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A Study of the Vendor's Perspective and their Issues on the Weekly Haat in Delhi

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Introduction

Weekly haat is a very special feature in Delhi. Although not unique, but in Delhi, these weekly haats exhibit the combination of the various components of an established market system based on a purely temporary edifice. The weekly haat system is comprised of the vendors of various commodities and services that a household normally requires.

The weekly haat provides all the essential commodities ranging from clothes, utensils, toys, hosiery items, cosmetics, vegetables, fruits and many more. A large number of people are engaged in this system. A weekly haat is usually named by the day on which it is temporarily organized. For instance, Som Bazar for the market on Monday, Veer Bazar for the market on Thursday. Besides, the weekly markets are also identified by the name of the location in which it is temporarily organized viz., the weekly haat in Tilak Nagar, West Patel Nagar etc.

Besides the vendors, a large number of people are associated with a single weekly haat. Some people take care of setting up the entire infrastructure like the transporters associated and the supplier of electric generator etc.

The weekly haat exhibits a tapestry of demographic diversity. People from different regions of India migrated to Delhi are a part of this grand mechanism.

Literature Review

To understand the notions associated with unorganized, temporary market structure a review of literature was undertaken. The highlights of the review are as follows. (McCree and Yeung, 1977) tries to define street vendors. Usually the people who do business in public places like streets and pavements can be considered as street vendors. They are capable of making significant contribution in shaping the informal economy.

Mehra, Shashank.(2014) in his paper has studied the consumers' perceptions towards purchasing from unorganized and organized retailers with respect to major grocery store .

M. Jolly (2015) in the paper "Organised and unorganised segment of fresh fruits and vegetables in Delhi and NCR" had studied all the front end retailers. She states "In Delhi NCR region about 70% food retail came under unorganized retail which mainly included push cart, temporary shops and permanent shops. Amongst three of them temporary shop were highest in number and sold maximum amount of fruits and vegetables and in Delhi NCR region people preferred to shop from weekly vegetable markets and roadside vendors due to availability of more choice and chances to bargain with the vendor. Under weekly vegetable markets vendors from nearby regions exhibited their stuff at best possible prices for the consumer."¹

There is a common tale often referred to, which explains how people without government assistance can build up their own business. After partition when people came to India and restarted their endeavor to earn a livelihood, it was very difficult for them to start with. They neither had enough capital nor there was any specific assistance from the government. The tale says that these people used to purchase sugar or other commodities at wholesale price and sell to the

¹ M. Jolly, (USMNRD) ISSN(P): 2249-6939; ISSN(E): 2249-8044

retailers at the same price. The only Gunny bag that was left behind was their earning that they could sell. They did not have a permanent shed nor any fixed cost. They didn't have any assistance from anywhere but slowly with passage of time they could build their own fortune. This tells the zeal of the traders associated with the temporary markets.

Problem

In India, there is a co-existence of both permanent and temporary markets. In various states, the temporary bazars or haats, i.e., markets with a temporary setup and organized for certain time period or on a particular day of the week is a very common feature. A large part of the population are directly or indirectly associated with these temporary markets. Delhi is no exception. Despite the existence of sprawling malls and the well-established market places one can find the weekly haats in Delhi. The socio-economic dimensions of this mechanism lured us to conduct a study. The huge population of people associated with the weekly haat system makes this mechanism a really interesting subject to be explored in the state of Delhi.

Although the study was conducted from two different perspectives viz, the perspective of the consumers and the perspective of the vendors. But, in this paper, we would endeavor to reflect on the Vendors' side of the story.

Objectives

1. To study socio-economic aspects of weekly haat markets in Delhi.
2. To study the benefits of the weekly haat for the Vendors
3. To study the spillover effects of the weekly haat system.
4. To study the administrative dimension.
5. To analyze the demographic composition of the people associated with haat system.

Research Methodology

This study is a based on primary data collected through a structured close ended questionnaire and personal interview. The sample of respondents was based on purposive sampling method. A total of thirty five respondents were interacted.

Area of the study

The study was conducted in the Saturday market "Sani Bazar" at Sector-7 Rohini, Delhi. During the study the various stakeholders of a haat were interacted that includes vendors, consumers and the internal regulatory body, transporter associated and the supplier of electric generator. (This paper relates to the interaction with the vendors)

Limitation of the study

The study was conducted with a very small sample

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Therefore, the study doesn't claim to make general representation of the entire haat system.

Observations and Discussions:

The highlights of the various observations made in the study have been discussed below.

(A) Female participations and working conditions

Female participation
This study had focused to explore the female participation in the weekly haat system and their issues.

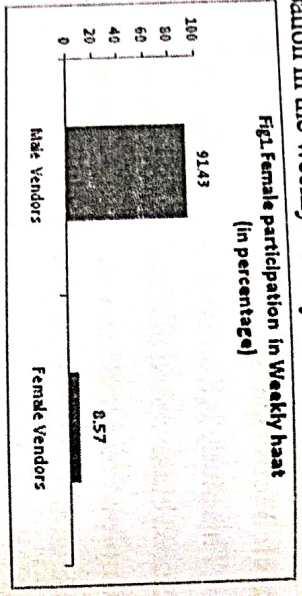


Fig1: Source: Computed from Sample Data

Female participation: This weekly market had a mere 8.57 percent of female vendors.

Female perspective on the system: Around 33.33 percent of the female vendors felt that there was an overall male domination in the entire setup of weekly haat system and considered it as a hurdle for them to run their business.

The issue of Gender sensitization: 100 percent of the female respondents had expressed their concerns regarding the lack of gender sensitization. They feel that the society has

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to be made more aware and a social environment more conducive for female participation should be prepared.

(B) Educational qualification across the generation

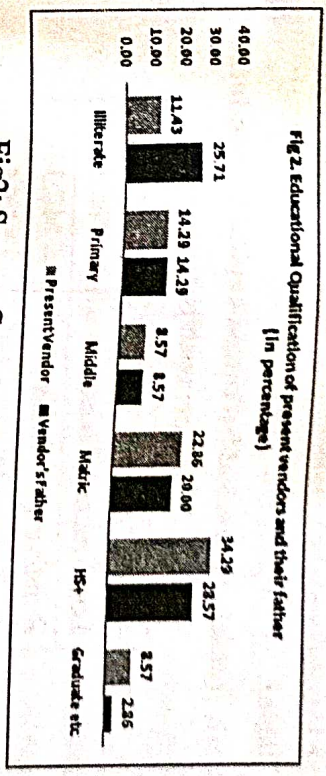


Fig2: Source: Computed from Sample Data

Fig2. Portrays the educational qualifications of the vendors and their previous generation. It was interesting to note that besides others, fathers of all the present illiterate respondents were illiterate too.

(C) Obstacles faced while setting up the business

The vendors have different obstacles. Fig3 tells the story of their variety of problems.

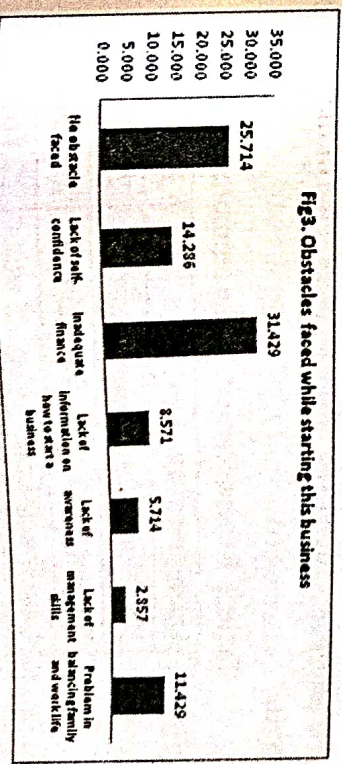


Fig3: Source: Computed from Sample Data

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(D) Funding of their business

Among the respondents in this study, 45.71 percent had started their business with their Own capital. The rest had borrowed their capital from different sources as given in table1.

Table1. Sources of borrowed capital by vendors (in percentage)

Bank	21.05
Local money lenders	26.32
Relatives & Friends	47.37
Committees/Chit funds	5.26

Source: Computed from Sample Data

(E) Reasons for joining the haat bazar

The respondents had different reasons that had compelled them to join a temporary system like the weekly haat. The major causes were to overcome the curse of unemployment and become self-dependent. Besides, the need of less investment had also propelled a considerable (22.86 percent) population to join the temporary setup of the weekly haat.

Table 2. Reasons for joining the temporary haat

Unemployment	37.14
Need for self-dependence	25.71
Did not like to work for others	14.29
Less investment	22.86

Source: Computed from Sample Data

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(F) Miscellaneous outcomes of joining the haat system and impact of life

- (i) Around 91.43 percent of the respondents have their association with the haat system as the only source of earning their livelihood.
- (ii) Around 71.43 percent of the respondents have expressed their view that this business has helped them to improve their standard of living.
- (iii) Around 80 percent of the respondents feel that they have been able to meet the basic needs of your family by trading in the weekly haat.
- (iv) Around 68.67 percent of the respondents intend to continue to be a part of the haat bazaar.

(G) Business strategy

- (i) Around 62.86 percent of the respondents allow bargaining in order to attract the customers. They provide discounts in order to satisfy their customers.
- (ii) Around 60 percent of the respondents feel that fixed location help their customers to identify them among other vendors
- (iii) Around 70 percent of the respondents opine that the administration and police help them in smooth functioning of the haat.
- (iv) A mere 22 percent of the respondents have insurance coverage.

Recommendations:

This study had endeavored to understand the perspective and the issues of the vendors of the weekly haat system. Based on the observations, the study takes the courage of making few humble recommendations.

- (i) The administration may make better infrastructural facilities for these weekly haats. As the haats are organized on roads, better traffic maintenance may be made to make the area hassle free.
- (ii) The police and general administration may take initiatives to make the market environment more conducive for female vendors.
- (iii) The vendors associated with the weekly haat should be provided better and easier access to loans and financial assistance from the organized financial sector.
- (iv) The insurance sector may take comprehensive measures to encompass these markets into their ambit.
- (v) The vendors can make use of latest technology in creating their identification in the market place organized temporarily. They may use mobile app or other ways to get to their customers.

Conclusion:

This study has tried to provide an insight of the issues of the vendors associated with the weekly markets in Delhi.

The study discusses the various problems and prospects of the vendors and makes certain humble recommendations to make the weekly haat system more efficient and vibrant.

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