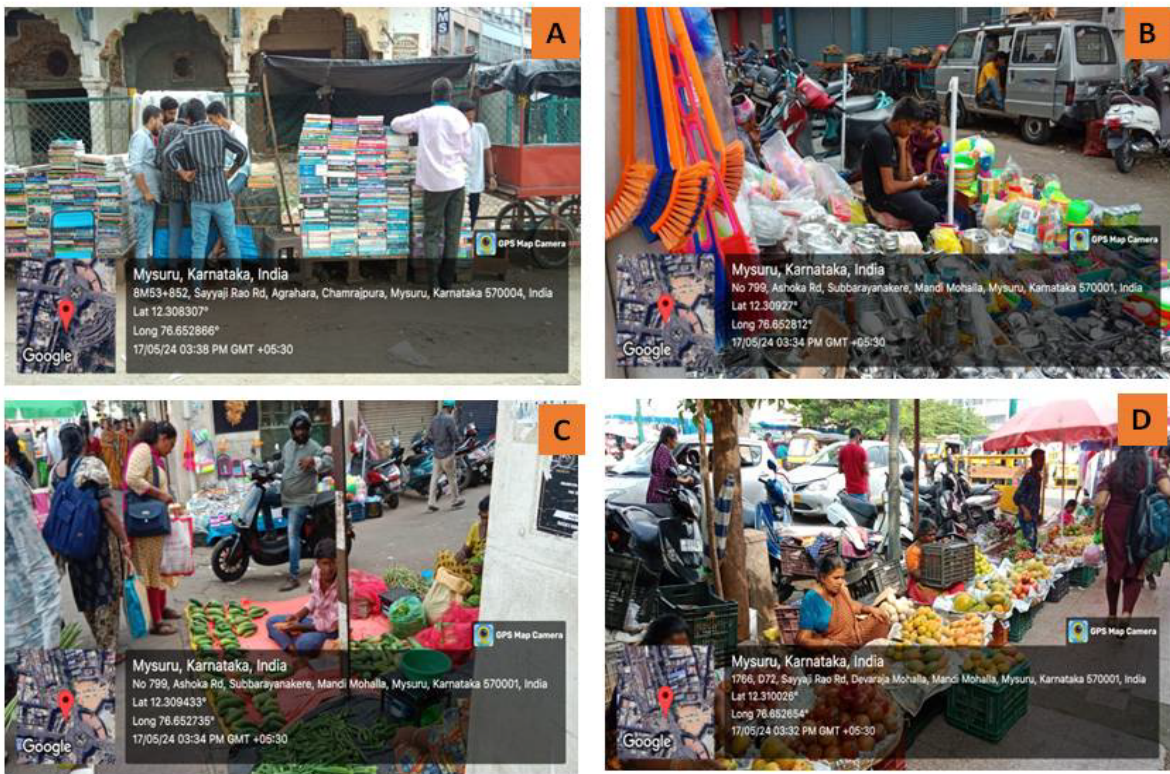


Figure 6. A. Selling old books, B. Selling Steel and plastics, C. Selling vegetables and green lettuce, D. Selling fruits

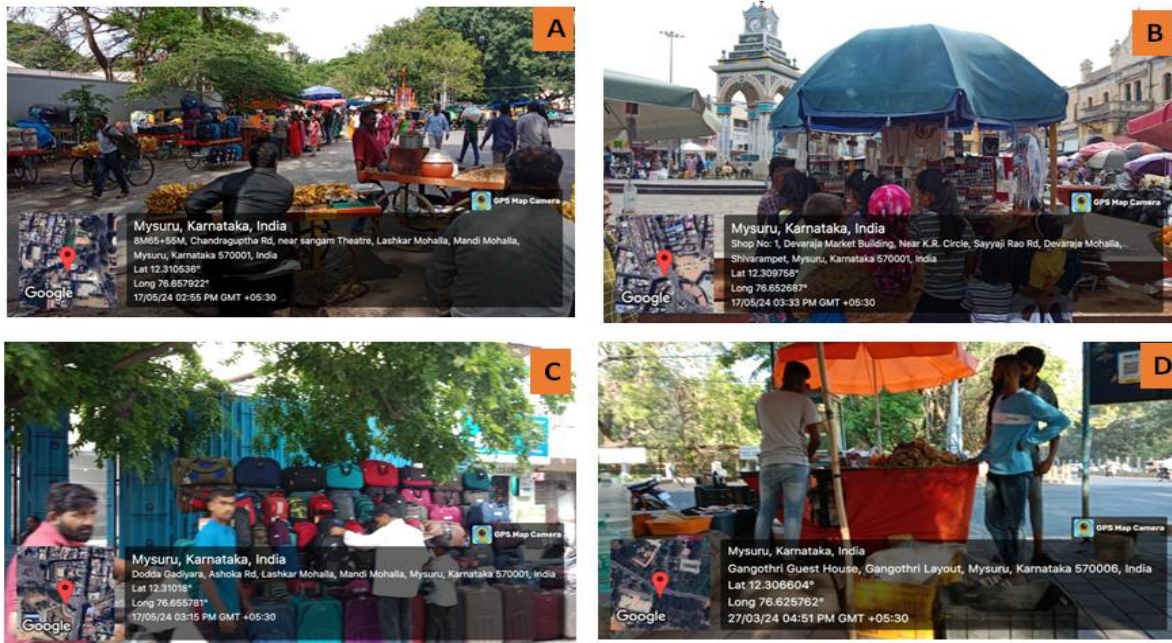


Figure 7. A. Selling peanuts and bananas, B. Selling women's makeup, C. Selling bags, D. Selling fresh juice

Based on the studies, **Figure 8** shows the problems and challenges faced by street vendors. About 48.18% of vendors face less range of turnover problems, 40.91% face medium-level problems regarding storing unsold goods, 40.9% are facing competition issues at low levels in the market, 40% encounter environmental-related challenges, 36.36% of traders suffer from social security problems at the medium level, and about 42.73% of traders face a medium range of problems by the people. The study revealed that 46.37% of moderate problems were created by local committees and 42.73% of traders are facing low levels of problems due to price fluctuations.

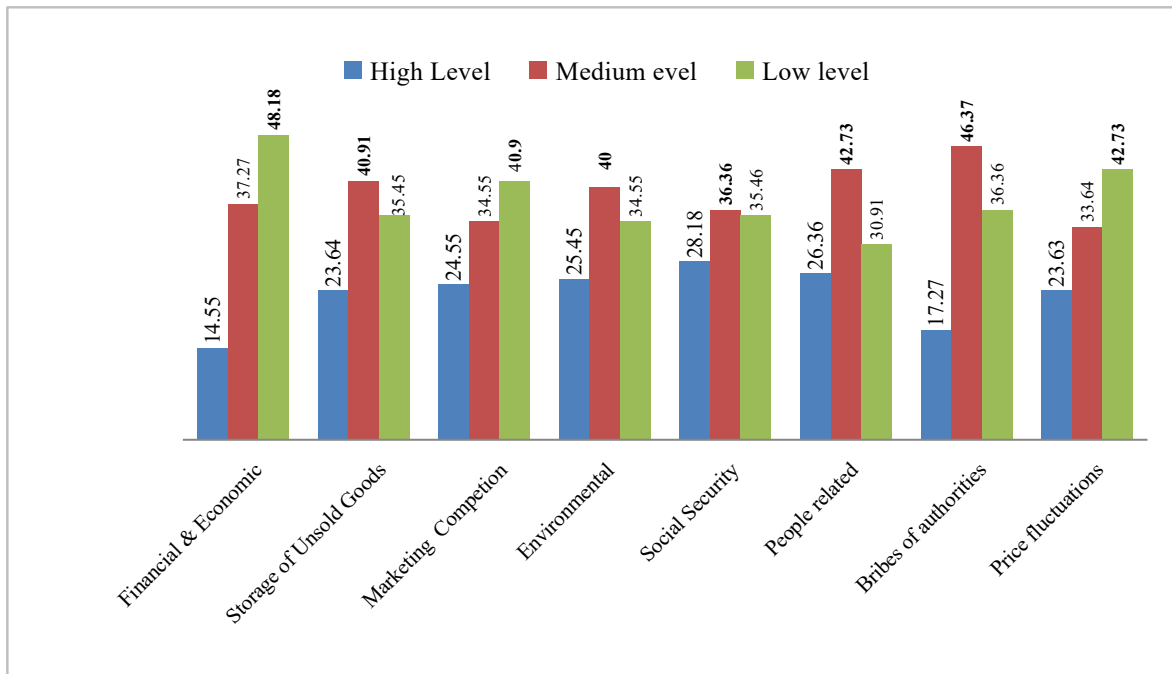


Figure 8. Problems & Challenges faced by the street vendors

4. Suggestions

Street vendors often work outside while surrounded by problems such as lack of resources and limited profits. Traders and their goods are exposed to strong sun, rain, and extreme heat or cold. Also, most of them do not have shelter, running water, and toilets near the workplace. Due to the lack of clean water, prepared food vendors have to take extra care of the safety and health of consumers. Hence, all the street traders should get an identity card and a business sale certificate and carry out their transactions. Everyone should follow the road rules and regulations without causing any annoyance or disturbance to pedestrians and motorists. There are several forms available and they should be compensating in time. Although there are many schemes for street vendors, lack of implementation in the schemes, recognition, awareness, and availability of the schemes have several errors, which need to be rectified in time. In this direction, if the street vendors become organized and aware, they can make good use of the government schemes and improve their lives.

5. Conclusion

This article should be interpreted as a challenge by policymakers and social science researchers because the

employment of street vendors is insecure and irregular. They were given a lower status compared to others in the society. They can sell their goods only in certain areas. They also have temporary living arrangements, which can be destroyed at any time. There is no fixed income, having very low profit and this profession is not legal. Therefore, they are at risk of harassment and loss from urban policies and various social control agencies. Even today, they are facing many kinds of problems like regular eviction and payment of bribes from the district or municipal administration. Their economic and social standard of living has not recovered, and their life becomes difficult. Street vendors are mostly immigrants to the cities. Some do not have permanent residence in the cities, so they do not have the necessary documents and proofs for government schemes and facilities. Microfinance institutions can facilitate access to affordable credit to street vendors through self-help groups or government-supported schemes and provide loans at low interest rates to help them expand their business.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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