



# “ASSESSMENT OF NUTRITIONAL HEALTH STATUS AND HYGIENE PRACTICES AMONG STREET VENDORS IN HYDERABAD”

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## **ABSTRACT**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Street vendor is a person who offers goods for sale to the public at large without having a permanent buildup from which to sell. Street vending is one of the primary ways of earning money and sustaining livelihood for poor people. It is also a big informal sector platform. It is a viable source of employment for many. Even though they form a big part in informal sector they face many problems. They are often illtreated, live in uncertainty and work in poor condition with little access to infrastructure, inability to access various government facilities, social security and job security.

Street vendors are self employed people and have a low educational level who utilize public street to secure their livelihood. The focus of this study is to assess the nutritional and health status of street vendors along with challenges like socio-economic status, hygiene and other issues.

## **METHODS AND MATERIALS**

Cross-sectional study is done for assessing the knowledge with the help of an interview in the form of questionnaire among street vendors living in Barkatpura.

## **RESULT**

From the data which has been collected from street vendors of Barkatpura area, it has been found that even after being in this occupation they are facing many problems in the course of running their activities. Further they enjoy neither safety nor security in work place without having any fixed hours of vending. Also, they suffer from poor nutritional and health status. They also do not have proper hygiene practices and knowledge about hygiene and sanitation.

## **CONCLUSION**

Street vendors need to be properly educated about the importance of nutrition and maintenance of good health and hygiene. They should also be educated about various policies and schemes provided by government so that it will be helpful to sustain their economic status. Government should take some action towards the street vendors pertaining to their safety in their protection and also their health.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Street vending is one of the most visible and prominent occupation in urban and rural areas. A street vendor is someone who offers goods or services for sale to the public without having a permanent buildup but with a temporary static structure or mobile stall.

It is a global phenomenon and the informal sector. It has been persisting for centuries and recognized as an ancient and important occupation in the ancient informal economy. It is distinctive and prevailing component of a broad informal sector.

Street vending is one of the primary ways of earning money and sustaining livelihood for poor people because street vending needs small capital and least skills. It is not only a source of self-employment to the poor in cities and towns but also a means to provide “affordable” as well as “convenient” services to a majority of urban population. They are illiterate and the majority of respondents belonging into poor schedule tribe families who are often unable to get regular jobs in the paid formal sector on account of their low level of education and skills.



The study has focused on nutritional knowledge in terms of food among the street vendors and also their hygiene practices or health skill they apply during the vending process. Therefore, the aim of this study was to investigate public health aspects regarding different street vendors. Street vendors sell variety of goods and products by bending, pushing heavy loads over mobile cart, long standing and long working hours on sidewalks, footpath, pavement, public park or any public place.

They face many challenges from public authorities. They consider them as nuisance. They work under grueling conditions for long hours and are frequently harassed by the municipal authorities and seize their goods entails heavy fines for recovery. In most case it means that the vendors have to take loans from private source to either recover whatever remains of his/her seized goods or to restart his/her business. Street vendors lead a very difficult life, the mode of travel or their working hours, is hardly providing any time for rest and relaxation. This creates adverse effects on their health.

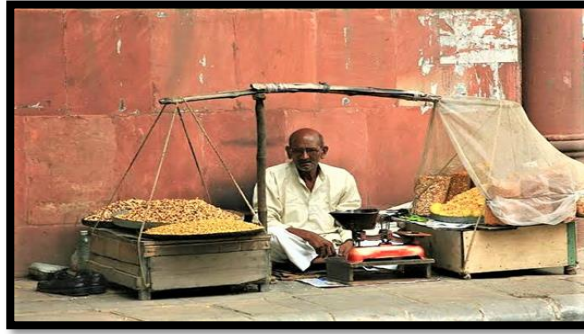
Increased traffic affects their mobility on streets/roads. Mishandling and disregard of hygiene measures on the part of the food vendors may enable pathogenic bacteria to come in contact with food and in some cases survive and multiply to cause illness. Most of the vendors are poorly educated and untrained in food hygiene. Street vendors face a lot of problems associated with land use, security, health and infrastructure. Their employment is insecure and irregular have very low gain. It is not legal and there is a danger of harassment by varied social control agencies.

## **BACKGROUND**

Most of the street vendors come from rural area are from low socio-economic background. This is leading to poor health status among the street vendors. Most of them are not valuing their profession and criticizing the vendors which is showing an impact on their mental health.

Lack of awareness on the importance of nutrients is leading to poor nutritional status among the street vendors. Deficiency of certain nutrients in their diets is resulting in musculoskeletal disorders which requires immediate measure.

Most of them lack basic knowledge on hygiene and sanitation which is resulting in spreading of infections due to poor practice of hygiene and sanitation and lowering their immunity.



## **OBJECTIVES**

1. To assess the nutritional knowledge and hygiene practices among the street vendors in their day-to-day lives.
2. To assess the knowledge pertaining to government policies and programs which are applicable.

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

From the previous study we have observed that they are working under harsh conditions for long hours and are frequently harassed by the municipal authorities and the police. The studies also explore that the street vendors mainly depend on money lenders for their economic and social security purposes. There is no safety for the street vendors in their work place. They are facing severe harassment from the local authorities. Study also reveals that inadequate finance, infrastructure inflexibility, improper marketing strategies and insecurity and uncertainty are identified as the challenges of street vendors.



Though India has witnessed an increase in street vendors the government is indifferent to specific needs of this sector of street vending and petty trading activities from the essential care of informal economic sectors in developing nations which helps in generating income with

minimized investments of financial capital and without requiring large human capital. A study of socio-demographic profile and cause of street vending in an urban area, Aurangabad, Maharashtra found that one fourth of the street vendors experience health problems associated with their work.

Most of the cases are showing that, street vending is related with uncertainty in income. Study also shows that women vendors are mainly engaged in fruit, vegetable and flowers vending which are perishable bring loss if left unsold. Many street vendors borrow money lenders and return the principal amount on a daily sales basis on higher interest rates. They are compelled to pay bribes to multiple people to keep running their business. Moreover, their working conditions and working environment is very poor.

## **METHODS AND MATERIALS**

This study was performed among the street vendors residing in Barkatpura small area in Hyderabad, Telangana.

Sample size is 30, among which 15 are men and 15 are women. Sampling technique used here is convenient non-purposive adults of ages 30-50 years belonging to Barkatpura region through snowballing technique.

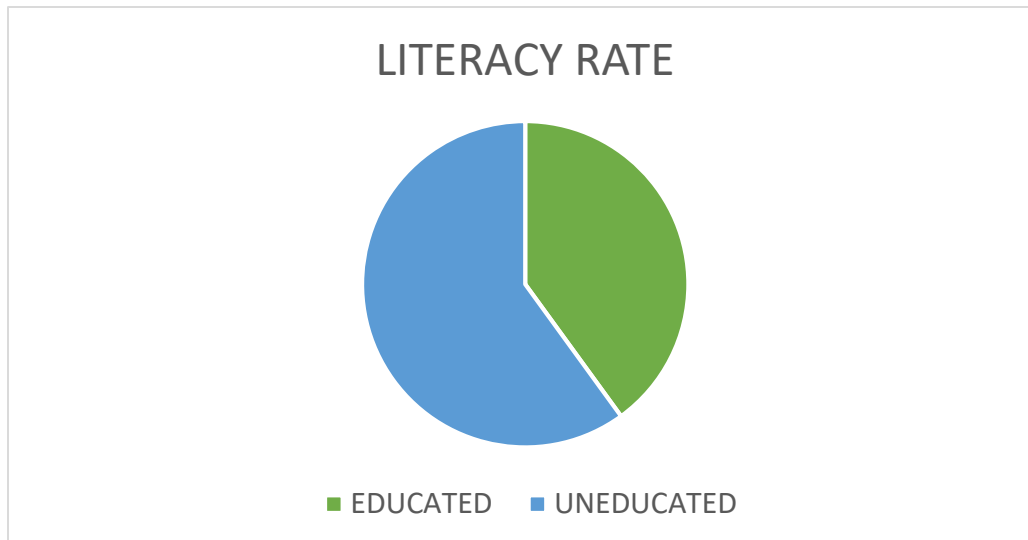
This study is a cross-sectional study with a well structured and designed questionnaire which was given to the street vendors living in Barkatpura region. The questionnaire consists of questions related to socio demographic status, knowledge, attitude and practice on nutrition, hygiene and sanitation. Lack of attention, knowledge, education, resources were the main reasons for choosing this area.

## **RESULTS**

Gender	Educated	Uneducated
Women	3	12
Men	9	6
Total	12	18

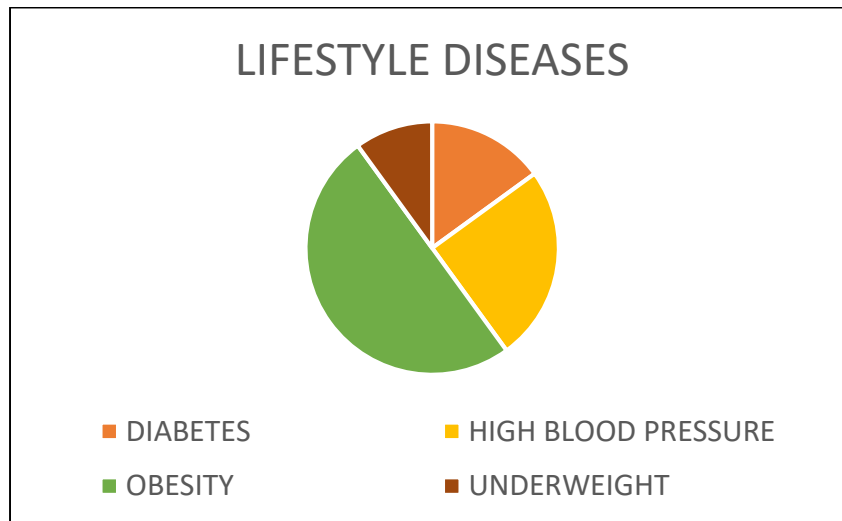
The above cross tabulation represents part-1 that is the socio-demographic status and educational status of the vendors.

As shown in the below pie chart 40% of the vendors are educated with minimum qualification. 60% of the vendors are uneducated which clearly indicates that they are all belonging to low income families.



## **PART 2 – LIFESTYLE DISEASES**

The results show that most of the vegetable vendors are working more than 10 hours per day with which they are also suffering from lifestyle diseases like high blood pressure, diabetes, overweight and also underweight.



### **PART 3 – HYDRATION**

The results show that most of the street vendors are not hydrated because of poor public water supply. They tend to face a lot of problem during the consumption of water as the area near the public water supply are unhygienic.

## **PART 4 – MEAL CONSUMPTION**

The below cross tabulation gives the data on meal consumption among the street vendors which covers their meal patterns, timings and number of meals which they consume in their day to day life.

The data shows that most of the street vendors consume all the three meals in a day which contain only the basic food groups [i.e. cereals and pulses]. But most of them are not having proper meal timings as their working time is irregular. As there is an increased demand during evening times the street vendors are getting busy resulting in irregular timings of their meal consumption.

S.NO	No of meals	Meal timings	Meal pattern
Women	53% (all the meals)	93% late dinner	Basic diet
Men	86% (all the meals)	95% late dinner	Basic diet

## **PART 5 – CONSUMPTION OF FRUITS AND VEGETABLES**

The below cross tabulation gives the data on consumption of fruits and green leafy vegetables of street vendors.

The data shows that 73% of the women street vendors consume fruits daily whereas 66% men are consuming fruits daily. The data also shows that 68% of them consume green leafy vegetables at least three times a week. Even after consuming fruits and green leafy vegetables frequently they are facing problems like low nutritional level and weakness.

The main reason for most of them consuming fruits and vegetables is because they themselves are selling either fruits or vegetables which is one of the best thing but still some of them due to low financial support are not able to afford their basic requirement.



S.NO	FRUITS INTAKE	GREEN LEAFY VEGETABLES INTAKE
WOMEN	73% of them are consuming fruits daily	68%of them are consuming green leafy vegetables for 3 times a week
MEN	66% of them are consuming fruits for 3 times in a week	68%of them are consuming green leafy vegetables for 3 times a week



## **PART 6 – MILK AND CAFFINE CONSUMPTION**

The below cross tabulation gives the data on consumption of milk and caffeine among the street vendors.

The data shows that 93% of women and 86% of men are consuming caffeine daily in the form of tea or coffee. The data also shows that 93% of them consume milk and its products daily. This shows that they are suppressing their hunger which a cup of tea leading to delaying their main meal consumption resulting in digestion and musculoskeletal problems. We can also conclude that they are addicted to caffeine.

S.NO	MILK AND ITS PRODUCTS	CAFFINE CONSUMPTION
WOMEN	94%of them consume milk and its products daily	93% of them consume caffeine daily in the form of tea or coffee
MEN	93% of them consume milk and its products daily	86% of them consume caffeine daily in the form of tea or coffee

## **PART 7 – SUPPLEMENTS AND HEALTH CHECKUP**

The below cross tabulation gives the data on intake of supplements and regular health check-ups among the street vendors.

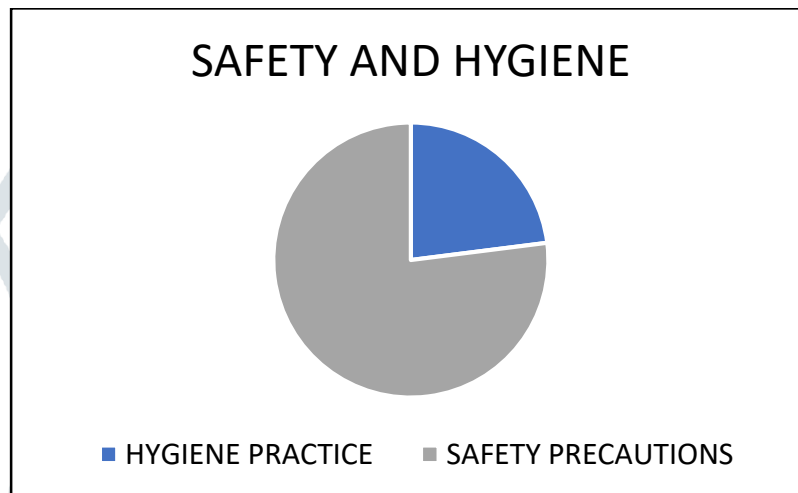
The data shows that 96% of them neither take any supplements nor go for regular health check-ups. This is happening due to their poor economic status and lack of awareness about basic health facilities provided by government.

S.NO	SUPPLEMENTS	HEALTH CHECK UP
WOMEN	80% of them are not taking any supplements	6% of them are not going to regular health check-ups
MEN	40% of them are not taking any supplements	6% of them are not going to regular health check-ups

## **PART 8 – SAFETY PRECAUTIONS AND HYGIENE PRACTICES**

The below pie chart gives the data on safety precautions and hygiene practices of the street vendors.

The data shows that 77% of street vendors are not taking any safety precautions during their work. The data shows that only 23% of street vendors are following hygiene practices. With this we can conclude that improper safety precautions and hygiene practice can cause severe health problems not only to the vendors but also to the public.



## **PART 9 – WASHROOM USAGE AND PUBLIC TOILETS ACCESS**

The below cross tabulation gives the data on the washroom usage and public toilet access to the street vendors.

The data shows that 93% of women and 66% of men are using washroom for 3-4 times. The data also shows that 13% of women and 46% of men are having access to the public toilets. But neither of them are following any safety precautions while using public toilets. The other street vendors are asking nearby apartment people for the usage of wash rooms.

S.NO	NO OF TIMES OF USAGE WASHROOM	PUBLIC TOILET FACILITY
WOMEN	93% of them are using washroom for 3-4 times	13% of them use public toilets
MEN	66% of them are using washroom for 3-4 times	46% of them use public toilets

## **PART 10 – GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND THEIR ACCESS**

The above cross tabulation gives the data on the knowledge of street vendors on government policies and their access to these policies.

The data shows that 20% of women and 6% of men are aware and have knowledge about the government policies provided to them. But, only men have the access to these policies but none of the women are having access these policies as they are unaware of it. To overcome this problem proper awareness programs, need to be conducted and they need to be educated on how to access these programs.

S.NO	GOVERNMENT POLICIES	ACCESS TO GOVERNMENT POLICIES
WOMEN	20% of them are aware of the government policies provided to them.	None of them have access to these policies
MEN	6% of them are aware of the government policies provided to them	6% of them are having access to these policies



## **DISCUSSION**

When we observe the socio-demographic status of the street vendors we can see that illiteracy is still a prevailing problem and most of them are belonging to lower middle-class families where the annual income levels are not satisfying their basic needs. This may be one of the reason for the street vendors due to which they are unable to afford the basic necessities.

As the results shown among the females. 50% of the women street vendors are coming from old age group and they are working for more than 10 hours to repay their previous debts.

The data shows that 50% of the street vendors are obese and overweight and some of them are underweight. This shows that there is a lot of metabolic problems along with lifestyle changes.

Majority of the vendors are still facing some discrimination in their work place with which they are unable to sell their goods at the same time they are also being harassed by the public authorities.

Most of them are not aware of basic government policies therefore some basic education should be given to the vendors by government authorities with which there will be some kind of awareness among the vendors.

The above results show that there is a lot of pressure on the vendors in terms of clearing their debts and selling their goods on time this is bringing some psychological disturbances among the vendors.

A lot of vendors are baring a lot of pain during their working hours and tend to use some medications to overcome the pain this shows that due to lack of money and proper healthcare facilities they are unable to have their regular health checkups that is a type of concern towards their health problems.

According to the results there is a lot of change in their behavior this is clearly indicated in their meal consumption i.e. 90% of the street vendors are consuming all the three meals in a day.

Their dietary patterns have shown that most of them are consuming only the basic diet that is cereals and pulses. This shows that their diet is not having all the five food groups which tells that there is a need for dietary modification.

Improper facilities for access of public toilets and safe drinking water is a concern as they are the most important things to be present in any working place.

Most of the street vendors sell their goods staying at a single place resulting in musculo-skeletal problem due to lack physical activity and improper meal timings.

The data shows that none of the street vendors are following safety precautions like wearing hand gloves, mask, washing their hands, usage of sanitizers etc. there is a high chance of respiratory tract infections, skin allergies, spread of viral infections.

## **CONCLUSION**

The main purpose of this study is to assess the nutrition, health status and hygiene practices among street vendors. As per our study out of 30 samples most of them are not following hygiene practices. Many of them are having poor knowledge on nutrition and health. Most of them were unskilled, less educated with poor economic conditions.

In the need to earn more money they work for longer and tend to skip their meals or have their meals irregularly. They face variety of challenges with exploitation, extortion and intimidation i.e. unfair treatment, threatening and frightening them. At the forefront of most discussions with the street vendors there was an issue of exploitative relationship with the municipal authorities.

With the knowledge we have gained from this study we can say that the condition of street vendors is still the same as past or even worse after the covid-19 breakout.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

As per our study we would like to recommend a few things: -

1. The most important thing is business security. Vendors need proper space, business license and some basic amenities to serve better.
2. There is need to do proper awareness programs for street vendors on hygiene and sanitation along with government policies which are meant for them.
3. Women street vendors need financial support to improve their business.
4. Proper safety and precautionary measures are to be taken specially in rainy season.

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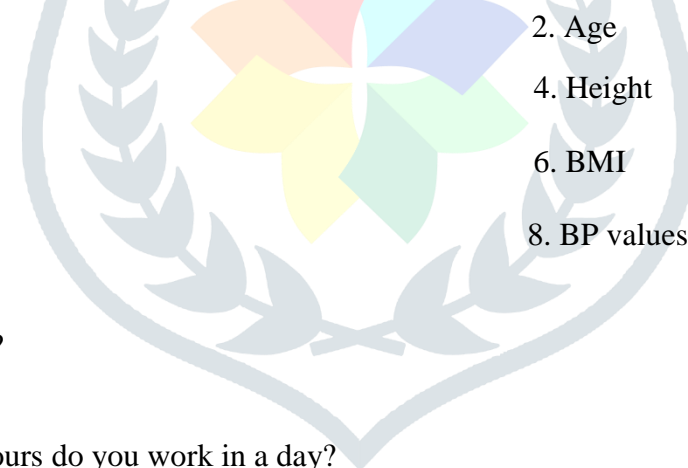
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Questionnaire on Nutritional Health Status and Hygiene  
Street Vendors in Hyderabad

Practices Among

- 
- 1.Name
  2. Age
  - 3.Gender
  4. Height
  - 5.Weight
  6. BMI
  - 7.Economic Status
  8. BP values
  - 9.Are you Educated?
  - 10.How many hours do you work in a day?
  - 11.Are you suffering from any disease?
  - 12.How many glasses of water do you drink in a day?
  - 13.How many meals do you consume in a day?
  - 14.Do you take your breakfast daily. If no, how often do you skip?
  - 15.What are your meal patterns?
  - 16.What are the timings of your meal?



- 17.How often do you consume green leafy vegetables?
- 18.How often do you consume fruits?
- 19.How often do you consume milk or milk products?
- 20.Do you consume non-veg. If yes, how often do you consume it?
- 21.Are you taking any supplements?
- 22.How frequently you go for urination?
- 23.Is there any access for public toilets? Do you follow any hygiene and sanitation while using public toilets?
- 24.Do you take any safety precautions during the working time?
- 25.Do you go for regular health checkup?
- 26.Are you aware of government policies or programs?
- 27.Do you have an access for these programs?
- 28.What is your work status?
- 29.How much do you earn in a day?
- 30.How often do you consume caffeine?
- 31.Do you have regular menstrual cycle? [if applicable]
- 32.Do you have any insurance policies?
- 33.Do you follow any hygiene practices while working?