

**LIVELIHOOD STRATEGIES, CHALLENGES AND NEGOTIATION
PRACTICES AMONG WOMEN STREET VENDORS IN
MACHHAPOKHARI, KATHMANDU**

A Thesis

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Master of Arts in Sociology**

Submitted By

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DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis entitled “Livelihood Strategies, Challenges and Negotiation Practices Among Women Street Vendors in Machhapokhari, Kathmandu” submitted the Central Department of Sociology, Tribhuvan University is an entirely original work prepared under the supervision and guidance of supervisor Guman Singh Khatri, PhD. I have made due to acknowledgement to all ideas and information borrowed from different sources while writing this thesis. I am solely responsible if any evidence is found against my thesis.

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LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

This is to certify that the thesis entitled, “Livelihood Strategies, Challenges and Negotiation Practices Among Women Street Vendors in Machhapokhari, Kathmandu” was prepared by Mrs. Sanjita Adhikari under my supervisor and guidance. I, hereby, recommend this thesis for final evaluation and approval by the Central Department of Sociology, Tribhuvan University in fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Sociology.

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LETTER OF APPROVAL

This thesis entitled “Livelihood Strategies, Challenges and Negotiation Practices Among Women Street Vendors Machhapokhari, Kathmandu” was submitted by Mrs. Sanjita Adhikari for final examination by the Central Department of Sociology, University Campus, Kirtipur in partial fulfillment of Degree of Masters of Arts Sociology. We, hereby, certify that the thesis is satisfactory and is, therefore, accepted for the degree of Master of Arts in Sociology.

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ABSTRACT

This research explores livelihood practices, challenges and negotiation strategies of women street vendors in their everyday life. This study focuses daily experiences of women street vendors in the urban informal economy settings and reveals complex social realities in Machhapokhari, a city of Kathmandu. Women street vendors as the most affected group have encountered the increasing enforcement of anti-vending policies by Kathmandu Metropolitan City without any alternative supports. Uncertainty lives of women street vendors has increased under the restriction of neoliberal urban plan. Despite contributing significantly to the urban economy, these women remain marginalized due to various reasons. Understand while intersecting factors such as gender, migration status, class, age, and single motherhood play crucial role in shaping the margin position. There is barely discourse about women street vendors globally. Still some existing research and urban policy mostly generalize women as a homogenous group which fails to see these interactional factors.

The unpredictable lives of women vendors highlight the importance of understanding their strategies for survival. As main objectives of this thesis paper are: (i) To examine the combination of gender, migration histories, class, marital status, single motherhood (single migrant women) and age that influence the livelihood strategies of women street vendors. (ii) To identify specific challenges, they face due to their status as women, migrants, single mothers etc. (iii) To analyze negotiate practices towards certain challenges by women street vendors and still continuing vending work as well. Women vendors embrace vending not by choice but for survival. Due to a lack of formal jobs and practical education, a lack of skill and vocational training, and a barrier system even to entry into formal job sectors for marginal people.

This research is guided by an intersectional framework drawing on the theories of Kimberle Crenshaw (1989). Using phenomenological approach within qualitative methods and purposive sampling strategies was used to select participants. The study involved field observation, in-depth interviews with 21 women vendors, and triangulation interviews with women street vendors including ward officials and members of community.

The study concludes that women vendors' hardships are not isolated but reflect broader structures of gendered and urban inequalities. Women vendors are not just economic actors but also citizen, mother, migrant, widow and caregivers. Their hardships such as tolerating customer behavior, daily struggle for public space, harassment and abuse, eviction, and lack of social protection are compounded by gendered roles, socio economic status, migration histories, age factors and lack of kin support. Despite these challenges women display creativity and resilience through flexible vending strategies and social network support. Informal network act as survival mechanism by providing information, solidarity, and protection in chaos urban setting.

Overall, this study shows that women street vendors use different livelihood strategies, and these strategies are smart responses to deep structural problems. They must always negotiate with the situation and they resist challenges in their daily lives. Their survival depends on social networks and they also rely on creative tactics and strong personal effort. These actions challenge neoliberal urban governance and they also create a sense of belonging in a city that mostly excludes them. This research argues that it is important to recognize these practices and such recognition can help build urban policies that are more inclusive. These policies should move beyond criminalizing vendors and they should support their right to the city as marginalized people. Ultimately, this research contributes to the fields of feminist urban studies, informal economy, and intersectional sociology by illustrating complex realities of lived experiences of women vendors are totally ignored in public discourse and policymaking.

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ACRONYMS/ABBREVIATIONS

ILO	:	International Labor Office
JSSTSC	:	The Joint Self-employed Street Traders Struggle Committee
KMC	:	Kathmandu Metropolitan City
LDC	:	Least Developed Country
NEST	:	Nepal Street Vendor Trade Union
NLFS	:	Nepal Labour Force Survey
SSF	:	Social Security Scheme
UNIFEM:		United Nations Development Fund for Women
WIEGO	:	Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Street vending is essential component of the informal economy of an urban area. People are pursuing internal migration as a way of survival strategy to create livelihoods in the urban informal sectors (Khawas, 2022). Such internal migration patterns from remote rural area towards cities such as Kathmandu, Pokhara, Bharatpur provide a fascinating perspective when analyzed through sustain life to meet basic needs among poor and marginalized group.

Urban centers such as Kathmandu serve as core areas having facilitate infrastructure and economic activities whereas rural areas are considered peripheral regions with low economic potential (Khatri, 2024). Informal sectors such as street vendors play a significant role in the urban economy of Kathmandu areas and support it by distributing goods to locals. We can't ignore its importance in supporting urban economies. Street vendors provide affordable low cost goods and services to urban residents while also providing essential employment opportunities for the economically vulnerable particularly rural migrants and the urban poor.

Globally, street vendors play a significant role in the urban economy by providing consumers with convenient access to a wide range of goods and services in public areas (Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing, 2014). Anyone who sells things to the general public without a permanent, built up facility to sell from is considered a street vendor (Bhowmik, 2005). Bose and Mishra (2013) describe a more holistic definition of street vendors, describing street vendor as someone who sells everyday items, wares, food items, or merchandise to the general public in a street, lane, sidewalk, footpath, pavement, public park, or any other public or private area, either from a temporary built-up structure or by moving from place to place. This includes hawkers, peddlers, squatters, and any other names that may be specific to a particular area or region.

One of the notable features of street vendors is the mobility and structure of the selling place. Based on that, Yatmo (2008) divides street vendors into several categories,

namely: 1) kiosk; 2) mat; 3) tent; 4) pushcart; 5) carrier; and 6) basket (Fanggidae, 2021). The bulk of the women in developing countries are engaged in the informal sector (Takaza & Chitereka, 2022). In Nepal, women street vendors are those who have limited formal education, low skill levels, and are forced by circumstance to become the primary breadwinner of their household. To support and sustain their livelihood, they participate in the informal sale of goods and services in public places. Particularly in the early morning and evening hours which often continue into the night, these women are actively involved in vending tasks solely for basic survival.

In order to comprehend the experiences of women street vendors, it is necessary to look beyond economic analysis and consider how their social position is shaped by livelihood strategies, acts of resistance, negotiation with authority, and informal employment in urban space.

The concept of social location describes an individual's position in society according to their social traits. Race, gender, class, sexual orientation, ability, religion, and geography are a few examples of these traits. Social location is embedded in relations of hierarchy within a multiplicity of specific situational and conjunctural spheres. Stated differently, places are related to stratification (at local, national, and international levels) in a chronographic and contextual context; that is, they are part of a "real time and place" context. A person might be in a position of dominance and subordination simultaneously on the one hand or at different times or spaces on the other (Anthias, 2013).

Therefore, social location is dynamic. It recognizes that individuals possess multiple identities while intersecting form new different position rather than being defined by a single ascribe, rigid category. A person's experiences, opportunities, and access to resources and power are influenced by their social location. It has an impact on how individuals are perceived and treated by others, as well as their interactions with social structures.

Equally relevant is the concept of livelihood which has become central to understanding how people sustain themselves. Chambers & Conway (1992) define livelihood as the activities, assets (stores, resources, claims, and access), and capabilities necessary for a

means of subsistence. According to Chambers & Conway's (1992) definition, livelihood is comprised of four components:

- i) People and their livelihood capabilities,
- ii) Assets including both the tangible (resources and stores) and intangible (claims and access) which provide the material and social means that are used to construct livelihood,
- iii) Activities for example like what people do and
- iv) A living which describes the results of people's actions.

The five primary categories of capital that contribute to assets in the livelihood definition are natural capital, physical capital, human capital, financial capital, and social capital, according to proponents of the Chambers and Conway school of thought (e.g., Scoones, 1998). Among them social capital refers to the social network and associations in which people participate and from which they can derive support that contributes to their livelihood (Ellis, 2000).

The livelihood concept has become important as a means of understanding the factors that shapes people's lives and well beings (Bagchi et al., 1998). In a simple sense, a livelihood refers to the means people use to make a living. According to Vincent (2001), livelihood is the result of how and why individuals band together to use technology, labor, power, knowledge, and social relationships to change the environment to suit their needs and wishes. The definition of livelihood by Ellis (2000) is a livelihood is made up of the activities, natural, physical, human, financial, and social assets as well as the access to these resources which are mediated by institutions and social relationships that collectively define the standard of living for an individual or household.

Street vending also involves negotiation practices that reflect both cooperative and competitive motivations. Bartos (1977) views negotiation should be viewed as a process with two, largely opposing motivations: the collectivistic (cooperative) desire to arrive at a just resolution and the individual (competitive) goal to maximize one's own utility. Strategies like 'court action,' 'bargaining with votes,' 'payment of tokens,' and 'carrying few goods' were identified and grouped into macro level and micro level

negotiating strategies providing a framework for understanding how vendors negotiate for space (Forkuor et al., 2017).

One of the most prevalent urbanization related phenomena in emerging nations is street vending (Forkuor et al., 2017). Around the world street sellers can be found in urban public areas (Roever & Skinner, 2016). Due to factors including poverty, a lack of education, unskilled labor, a lack of training, and parental disruption, people in developing nations like Bangladesh, India, Nepal, and Pakistan work in the informal sector (International Labour Office, 2004; NLFS, 2019).

Since the formal sectors such as education, health, civil service, and social service demand a high degree of efficiency, skill, and knowledge, Nepal's liberalization and privatization policies since 1990 have led to an increasing number of people working as helpers in the informal sectors such as street vending, construction, and domestic work. Furthermore, the increasing population of Nepal and the shrinking opportunities for employment in the formal sector have also pushed people to gain employment in the informal sectors. Moreover, more and more women are entering paid work, but their entry is mainly in the informal sector and home based work (UNIFEM, 2005).

Contemporary Kathmandu clearly shows these dynamic. And taken one of the vibrant issue to street vending that randomly seen everywhere and anywhere as well as obstacles for pedestrians and difficulties for maintain urban orders. We are hearing lots of news in social media on it. My research study is situated in Machhapokhari area, a vibrant urban area and market hub in Kathmandu Metropolitan City. This place has become a critical site for rural-urban migrants especially women who engage in informal street vending. Recently many vendors have shifted from the main Machhapokhari road to the next location of the Machhapokhari spot which is near the Bishnumati riverside. This place is close to the bridge of New Buspark. The location was chosen for the visible presence of women vendors who regularly face harassment, displacement, and economic insecurity.

Despite women vendors' critical role in supporting ordinary urban life economy, their positionality is generally overlooked in policy discussions and academic studies. None of the researcher discourse in the context of women street vendors takes a different approach. Till now, every researcher debated the street vendor issue and their rights but

forgot to have public discourse in the front line about women street vendors and their situation and marginality.

In doing so, my thesis investigates the livelihood strategies, the challenges, and the negotiation practices adopted by women street vendor in Machhapokhari. The thesis contributes to a broader understanding with a new lens/perspective of how multiple, overlapping identities shaped women street vendors as the most marginalized or disadvantaged group.

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

The term "informal sector" in urban settings refers to small business owners who engage in market transactions and the cash economy by selling goods and food or providing services. The majority of urban families make their living from a wide range of economic activities in this so called "urban informal sector," which is more varied than the rural one (Adhikari, 2011).

One of the main indicators of urban poverty particularly in developing nations like Nepal is street hawking. Due to a lack of other revenue streams, it has now grown to be a significant area of small scale economic activity. A straightforward method of making money with little initial investment is street vending. Poor individuals are therefore drawn to these kinds of activities. The majority of everyday objects may be found on the street, including local goods, inexpensive jewelry, crafts, religious items, dolls, caps, CDs, clothing, books, fruits, vegetables, radios, and more (Adhikari, 2011).

Despite their essential contribution to the urban economy, vendors are continuing to be excluded from urban planning, informal employment policy, and social protection frameworks however women vendors are even more affected by exclusion. Their dual duties as caregivers and providers go unrecognized, while they remain highly vulnerable to harassment, abuse displacement, and poverty.

Street vendors play a crucial role in the economic activity of the unorganized sector. The practice of street vending world widespread. Millions of people sell a variety of things on the streets, sidewalks, and other public areas in cities, towns, and villages all over the world, making up all or part of their income (Adhikari, 2011).

The formal sector is too limited in a least developed country (LDC) like Nepal to provide employment possibilities to the vast number of workers. As a result, it is evident that a sizable portion of the population makes their living in the unorganized sector which is particularly prevalent in metropolitan areas (Adhikari, 2011). The Nepal Street Vendor Trade Union (NEST) estimates that there are currently 50,000 street vendors operating in KMC which is a significant number given the figures from five years ago (Dahal & Sharma, 2023).

After taking office, Mayor Balendra Shah started to take action against street vendors in public immediately. The metropolitan city states it functions in a legal manner. As per the representative, the authority firstly released a notice on January 10, 2023, stating that street vendors should not run their businesses on the streets and that it is illegal. The notice provided the street vendors with 35 days to remove their vending practices. After that, micing was done for seven days; only then was municipal police mobilized to manage the street vendors on the street (Dahal & Sharma, 2023). Without providing any alternative livelihood arrangements by policymakers. The Joint Self-Employed Street Traders Struggle Committee (JSSTSC) has announced a phase wise protest against the Kathmandu Metropolitan City (KMC) putting forth a seven-point charter of demands. Return of seized goods, fair price markets, business continuity with timing, labor management, and a high-powered management task force are some of the demands of street vendors (Republica, 2024).

Amid this growing contestation, the challenges faced by women street vendors in Nepal remain largely absent in social science research. Although street vending is widely discussed, policies and media narratives mostly generalize the issue, failing to recognize that women vendors experience compounded vulnerabilities due to gender roles, caregiving responsibilities, earning income, limited mobility, and weaker social protection. Many of these women are migrants, single mothers, or from marginalized socioeconomic background who are working in hazardous, unsanitary, and insecure public spaces. For many vending is not a choice but a compulsion.

Machhapokhari, an area surrounded by pollution, overcrowding, the stench of the Bisnumati River, informal commerce, and frequent police surveillance. This site has become a concentrated area of women led street vending especially in the morning and late evening. They do this not by choice but out of necessity hoping to earn just enough

for daily meals, school fees, and rent. Their ability to continue working despite having pollutant area, confiscation threats, abusive encounters, and the pressure of managing household duties speaks to the depth of their economic hardship and quiet resilience.

In light of these realities, this study aims to explore the everyday struggles, livelihood strategies, and coping mechanisms of women street vendors in surrounding Machhapokhari, Kathmandu. By concentrating on their lived experiences, notably the intersection of gender, age, migration, poverty, and urban governance, this research hopes to shed light on the invisible marginal women who are overshadowed in the broad headline called vendor issue in the informal economy. It further seeks to inform more inclusive urban policies that acknowledge the value, challenges, and resilience of women street vendors not just as economic actors but as caregivers, decision makers of house, and community members within the urban setting.

1.3 Research Questions

The central idea of this study is not solely documented experiences of women street vendors rather to understand how structural inequalities and intersecting social positions particularly gender, age, migration histories and single motherhood influence the livelihood strategies of women street vendors. This research investigates the challenges these women face and the strategies they adopt to cope with and negotiate life within the informal urban public space. The central idea of this research is not merely documented experiences of women street vendors but rather to understand how structural inequalities and intersecting social positions particularly gender, migration histories, class, age and single motherhood influence the livelihood strategies of women street vendors.

Therefore, major questions are how, why, and in whose interest these experiences are produced and maintained. The given research questions unpack these complexities by focusing on both individual strategies and broader structural forces.

- a. How do the combination of gender, age, migration histories, and single motherhood (single migrant woman) influence the livelihood strategies of women street vendors?
- b. What specific challenges do they face due to their status as women, migrants, and single mothers?

- c. How do they navigate and negotiate certain challenges, still continuing vending work as well?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

This thesis has the following key objectives:

- To examine the combination of gender, migration histories, and single motherhood (single migrant women) that influence the livelihood strategies of women street vendors.
- To identify specific challenges, they face due to their status as women, migrants, and single mothers.
- To analyze women street vendors, navigate and negotiate towards certain challenges, still continuing vending work as well.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study examines the focuses on the livelihood strategy, challenges, and negotiation strategy of women street vendors in Machhapokhari, area of Kathmandu. Nepal is one of the least developed countries with the characteristics of less practical education, low skill, lack of industries, and rural migration to urban spaces. Though for sustaining livelihood, the easiest way to get involved in street vending is with low capital to investment. However, generalizing all the vendors and putting them into the same pot, not provides actual in-depth realities of complex society. The unrepresented unique experiences of marginalized ones.

The lived experiences of women vendors reveal not only economic hardship but also the daily negotiations required to survive in exclusionary urban spaces. Thus, the study on the struggle and negotiation of marginalised women vendors holds academic and practical significance. Contributing to investigate how underprivileged women deal with urban governance that excludes them. Despite being refused legal recognition, excluded from urban development, displaced and subjected to violence. However, labor is necessary for both to live daily life and function in cities. This study highlights the underappreciated claims that the primary source of stains in the urban arena's beauty is vendors and this narrative affect most to women street vendors.

Kathmandu city's everywhere private, public, corner side of the road, junction, river site, and park are surrounded by vendors who create informal economies in defiance of formal barriers. After a recent strict ban on vending in an attempt to improve pedestrian space and reduce congestion by the Kathmandu Metropolitan City. Then immediately marginal people, women street vendors especially are neglected in the urban policies, legal protection, and social recognition. Thus, this research adds to the understanding of the structural inequalities produced and maintained by the dominant group even centering the voices of women street vendors, their struggle and navigate strategies.

The significance of this study lies in its interdisciplinary approach combining intersectionality, urban sociology, and informality studies. By focusing on the theme of livelihood tactics, obstacles, and negotiate way of women street vendors in Machhapokhari. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of how their innovative tactics are skillful to resist against odds and survive their existence. The research study finding will not only contribute to academic discourse but also provide practical insights for identifying the most marginal women among women vendors group by intersecting various factors which is helpful in the process of mainstreaming. The findings will inform inclusive urban policies that recognize and support the rights of women street vendors. It will challenge dominant narratives of development that ignore the lived realities of women in the informal sectors.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter highlights the theoretical, empirical and anti-vending action in local regulatory context on vendors specifically exploring the experiences of women street vendors. The following literatures are the references for this study.

2.1 Theoretical Review

For the purpose of women street vendors study, the following theoretical framework are particularly relevant such as: 1) Sociological Imagination and Neoliberal urban planning 2) Social Capital Theory 3) Gender and Intersectionality and 4) Livelihood Approaches. These Frameworks together provides lenses to comprehensive analyze how women street vendors sustain their lives while experiences multiple form of inequality, oppression and injustice in an urban informal economy.

2.1.1 Sociological Imagination and Neoliberal Urban Planning

The application of “sociological imagination” by American Sociologist C. Wright Mill (1959), which is considered one of the major contributions in the field of sociology and for research methods. It is instrumental in analyzing the issue from three axes: history, social structure, and biography. It is significant to know the historical background of urbanization, economic policies, migration, and gendered labor that forced women into informal vending. It’s necessary to understand that within social structure lie systematic issues such as state neglect, lack of social protection, neo-liberal urban policy structure, gender norms, and spatial politics that shape their realities. Biographies capture the personal struggles, stories, and lived experiences of many women street vendors who come from poor families, migrant, are single mothers, lack formal education and barrier to entry in formal sectors. These personal hardships are not isolated but rather shaped by broader social structures marked by patriarchy, inadequate urban plan policies, and economic disparity.

The link between Mills’ sociological imagination and neo liberal urbanism becomes apparent when examining eviction policies. The relationship between neoliberal urban planning and forced evictions of marginal and urban poor has been widely explored in the fields of urban studies, sociology, and geography. In this context, urban planning

and policy related to the development agenda shaped by neoliberal ideologies prioritize aesthetics, investment, and privatization. As Recio and Dovey (2021) note, neoliberal urban planning based on an economic agenda to enhance the city's competitiveness and attract investment. Consequently, cities promote only tall, shining buildings, big malls, high apartments, luxury houses, and privatized infrastructure while at the same time evict poor communities. This tendency is further reinforced through decisions by paradigm shifts in urban law, plans, and policies. Even power and governance reflect the interest of capital over the community's welfare.

Building on, the underlying institutional frameworks of urban government will reinforce neoliberal goals (Brenner & Theodore, 2002). Thus, neoliberal ideas inherently favor economic growth and capital accumulation over social fairness. It indicates that marginalized populations will eventually be displaced through eviction and gentrification. Ghertner (2011) in *Rule by Aesthetics* argues that this dramatic restructuring of the city could be enacted successfully because state institutions, and the judiciary in particular, established a "mode of governing space on the basis of codes of appearance" in place of the "calculative instruments of map, census, and survey." Eviction appears as a neoliberal urban planning tool in this scenario. For example, women street vendors are viewed as encroachments or visual pollution, and policies are designed to sanitize cities for middle class consumption. A vision of urban modernism that excludes the poor is reflected in the forcible eviction of vendors as part of the beautifying of cities like Kathmandu, Pokhara, Dharan etc.

Expanding on this perspective, Neil Smith (1996) discusses the aggressive reclaiming of inner cities by the state and capital through gentrification which displacing marginalized groups such as the poor, street vendors. That's true urban government supports capital accumulation through land commodification at the expense of the marginalized urban group. Similarly, David Harvey (2003) introduces the concept of "accumulation by dispossession" which describes how neoliberalism repurposes state power to facilitate the privatization of public assets and the displacement of vulnerable groups. It means that displacement is associated to contemporary urban redevelopment.

The same tendency can be seen in the PPP Model (Public Private Partnership Model) where government agency and a private sector business work together to finance, construct, and run a public infrastructure project over the long run. Examples include

road construction, transportation, and energy projects rather than supporting individual street vendors. Even this collaboration between government and private developers prioritizes profit over social welfare, leading to the commodification of public spaces. This framework coverage on the idea that neoliberal urbanism prioritizes capital accumulation, competitiveness and aesthetics, leading to evictions, displacement, gentrification for upper classes, commodification of public space and exclusion of informal vendors belongs to marginal group. Thus, Mills' sociological imagination reframes women vendors' difficulties not as isolated issues but as the result of neoliberal urban policy design and structural inequality.

2.1.2 Social Capital Theory

Social capital theory was first defined by renowned French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu as “the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition.” Its fundamental idea is that by giving its members access to the social resources that are integrated into the network, a network adds value for them (Bourdieu, 1985; Florin, Lubatkin, & Schulze, 2003). Firstly, social capital is embedded in social networks and social relationships through which individuals gain access to support, information, protection, and opportunities. Social capital is not merely just about relationships but also about access to resources embedded within those networks.

Secondly, social capital does not function in isolation. It intersects with these aspects economic, cultural and symbolic capital which are unequally divided and influence individual position within social space. One's social connection in such space shape their ability to survive and thrive. Those who can mobilized support, exchange favors, share belongings and trust hold within own group often invisible yet powerful. Thirdly, Bourdieu focuses that social capital is not neutral but rather shaped by power relations, social hierarchies, and structural inequalities such as gender, class, caste, ethnicity and migration. This how social capital can both enable and constrain individual agency, depending on the actor's position within the broader field. Depend on kind of connections serves actual access to opportunities, support and information to the individuals are some important concepts in this theoretical framework.

Casting Bourdieu's (1986) concept of social capital in the context of women street vendors to understand how these women draw on networks of relationship to support

their everyday lives. These network provide information on market days, police activity, and current prices in addition to providing small loans, idea sharing, and emotional support. Street vendors in urban areas always have to deal with municipal bans, lack of legal status, eviction threats, spot uncertainty, etc. In such a hostile urban environment women vendors survive not only through economic strategies but also through mobilization of social capital. Social capital might be an essential resource for women street vendors who have low resource, migrant and poor education in order to maintain their livelihood and use it as a negotiating tool. This social capital is denoted as support from friends' circles, kinship ties, neighborhood solidarity, and aid from informal cooperatives.

2.1.3 Gender and Intersectionality Theory

The concept of patriarchy is the essential component to understand gender relational. Through the feminist perspective it focuses how patriarchy operates across different domains of social life. Six key structures of patriarchy that traps women and have gender inequalities such as paid work where women face discrimination, household production where women's labor unpaid, culture norms and values are patriarchal and suggest women are subordinate to men, sexuality of women is controlled and restricted by society. Gender based violence a mechanism for males exerting control and the state policies reinforce gender inequalities. Moreover, individual control in private, public control via systems (Walby, 1989). Core concept in this framework include gender inequality is maintained in various domain of social life.

Furthermore, to understand multiple forms of social reality exist within society which represent diversity rather than uniformity. Prior to the emergence of the intersectional framework, scholars used to argue about sticking to a one-axis paradigm. One of the renowned sociologist Kimberly Crenshaw provides an alternative viewpoint for examining the complexity of social realities and highlights how overlapping identities shape distinct experiences of oppression, inequality and injustice.

Crenshaw's foundational work that introduced the concept of intersectional. It demonstrates how Black women experiences were excluded in both feminist and anti-racist discourses. Focusing on how Black women face overlapping and distinct forms of oppression. The issue of color women is overshadowed within both feminist and anti-racist movements. These movements discussed being disadvantaged by only one

axis of identity either race or gender but not both. Black women lived experience does not align with either movement. She argues that this exclusion is not only a social but also political issues. Requires a more inclusive and nuanced understanding of how the intersection of race, gender, class and other identities produces a form of marginalized group and unique experience of oppressions (Crenshaw, 1989).

This approach is highly needed to include in the discourse debt, plans, and policies in developing countries like Nepal. In the case of Nepal, feminist discourse focuses on broader issues of gender equality, political representation, and violence against women. But there tend to treat every woman as a homogenous category. For instance, even the famous feminist of Nepal Mangala Devi Singh homogenizes all the women in the same way. Putting all women into the same basket, it looks more like viewing from a bird's eye. None discourse about plural realities of marginal women. It's high time to see the issue through a new perspective that provides justice towards getting in-depth realities and the unique struggle of each one.

Casting Kimberly's idea when applied to women street vendors and find that they are not just 'women' or 'poor migrants' or 'workers.' Difficult to understand from a single-axis framework rejected it. Rather they are affected by multiple overlapping structures of power that are spatial, political, and cultural. Multiple categories such as gender, class, migration status etc., interact politically to shape women street vendors' lived experiences especially in terms of inclusion, exclusion and representation in policy.

2.1.4 Livelihood Approaches

Social and kinship networks are crucial for facilitating and maintaining diverse income portfolios. Social institutions are also essential for interpreting the options and constraints of individuals and families differentiated by gender, income, wealth, access, and assets. A livelihood includes income, both monetary and in-kind, as well as the social institutions (kin, family, compound, village etc.), gender relations, and property rights necessary to support and sustain a given standard of living. Therefore, livelihood diversification is not the same as income diversification. Diversification views this as an active social process in which households are seen to participate in progressively more complex activity portfolios over time. Certain literary subfields focus primarily on diversification as a survival strategy. Other branches concentrate on diversification as an issue of opportunity and choice, incorporating proactive family tactics to raise

living standards. A continuum of causes and motivations that differ for the same families at different times and across families at a given point in time govern diversification (Ellis, 2000).

Ellis' (2000) concept of livelihood diversification helps understand the strategies of women street vendors in location fields. Social networks such as family ties, fellow vendors, relatives enable access to goods and information. Gender relations and social institutions influence products and mobility while lack of secure property rights exposes them to eviction risks. Vending is more than just an income source, it represents a dynamic social process where women constantly change their products and techniques based on demand and regulatory restrictions. Most women diversify for survival while some use it to improve their living situations.

2.2 Empirical Review

2.2.1 Historical and Global Context of Street Vending

The historical and worldwide context of vending indicates that it is not a new or isolated phenomenon but rather a continual response to systematic economic shifts. Understanding its history over time and across geographical regions helps to explain why informal trading persists within contemporary urban environments. While this informal method of commerce has essentially faded from modern western economies, it is still prevalent in many developing countries where it plays a vital role in product distribution particularly among low income communities. The continuance of street hawking is closely related to structural circumstances such as poverty, excessive labor and a lack of official job opportunities. Comparative studies, ranging from Ancient Rome to nineteenth century London and modern day Lagos show that large cities experiencing rapid migration and expansion frequently exhibit comparable patterns of informal retail. These historical roots suggest that street vending is not merely a temporary survival tactic but also recurring response to broader economic transformations. Despite their informal look such systems have been planned, organized and layered which reveal both vulnerability and resilience within urban informal economies (Holleran, 2012).

Since street vending is a long standing and significant occupation that can be found in every country and major city around the world, Bromley (2000) provides a

comprehensive global overview of street vending practice and public policy. Analyzing its permanence and ambivalent attitudes towards it. Drawing from over 25 years of research, it synthesizes and generalizes findings from various countries and contexts. According to the author, street vending has been around for centuries. It was taken as a form of survival livelihood from ranging subsistence workers through to petty capitalism in urban markets of wealthier nations. He critiques the predominance of local case studies and asks for broader comparative and synthetic study to understand comprehend global trends. The article examines the conflict between state control and vendor resilience. It focuses uneven policy responses throughout time and space which contextualizing street vending as a widely distributed occupation.

Holleran (2016), in her chapter “*Representation of food hawkers in ancient Rome.*” Investigate both the role and perception of street food vendors in ancient Rome, one of the largest pre-industrial city in the western world. She points out that food hawkers played a crucial role in the urban food distribution system, providing for the nutritional needs of almost a million people. Despite the limited archaeological evidence due to the perishable nature of goods and mobile nature of vending, Holleran utilizes literary texts, legal codes and artistic images to reconstruct the presence and function of hawkers.

The study focused on how historical representation of street vendors were shaped by elite literary and artistic perspective, frequently depicting as either service provider or social nuisance. This book provides an important historical perspective for understanding how street vending has long been embedded in the fabric of urban life, as well as illuminating early patterns of stigmatization, regulation and survival in informal economies.

Recchi (2021) in the article presents a comparative literature review of informal street vending, focusing on both southern and northern countries. The study emphasizes that while there is extensive research on street vending in developing countries like Africa, Asia, and Latin America, few studies exist in industrialized countries such as Europe and North America. The review overcomes the tendency to investigate this informal economy sector with different analytical lenses between the global South and global North. A literature review was conducted using the Google Scholar database, identifying 59 empirical studies published between 2000 and 2019. Each study was read

twice and two tables were created to summarize studies in developing and developed countries, focusing on author, year, journal, location, and research techniques.

Street vending is shown to be a significant informal sector in urban public spaces. Most studies in both contexts use qualitative investigation techniques like interviews and focus groups due to the lack of official statistical data. The article highlights that street vendors' working strategies, socio-demographic characteristics, and urban governance themes are highly investigated. Street vendors play a crucial role in the socio-demographic and economic aspects of many developing countries particularly in Asia and Africa. They provide income for marginalized and poor people, particularly internal rural migrants, and are often women or displaced former formal workers. In developed countries, informal street vending activities are carried out mainly by immigrants, especially Latin Americans, reflecting challenges due to socio-economic discrimination. The study Recchi (2021) revealed similarities and differences in the characteristics the phenomenon assumes in the two areas of the world while at the same time, showing how there are aspects mainly examined in the literature of southern countries but less investigated in the literature of northern countries and vice versa.

Skinner (2008) in the article, '*Street Trade in Africa: A Review*' analyzes street trading in Africa, focusing on its historical and current trends. It examines the theoretical lenses used in academic literature, the contextualization of street trade statistics and trends in policy, planning and governance. It uses several secondary sources and regional comparisons but its reliance on literature reviews and geographic bias towards Anglophone Africa and absence of case studies from North Africa and Nigeria limit its empirical originality. The surge in street traders is likely to continue due to economic restructuring processes. The paper was commissioned by the research and advocacy network Women in Informal Employment: Globalising and Organising (WIEGO) and draws on a review of existing literature.

This study presents, theoretical debates on street trading have tended to draw on experiences from Latin America, with De Soto being a key figure in policy circles. The literature of the 1970s and 1980s has been categorized into two broader traditions: the neo liberal position that celebrates informality and the structuralism position which views informality as a crisis of capitalist development based on empirical research from Africa, two studies on street trade seek to add to these discussions.

In Africa, the informal sector accounts for 60% of all urban jobs and over 90% of new urban jobs with street trading accounting for the largest share. Urbanization in Africa is lower than in Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean but there are significant regional differences within the continent. International migration is another dimension of urbanization process that swells the number of street traders. Many foreign migrants, like their rural counterparts have no choice but to work in segments of the economy where barriers to entry and set up costs are low.

A major factor in the rise in street vendors in Africa throughout the 1980s and 1990s was the Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs). The continuous privatization and liberalization efforts on the continent continue to have an impact on the size, nature, and dynamics of the informal economy in general and street trading in particular.

The implications of the increase in numbers of those working informally on gender dynamics are complex. Women tend to predominate in areas of trade which are less lucrative, leading to greater competition and displacement. Street trading is a growing issue due to demographic and economic trends, as well as the significant contribution it makes to local economies and revenue collection. The article Skinner (2008) provides a comprehensive analysis of street vending in Africa, combining theoretical frameworks with empirical trends and highlighting under discovered dimensions like urbanization, migration and economic restructuring.

2.2.2 Historical Development of Street Vendors in Nepal

In the case of Nepal, the Idea of Haat bazaars indicated the beginning of the historical lineage of informal trading. Haat bazaars were the earliest form of informal and open air market in urban space where farmers and small scale traders sold goods directly. *Hatiya* is the tradition of *Madhesh* (Portel, 2025). Initially, such bazaars were seen in a number of places in eastern Nepal. Towns were named after haat bazaars, such as Aaitabare, Sombare, Mangalbare, Budhabare, and Sanischare. According to the Hindu lunar calendar, the towns of Panchami, Nawamidanda, and Saptami are named after weekly haats (Wikipedia, 2025). This illustrates that these haats gradually transformed and shaped into the permanent structural part of urban centres then vendors shifted from periodic mobility to daily. This continuity suggests that modern street hawking is not an urban phenomenon rather a historical extension of Nepal's indigenous market systems.

In the past, Traditional marketing tactics were used as mobile vendors. They were known as Banjaras in the local dialect who were regularly available to satisfy local demand by roaming throughout the communities and selling their own handicrafts and agricultural items (HMG/UN/UNESCO, 1975; Regmi, 1978).

The difficulty and time consuming nature of visiting small market places with scattered retail stores and frequent foot visits by inhabitants contributed to the issue. Local products like seasonal vegetables, fruits, mustard oil, grains, flour, milk products, rick flake, spices, handloom cloth, straw mats, baskets and brooms were traded in informal markets. Producers carried these commodities using Kharpan or Dokos and walked to the open, unofficial marketplaces in the core of the cities to sell directly to customers. This marketing structure remained in place until 1956. Major turning point appears while in 1956, construction of the first road linking the valley to Terai town along the Indian border in the south noted a fundamental shift in the valley's marketing strategies. Then, motor vehicles replaced manual methods of commodity transportation (DHPP, 1972).

As a result of the increase in urban population and the number of market places, the traditional marketing system has gradually been substituted by the modern one. Despite this informal marketing operation particularly by street vendors have risen dramatically since the early 1980s. The number of informal market places by locality appears to have increased from 13 (with 5 or more vendors) in 1987 to 87 (with 20 or more vendors) in 2018 as well as the quantity of vendors there, which rose from 317 to 13,935 in the same time frame (Pradhan, 1987; Sharma, 2018). The process of in-migration has accelerated during and after the Maoist insurgency. It is supposed that there is more than 3 million people are living in the capital. Social, Political, economic development in Kathmandu have brought many new comers in Kathmandu due to working opportunities and other facilities (Blaikie et al. 1980). In Kathmandu Valley where informal sectors have been shaped by multiple forces such as rapid urbanization, migrant rural people, locational advantages, the expansion of informal enterprises and the role of municipal authorities (Sharma, 2018).

2.2.3 Structural Drivers of Street Vending

Several empirical studies have identified poverty, rural-urban migration, urbanization and neoliberal economic policies as structural causes of street hawking. These studies assist to understand why people, particularly the underprivileged, continue to sell despite governmental bans and urban restrictions.

Bhowimk (2005), in his article, 'Street Vendors in Asia: A review' attempts to examines on street vendors in Asia with the aim of assessing the magnitude of street vending in different countries and the composition of the vendors. The authors provide one of the foundational regional overall views of street vending in Asia, drawing from various reports, conference and document. The review highlights mainly two groups' category of street vendors found in the Asia.

The first category, namely low skilled rural migrants are prevalent in Asia, particularly in poorer countries like India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Cambodia and Vietnam. These countries lack a strong industrial base and have primarily engaged the urban workforce in the informal sector. In contrast, second category, namely workers in formal sectors like the Philippines, South Korea, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and India have experienced large scale unemployment due to industry closures, outsourcing, mergers, and downsizing.

The research paper (Bhowimk, 2005) mentioned that reports from Asian countries reveal a surge in street vendors following the 1998 financial crisis, particularly affecting the Asian Tigers, particularly in Thailand, Singapore and The Philippines. Many workers who lost their formal jobs turned to street vending as a means of income.

Various documents, reports and media sources provide content to the growth of informal employment in Nepal. For instance, UNIFEM (2005) The liberalization and privatization policy that Nepal adopted after 1990 has seen more and more people engaged in the informal sectors such as street vending, construction work, and domestic work as helpers, because the formal sectors like education, health, civil service and social service, demand a high level of efficiency, skill and knowledge. Furthermore, the increasing population of Nepal and the shrinking opportunities for employment in the formal sector have also pushed people to gain employment in the informal sectors. Additionally, a growing number of women are working for pay but mostly in the

unorganized sector and from home. Similarly, a newspaper article by Ojha (2018) mentioned that city planners say the number increased after the earthquake that struck Nepal on April 25, 2015. They cite socio economic reasons for this. Displaced by the earthquake, people from rural areas migrated to Kathmandu in search of jobs and shelter. Most took up street vending.

Timalsina (2007), in his master's thesis titled '*Rural urban migration and livelihood in the Informal Sector: A study of street vendors of Kathmandu Metropolitan City, Nepal.*' This research paper explored that rural migrants having low levels of education and skills face limited livelihood opportunities in their own village places and then engage in street vending as a survival strategy upon reaching urban areas. The researcher has used qualitative methods including standardized open ended interviews, key informants' interviews, and informal conversational interviews as well as observation and photography. He presented detailed life histories of street vendors highlighting how informal vending emerges as both a necessity and a coping mechanism for poverty, lack of education and exclusion from formal employment.

The study finds that street vending in Kathmandu provides a means of livelihood for the urban poor, particularly migrants and has increased their access to financial and human capital assets. However, the vendors face challenges such as lack of natural and social capital assets and conflicts with authorities over licensing, encroachment and taxation. Timalsina (2007) concluded that the livelihood of the urban poor who are involved in the informal sector in Kathmandu can be termed as 'struggling for living' and 'living in the present'. The study provides valuable insights into informal livelihood choices but by some major structural and life histories influences.

Bista et al. (2024) in their article 'Empirical Evidence on Status of Street Vendors in Nepal amid Covid-19: A Structural Equation Modeling Approach', assess how the COVID-19 pandemic affected the livelihood, resilience and well beings of street vendors in Nepal. The research objective is to examine COVID-19's impact on Kathmandu Valley street vendors focusing on poverty, unemployment and migration, and aims to analyze socio economic status and managerial implications. The study reveals that poverty, lack of education and unemployment are significant factors driving street vendors to engage in street vending during the pandemic. The Kathmandu Valley's street vending industry has flourished due in large part to domestic migration.

The study (Bista et al., 2024) illustrated that poverty and lack of education significantly impact street vending and unemployment, with 87% of respondents finding it difficult to manage these challenges. The majority of respondents are male, illiterate and have experienced unemployment in the past. Street vendors face challenges like harassment, limited capital access and poor working conditions. Lack of education also impacts migration. The study also highlights the role of migration and poverty structural in producing street vendors and unemployment. It recommends local governments and authorities manage migration and provide licenses, registration and vending zones.

Ojha and Pant (2025) in their article, ‘Problems and Prospects of the Street Vendors: An Analytical Study of Dhangadhi City in Nepal’ aim to address challenges by examining the conditions and problems faced by street vendors in Dhangadhi. This research focused on street vendors in Dhangadhi exploring their current structural status, financial problems, governance, policy issues and working conditions. The researchers combine quantitative and qualitative approaches using a descriptive method. The study collected data from 84 street vendors in four key areas of Dhangadi, Hasanpur, Chauraha, Milan Chowk and the Buspark area. The main key finding is majority of street vendors in Dhangadhi have migrated for economic possibilities, with 60% bring women. Most vendors are 25-35 years old youth but illiterate. Only 10% are aware of general rules for street vendor jobs. Factors affecting their operations include financial problems, governance, policy issues, workplace issue and physical conditions. The main reasons for choosing street vending due to low investment cost, ease of carrying and suggestions from others. Food and clothing are the most common goods offered. Most vendors are unaware of policies affecting street vending, have mixed views on fairness and support the current regulatory framework.

Pokheral (2013), on his report which entitled, “*Street Vendors, Food and Cultural Change: A Case Study from Kathmandu Valley*” investigated Kathmandu’s rapid social and cultural transformation due to various reasons such as rural urban migration. Market expansion, and political upheavals after post 1990 liberalization and Maoist insurgency. This report adopts a descriptive and exploratory design by combining qualitative and quantitative approaches. The fieldwork was carried out in two sites that are Kalimati to Kuleshwor and Maitidevi to Gausala places. The research has used purposive sample of 100 vendors in which 60 women and 40 men across categories

such as vegetable, fruit, clothes, flower and food vendors. Data were collected through various ways like structured interviews, case studies, observation and informal conversations for capturing both demographic profiles and lived realities of vendors.

The study of case studies shows life stories from Maya Lama, Ganesh Bhandari, Subhadra Nepal and Januka Sharma in the report. It concluded that some various reasonable factors such as scarcity, boredom in urban life and peer influence make entry routes into vending. Vendors encounter emotional struggle with stigma, then eventual pride in sustaining livelihoods and the connection between vending and kinship (bringing relatives into business, pooling resources). This report's empirical findings (Pokheral, 2013) provide a groundbreaking contribution to urban sociology and economic anthropology in Nepal. In Kathmandu, street hawking is shown as a cultural, gendered, and relational practice rather than just an unofficial source of income. It represents resistance in the face of exclusive urban authority, reshapes social identities, and supports both the urban poor and middle classes.

2.2.4 Gender and Intersectional Vulnerabilities in Street Vending

An intersectional perspective on street selling elucidates how gender, class, single motherhood, age and caste many more generate compounded vulnerabilities, especially for women vendors. Empirical research examining these variables reveals the distinct and disproportionate experiences of structural inequalities faced by female sellers in urban informal marketplaces.

Bhowmik (2005) noted that street vendors have significantly increased in India since the country's economic liberalization policy was implemented in 1991. Then increased by 2.5 percent of the urban population engaged in street vending. According to the NASVI survey, women vendors tend to earn less than males due to main two reasons. They had less capital to invest because they belonged to poorer families. Another, they are constrained with time limitations on their vending work because they have to take care of the home as well compared to male vendors.

Khawas (2022) investigated on street vendors of Pokhara and recognized that the problem of women street vendors was qualitatively missing. Women street vendors face daily hardships in an exclusionary metropolitan environment. Her study is based on Qualitative data collected through ethnographic fieldwork including in depth interviews

with 11 women street vendors, key informant interviews and participant observation. This research unfolds how vendors persist in their livelihood practices despite repeated harassment, violence, pressure from shopkeepers, spatial conflict and lack of recognition. Despite official bans, the vendors' tireless continued presence on the streets symbolizes a silent form of resistance and negotiation over urban space.

The study (Khawas, 2022) demonstrated that women street vendors are forced to employ various techniques including cheating and bargaining to cope with the obstacles that they encounter. This empirical study based on qualitative data collected through the ethnographic fieldwork carried out in the market centers of Pokhara Metropolitan City, this article documents the struggle of women street vendors against challenges posed by metropolis authority and their police, customers, and shopkeepers. This article presents stories that vendors strive against these challenges to support their livelihood. Their ceaseless striving for urban space for undertaking vending practices continues. The tireless engagement of the street vendors in coping with the adversities created by different agencies is an indication that they have been claiming certain kinds of rights over urban space in Pokhara City. This study focuses on the gendered dimension of urban informality and shows unique insights into disadvantaged vendors' resilience and survival strategies.

In a related study, as Banerjee (2014) investigated on the primary reason why women become vegetable vendors and their issues. The author study based on survey of 124 vendors across market, streets and weakly hats, unfold that both male and female vendors faced poverty in comparison women vendors is more vulnerable that make vendors. According to the article, the income of women vendors is lower than that of male vendors because women sellers come from poor scheduled tribe families and have less capital to spend in their businesses.

Women vendors in Ranchi, Jharkhand choose this trade because of compulsion rather than choice. Their male family members are unemployed and even if they do have a job, they waste it on alcohol. Dual load of obligations, low income, and lack of unionization make women vendors into invisible segments. Additional issues like lack of public toilet and insecurity further worsening their working condition, suffer from various infection. However, they are courageous to fight against all odds due to mode

on for survival. This research draw attention to gendered vulnerabilities in the informal economy.

Through a feminist and intersectional lens, Saxena (2024) examines the socio-political and geographical aspects of street vending in her article. The paper makes three broad claims: (1) street vending spaces are fundamentally gendered spaces; (2) the intersectional identities and caste-based locations of women street vendors shape their spatial experiences, material realities and access to power; and (3) gender and caste are co-constituted categories that produce a spatiality unique to the Indian subcontinent. While the geographical approach towards street vending recognises the importance of space and considers vendors as spatial practitioners, vendors are often assumed to belong to a homogenous (male) category with differentials such as gender, race, age, ethnicity and caste invisibilised. This research gap is of even more critical importance in India where caste intersects with gender to produce space.

Examining the literature on gender and street vending reveals three broad analytical themes such as socio-spatial disparities, politics of space, and strategies of control. What seems to be missing is a critical, qualitative focus on the experiences of women street vendors, the gendering of vending spaces, the recognition of caste as a dynamic factor, and a spatial analysis grounded in the Southern urban context. Ultimately, this paper makes the case for a situated and postcolonial feminist geography approach to street vending in India, and calls for an intersectional research agenda that is attentive to the co-constitution of caste and gender in the production of urban space.

Sharma (2024) examines how structural limitations and gendered motives affect women's participation in the informal sectors such as street vending. Using 105 semi-structured interviews with vendors in Delhi highlights the role of patriarchal norms in public and private spheres in structuring women entry into street vending. Key issues to access jobs in the formal sector include the patriarchal norms, stigmatization and societal expectations that limit women access to education, their ability to work and the type of work they engage in, thus creating segmentation in the labour market. This study concludes that the structural conditions lead to transitions, life events and turning points in women lives, determining their access to employment in the formal or informal sector.

Kawarazuka et al., (2018), in the article “*Adapting to a new urbanizing environment: gendered strategies of Hanoi’s street food vendors*”. This research paper examines gendered strategies in Hanoi’s informal food systems, focusing on street vendors. This study uses qualitative method, ethnographic study using interviews and observation with purposive sampling. The finding show that informal food system is organized based on social and economic interactions with different power hierarchies and gender relations. Women operate based on social relations, while men are more capital based. This results in different challenges for women and men in sustaining their activities amidst policy and economic changes. The study emphasizes the importance of integrating gender aspects in urban planning for more inclusive cities.

Sepadi (2025) conducted a systematic review to find out the impact of climate change on informal street vendors between 2015 and 2024, with a primary focus on Africa and Asia. Using both qualitative and quantitative methods including Excel and ATLAS.ti, the research, which is based on 48 studies concludes that climate-induced stress such as high heat, air pollution, and unpredictable weather pose major economic, health, and operational issues to street vendors. These situations have led to reduced working hours, increased costs, and exposure to health risks, particularly for vendors with minimal infrastructure and regulatory support. The research paper also identifies gender-specific risks, claiming that care giving duties and limited access to sanitation disproportionately affect female vendors.

Many people in South Africa and other low resource environments are still unable to use adaptive technology like cooling gadgets and mobile payments even if some Asian vendors have embraced them. The report highlights the necessity of locally specific resilience plans that incorporate vendors into urban design and improve their access to financial assistance and medical care. This study shows important insights for policy and future research by examining the intersections of gender, informality, and socio-political exclusion with climate change from a cross regional perspective.

2.2.5 Livelihood, Challenges and Coping Strategies

Street vendors have many livelihood strategies and coping methods to maintain earnings in the face of uncertainty. Empirical research from various contexts illustrates the economic benefits of vending and the everyday challenges vendors have owing to inadequate governmental support and municipal governance problems.

Adhikari (2011), a research paper that analyzes the impact of education, labor supply, and investment determinants on the street vendor's income. Using a quantitative approach, the study surveyed a total of 170 street vendors across the Ratnapark and New Buspark areas through structured questionnaires and interviews. The study's main conclusions include the significance of the unorganized sector for jobs and revenue production, the part played by women and young people in the unorganized sector and the need for support and development of the informal sector. The study results highlight that higher education levels are associated with higher incomes while highly educated respondents earning in double that of illiterate respondents. Investment is also positively correlated with income, with higher investments leading to higher incomes. The analysis reveals that the ratio of income to investment is highly significant in the service sector and vegetable sector.

Gajurel et al. (2024) investigated the aspects of shadow entrepreneurship using the viewpoint of street vending in Dharan Sub Metropolitan City. This research paper was focused on profitability, livelihood empowerment and sustainability. The study reveals that married vendors those with livestock, residential property and those prudent in education tend to achieve higher profits. Street vending provides as an effective means for debt servicing, creating employment opportunities for family members and contributing to educational attainment. Additionally, 40% of vendors could purchase health services for less than NRS 1500 per month. Future studies should assess government policy's effect on vendors, livelihood sustainability concerns, and urban huddles as the urban shadow economy grows. This study uses a quantitative approach with a purposive sample using structure interviews to assess its impact on empowering lives and sustainability.

Street vending's profitability is determined by characteristics such as education, investment, and marital status. It plays a crucial role in individual survival, livelihood empowerment, social inclusion and long term sustainability. Education has little influence on profitability, limited capital investments and daily consumption expenses reduce profitability. Street vendors can earn more than NRS 1000 and support their families. The following are the article's key conclusions. Gajurel et al. (2024) emphasized the considerable impact of street vending on the urban population, as well

as its potential to empower lives and contribute to livelihood sustainability. It highlights the importance of street vending.

Bhattarai and Pathak (2020) investigate at how street vending helps low income people earn money and reduce poverty. For this study cross-sectional data were obtained from 450 randomly selected street vendors from five locations (e.g. Balaju, Lagankhel, Kalanki, Ratnapark, and Suryabinayak). Data were collected using a structured questionnaire. The average monthly net business income of street vendors is Rs. 22,500 influenced by factors like education, experience, sales, and working hours. The results showed that 54% of street vendors' income covers their consumption which is over the poverty level.

However, this suggests that 46% of sellers stay below the poverty level, a point the authors mention but do not adequately explore. Thus, authors may present an overly optimistic view. This neglects the structural challenges many vendors still face, such as low profit margins, irregular earnings, and lack of social protection that continue to impact nearly half of the vendor population. While the study rightly suggests the formalization of street vending could enhance livelihoods, it overlooks the complexities of doing so in a context marked by policy exclusion and frequent harassment from authorities.

Dahal and Sharma (2023) published an article titled "Perception of Street Vendors and Management by Kathmandu Metropolitan City." The article investigates the conflicting rights to livelihood and mobility by analyzing various stakeholder perspectives on KMC's decision to remove street vendors totally. The study was conducted in the core areas of Kathmandu Metropolitan City (ward numbers: 22, 23, and 24). This research employed a qualitative approach using field based interviews with 10 street vendors through judgment sampling and 10 pedestrians by convenience sampling.

Data were collected through structured interviews scheduled and key informant interviews with representatives from NEST and KMC. KMC's removal of street vendors under legal mandates has led to livelihood loss, repeated confiscations, and lack of policy alternatives which disproportionately affecting the urban poor. Pedestrians support vendor removal for road access and reduce road accidents while vendors and NEST stress constitutional violations and the unaffordability of

alternatives. The research study (Dahal and Sharma, 2023) concluded that the absence of long term policies, vendor identity systems, and proper data while suggesting inclusive measures like vendor zoning, timing regulations, and collaborative task forces. The conflicts between economic rights and urban order are highlighted by this study, demonstrating the need for more inclusive and cooperative urban administration.

Thapa-Parajuli et al. (2024) conducted a research article titled "From Margins to Mainstream: Uncovering Urban Informality of Street Vending in Kirtipur" investigates the drivers, financial performance, and challenges street vendors encounter in Kirtipur Municipality, Nepal. According to survey data 53.33% of respondents entered the street vending because they were unable to obtain formal employment and 51.67% did so because they lacked other skills, indicating that selling goods on the street is essentially a survival strategy. Since 98.33% of sellers' report profitability and more than half (55%) save between NPR 15,000 and NPR 30,000 per month, the survey shows that the trade is economically viable. Despite relatively high levels of financial literacy and banking access (75%), the majority of vendors obtained initial funding from informal sources highlighting ongoing hurdles to formal lending.

The report mentions environmental exposure (80%), municipal crackdowns (65%), and poor urban infrastructure particularly access to drinking water (48.33%) and sanitation (41.67%) as important difficulties. These findings highlight the unstable nature of urban informal livelihoods, notwithstanding their economic contributions. The authors Thapa-Parajuli et al. (2024) argued for inclusive municipal policies, urban infrastructure investment, skill development programs, and formal sector recognition in order to promote sustainability and minimize vulnerability. This study adds considerably to the empirical understanding of street vending in semi-urban towns and advocates for more extensive and longitudinal research to capture changing trends.

Thapaliya et al. (2023) have conducted a cross sectional analytical study to explore depression prevalence among street vendors in Kathmandu Valley. The study analyzed data from 316 respondents between August 2018 and April 2019. The research highlights mental health vulnerabilities in street sellers. An informal livelihood is crucial for urban survival and economic resilience. The study opens a significant mental health issue with 32.6% of respondents experiencing depressive symptoms and 55.4% having depression.

According to the study, a number of behavioral and socioeconomic characteristics are strongly linked to increased incidence of depression. These consist of low socioeconomic position, inactivity, alcohol and tobacco use, job dissatisfaction and low income. Furthermore, people with only basic or non-formal education had a higher risk of developing depression. This study highlights the connections between informal labor, socioeconomic insecurity, and mental health. By focusing on street sellers, a marginalized but essential segment of the urban informal sector. This research paper (Thapaliya et al., 2023) draws attention to the urgent need for social safety programs and mental health therapies. It provides empirical evidence that informal workers face economic insecurity and a higher risk of psychological distress due to structural and lifestyle vulnerabilities.

Parajuli conducted an empirical study entitled "Livelihood Opportunities of Street Vendors: Study of Ason, Indrachowk, and Khullamunch of Kathmandu Metropolitan City" in 2013. It concentrated on the socio-economic situations and vulnerabilities of street vendors in three significant Kathmandu commercial centers. The study used a mixed method by employed random and snowball sampling approaches to collect primary data through structured questionnaires, key informant interviews and focus group discussions. Additionally, complemented by secondary sources such as research articles, books, news, reports and online materials.

The results show that while being common and vital to the urban informal economy, street vending is nonetheless extremely vulnerable. Inadequate infrastructure, competitiveness, harassment, and restrictive government rules are some of the problems facing vendors. The study highlights several external factors that intensify the uncertainty of their livelihoods including road expansion initiative, pollution, hooliganism, and weak law enforcement. Vendors are also exposed to natural disasters, seasonal variability, fluctuation in consumer demand, and disruptions due to cultural events, strikes, and conflicts with other urban stakeholders. Furthermore, the absence of formal recognition, policy clarity, and institutional support from government entities makes street vending an insecure and marginalized occupation.

This study gives significant insight on public institutions' systematic disregard of the informal sector. It underlines the crucial need of inclusive urban design and policy

action in supporting the resilience of street vendors who contribute considerably to the urban economy yet continue to face tremendous instability and marginalization.

To summarize, extant empirical studies offer a thorough grasp of the historical continuity, structural causes, gendered vulnerabilities, vendors mental health issue, climate challenges and livelihood choices of street sellers in a variety of situations. They show how economic restructuring, migration, and urban exclusion shape street vending while emphasizing vendors' resilience and adaptability over time. Although the number of research is increasing, the majority of studies ignore specific, micro level geographies where intersectional disparities are well established in favor of focusing on broader national macro issues.

Particularly, the lived experiences of women street vendors in urban setting under explored. Therefore, this study seeks to fill the gap in research by centering women street vendors' voices, analyzing how gender, single motherhood, migrants, age and class intersect to shape their everyday life, survival situation and negotiation tactics in informal urban spaces.

2.3 Anti- Vending Action in Local Regulatory Context

Since Mayor Balendra Shah's election in May 2022, efforts to regulate and remove street vendors from Kathmandu's public spaces have intensified because they disrupt pedestrian flow and urban order (Shrestha & Shrestha, 2024). Timeline showing of anti-vending action and local regulatory context within Kathmandu area according to the news that we heard and see in different news portal.

2022 May 22 A.D - Balen Shah becomes mayor of Kathmandu Metropolitan City (KMC) and announced to manage the business run on footpath.

2022 July 1 A.D - KMC had issued a 35-day notice asking traders to clear space of encroachment to remove the basement.

2022 August 22 A.D - KMC removes illegal shops in underground parking.

2022 August 24 A.D – Demolish illegal structure by KMC with bull dozer.

2022 September 15 A.D - Street vendors under the General Federation of Nepalese Trade union protest in front of KMC office.

2023 January 10 A.D – The KMC declared that operating informal business on the city's streets including vending, hawking would be prohibited.

2023 February 5 A.D – KMC taken action against 581 vendors, many illegal structure removed, many signboards / encroachment cleared.

2023 April 8 A.D – Mayor urges Nepal Police to remove encroaching structures in the city and to enforce laws.

2023 July 12 A.D – The KMC has suspended five city police for misbehavior following a viral video of them handling vendor.

2024 March 25 A.D – The city office has imposed a composed a complete ban on street vending leading hawkers to shift their operations to evening hours with a reduced police presence.

2025 August 25 A.D – Scrap dealers protest against Balen's action, accusing him of unleashing a bulldozer terror against their businesses.

Under Mayor Balen administration, the Kathmandu Metropolitan City imposed stricter regulations issuing warnings and enforcing prohibitions against street vending in public areas. Concerns about public safety, such as the possibility of traffic accidents, occurrences of petty thievery in congested areas, and the portrayal of vendors as contributors to urban disorder. The Local Government Operation Act (2017) secures the rights of the local government to manage the local market (pp. 11–12). But neither the central nor the local government is visibly working for the benefit of street vendors (Shrestha & Shrestha, 2024). Open advice to Mayor Balen to think beyond the "engineering model of urban development" and embrace the idea of the "social engineering model of development," which stands for taking into account the social, economic, ecological, cultural, and human implications of a development initiative (Myrepublica) (Chapagai & Thapaliya, 2023).

2.4 Research Gap

Despite there is being substantial literature addressing the economic dimension and urban poverty surrounding street vending, most existing studies treat vendors as a homogenous group within the informal economy. These works primarily focus on the economic functions of informal work which emphasizes themes such as income generation, urban poverty, and regulatory ambiguity. Street vending as a threat to urban order and beauty. While such perspectives capture surface level urban concerns, they largely overlook the nuanced experiences of women vendors, their gendered livelihood strategies, everyday challenges and informal negotiation practices within constrained urban environments.

Building on this gap, there is a significant lack of comprehensive gender sensitive analysis firstly that critically engages to analyze the case of women street vendors in research area. Even qualitative research involving women frequently fail to account for their diversity, considering how intersecting identities such as gender, migration histories, marital status, single motherhood, age and degree of family support, friends, relatives' systems compound their marginalization. These overlapping identities have received little attention in mainstream academic and policy discourse particularly in Nepal, where informal work is perceived through a narrow lens of legality and order rather than lived experience and is impacted by structural inequities. The absence of such an intersectional paradigm limits our understanding of how certain women become more or less marginal even within informal livelihoods.

This lack of attention is also evident within feminist discourses in Nepal and have historically generalized 'womanhood'. Women's struggles are shaped by patriarchy. Influential feminist voices such as Mangala Devi Singh, with her foundational work in women's rights struggles. She did not adequately address ways that women's experiences are fractured by castes, several classes, single parenting, and migratory status. This marginalization need to be addresses who face extreme social realities of vulnerabilities and bring in mainstream. So, intersectionality is not just a theory a necessary framework in Nepal to understand the issues of disadvantages group of society. It challenges the dominant narratives that either romanticize street vending or criminalized. More importantly, it challenges the homogenization of women in mainstream Nepali feminist discourse.

Closely tied to this gap is the role of urban governance, policies, and moral narratives for women street vendors in research area has rarely been analyzed through a sociological perspective that centers women's agency, informal resistance, their flexibility under difficult circumstances, and spatial claims. The vending work is indicated as illegal and criminalised to vendors. These gaps demand a rethinking of how women street vendors are framed, not only as informal economic actors but also as complex social beings embedded in power relations across public space, gender, migration status, single motherhood etc. Women vendors have distinct lived experiences as a result of overlapping several factors, this study will provide nuanced understanding of how gendered vulnerabilities, structural injustices and urban exclusion interact to influence their daily tactics of resistance, survival and navigating the city's contested spaces.

Recent shift of strictness in governance further highlight these exclusions. As we all know that in Kathmandu since the election of Mayor Balendra Shah in 2022, the crackdown on street vendors has intensified under the discourse of urban modernization and beautification. Recent shifts in urban governance have attracted significant attention in media and policy discourse but academic and institutional analysis failed to notice the social spatial consequences of such changes. The realities of women street vendors who intersect with multiple identities like migration status, gender, single motherhood, class, or age suffer the most. But their voices and stories are still missing in both academic research and city policies.

Addressing these gaps, the research investigates several factors that shape the marginalized position of women within street vendor communities in Machhapokhari. They do vending work not by choices but out of necessity for daily meals, school fees and rent. Their ability to continue working despite pollutant area, eviction, confiscated threats, abusive encounters and the pressure of managing household duties speaks to the depth of their economic hardship and quite resilience. By employing a purposive sampling to select respondents and phenomenological approach for qualitative research. The study provides a grounded understanding of how marginal women are shaped and reshaped through interaction with structural forces, social institutions and state regulation

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

On the background of the above mentioned discussion, the main aim of this study is to understand how the street, as a socioeconomic space, becomes a site for the survival struggle, challenges, and negotiation of women street vendors in Machhapokhari. This study explores how the act of vending in urban informal spaces is not just a means of survival but also a dynamic process through which individuals and collectives negotiate challenges. The research further seeks to analyze how livelihood strategy and navigation practices are influenced by intersecting factors such as gender, class, migration, and urban governance policies.

To support the discussion mentioned above, a phenomenological approach has been chosen. Meanwhile, the phenomenological approach focuses on deep, lived experiences of women street vendors. Typically using in-depth interviews, key informants and participant observation to understand their stories how it feels to participants on everyday struggles in the urban space and the process of dealing with it through different coping mechanisms and strategies of each individual way. This methodology allows for tracing real-lived experience realities through their own perspectives.

The livelihood strategy, specific challenges, and negotiation practices of women vendors are shaped by recurring themes such as social networks, urban authority, spy tactics, etc. While street vending is often ignored by urban policy, women vendors claim visibility and legitimacy through their continued presence and collective actions in Machhapokhari. The street becomes more than just a vending site, it transforms into a space of belonging and self-recognition.

3.1 Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research design, specifically using a purposive method to explore how the lived experiences and everyday struggles of marginal women street vendors interacting class, migration histories, gender, single motherhood, age categories of Machhapokhari area who are still manage to sustain their livelihood. This method allowed for a depth, context specific understanding of how gender, migration, single motherhood, class, and age interact to compound marginalization that

play a crucial role in shaping the complex realities of these women. By focusing on the research area as a specific urban site, the research aimed to unfold how women street vendors construct livelihood plans, deal with daily obstacles, and navigate structural constraints in order to sustain their economic and personal survival in an increasingly hostile urban environment.

This study has used a qualitative research method, centering on field observation, in-depth interviews and narratives to understand the everyday experiences of women vendors. The primary data were collected from interactions with women vendors operating in Machhapokhari, key informant interviews with women street vendors, shop community members, and ward officials. Even observations of vendors, customers' activities in vending zones were the main sources of data. Secondary sources such as documentary video, reports on informal labor, urban sociology and feminist urban studies literature have also been used to contextualize the findings.

To collect and analyze data systematically, three major thematic areas were developed:

- i. Gendered livelihood strategies and urban survival focusing on how the street functions in women vendors' daily lives as a site of both economic activity and survival.
- ii. Everyday challenges and spatial inequalities. It explores how gender roles and social expectations shape women vendors' experiences and their marginalized status in the urban informal economy.
- iii. Navigating informality such as tactics, networks, and resilience focuses on the ways women vendors cope with, adapt to, and resist these structural challenges.

The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis, which helped to draw patterns and insights into how these women survive through livelihood strategies and challenges and navigate hardships in urban exclusion. Through their stories and presence in Machhapokhari, these women reconstruct what it means to belong to the city and claim the right to its spaces.

3.2 Justification of the Selection of the Study Area

The research was conducted in Machhapokhari which is a densely populated urban area in Kathmandu Metropolitan City, Nepal. This place operates as a major transit hub and is strategically located near the Gongabu Bus Park. That's why this location becomes one of the largest and busiest inter-district terminals in Nepal, attracting both formal and informal economic transactions. The area of the Bishnumati River corridor and numbers of local bridge site road areas are occupied particularly in early morning and evening hours daily by mostly women street vendors who sell vegetables, fresh corn, grilled corn, clothes, cosmetics, and small items of utensils.

Comparatively, the number of women street vendors is larger in this area which is a suitable field for my research's aim to meet. This vibrant marketplace not only shows the entrepreneurial spirit of these women but also highlights the challenges they face in terms of space, competition, and regulation. Understanding their experiences can provide valuable insights into the dynamics of informal economies and the role of women in urban spaces.

Machhapokhari is a significant urban area for market hub where negotiation between street vendors, pedestrians, shopkeepers, and municipal authorities. The area has scrutiny due to anti-vending policies enforced by Kathmandu Metropolitan City since 2022. Such regular monitoring by authorities provides difficult circumstances for vendors particularly women vendors to do vending freely. Despite difficulties, they are relying on this location for economic survival to sustain their livelihood.

This research area was selected as the study site because it reflects the broader tensions between informality, state regulation, public space, gender, and migration. It is market hub where a large number of women vendors are concentrated which makes it particularly suitable for this study. It is rich setting for exploring women vendors' livelihood strategies and challenges and adopting existing challenges in an urban landscape.

The women vendors in this area are represented as a diverse group in terms of age, caste, class, marital status, and migration history. Most of the respondents have been vending for over a decade while a few are fresher. They entered into vending due to lack of a formal job and personal hardships. Their products range from green leafy

vegetables, fresh corn, grilled peanuts, clothes, and small items of cosmetic goods. Even though sharing the same physical space but their experiences are far from uniform. As witnessed during research, these women demonstrate remarkable resilience such as sitting in the polluted, noisy junction and navigating foot traffic and local tensions. Their presence in this area becomes contested, a creative site of survival, negotiation, and informal belonging.

3.3 Description of Study Field Setting

The urban setting of the study area is in Machhapokhari. This area characterized by dense population lies within the Kathmandu Metropolitan City. This area includes the Bishnumati River corridor, busy road intersections, walkways under bridge, multiple bridge points and the area near the Gongabu bus park which is a major transit hub and the largest inter-district bus terminal place. This area serves as a prime location for street vending. Meanwhile, the area is also marked by pollution, overcrowding, poor sanitation, a contaminated river, dusty roads, and the stench of pollution.

Local buses regularly connect Machhapokhari to other major parts of Kathmandu. However, a highly polluted and crowded environment is also a result of the traffic density. This region is passed through by the Bishnumati River which shapes the vending pattern spatially. Despite its thriving economy, the area suffers from unhygienic, unhealthy environment conditions, and a lack of basic toilet facilities and clean water access in the inner area particularly in the surrounding area of the river corridor. Another notable aspect of this area is urban monitoring. Vendors feel unstable due to strict surveillance by police authority. In sum, the urban setting of Machhapokhari, mirrors a complex interplay of transit, mobility, informal economy activities and spatial constraints.

The Nature of the Vending Field: Streets as Livelihood Zones

The vending field in Machhapokhari which is characterized by fluidity, adaptability, and strategic use of urban public spaces. Unlike a formal marketplace with fixed stalls, vending locations are not officially designated in this area. Since the month of Baisakha, permission has been issued by the authority under the bridge for the temporary usage of vegetable sellers from the early morning to 8:30 am. It is an unpitched road and has less transportation flow which can be known as part of one side of the corridor of the

Bishnumati River. Women street vendors occupy whatever space is available such as sidewalks, river corridors, bridge underpasses in the bridge corner, temple surroundings, junctions of sub roads, and subway intersections of several roads, turning them into informal temporary economic zones which is illegal and unauthorized. Even they have made vending spots in front of shuttered shops that offer temporary permission out of generosity.

These areas of the vending field are mostly occupied by women vendors who have rented rooms nearby this vending area. Some are doing vending in front of their own rented room house, in front of the galley side, on the gate side, on the roadside corner, and on the bridge. Some prefer mobile carts in vending field, it means follow the tactics to protect. Vendors are active after 5 pm in vending field. The vending field is filled with a diverse range of goods in affordable price. In the early morning, vegetable sellers, fresh corn sellers, green leafy vegetable sellers, and curry vegetable sellers are more apparent while the same place is occupied by the clothes vendors, grilled corn sellers, fruit sellers, and small cosmetic product sellers in the evening. Thus, a notable feature of the vending field is its temporal patterning where different groups of vendors occupy the same space at different times of the day.

Thus, several small bridges connect various parts of the area especially along the directions of Gangbu and Tarkeshwor, increasing pedestrian circulation. These corridors are not just mobility routes but also commercial sites where vendors always set up places to display products and utilize the everyday pedestrian flow to attract customers. However, this vending field is located in an unsanitary metropolitan area with a dusty road and a dirty riverbank. While some sanitation facilities exist along the main roads, the inner areas, especially in the river corridor, lack toilets or clean water access. These have led to unsanitary practices in the vending field as some vendors resort to open urination near the river, citing the absence of facilities. That's why, vendors were compelled to wear masks during vending.

To sum up, street vending fields are vital livelihood zones. Vendors actively shape and repurpose the field through economic activity. This field is not just a site of economic activity but is also constituted by social agency, spatial contestation and resilience, and negotiation practices within a constrained urban setting.

3.4 Respondents' Socio-Demographic Profile

3.4.1 Age, Class, Caste and Educational Background

Twenty-one women street vendors' respondents of this study taken in the Machhapokhari surrounding. They come from different background. Most are in their midlife years, 20 out of 21, almost everyone falling within the age range of 30 to 55. Two women are widow, one is single mother, and two have unsupportive spouse. Only one younger youth women vendor aged 24. These age patterns reflect that women are fall into vending due to sharing responsibilities of house and doing dual responsibilities by doing vending as a livelihood. While above 40 years' women vendors mention that due to physical constraint and aged, they prefer light loaded product such as green leafy vegetables, corn, peanut selling. Age also defined the choosing products and quantity. And the entry of younger woman into the informal sector due to the absence of better opportunities.

All respondents self-identified as belonging to a lower socio economic class. Often explaining their upbringing in agrarian households marked by economic struggle. Articulating their class location through narratives of rural hardship and economic exclusion. Migrated to Kathmandu hoping that better opportunities and livelihoods. However, lack of resources and skill set them behind to access in formal sector employment. As a result, street vending is not their first preference occupation but as a livelihood of necessity.

The respondents of my research study come are from diverse caste backgrounds such as Janajati, Chhetri and Brahmin group. Majority identified as janajati group (Tamang, Magar, Rajbansi) and Brahmin group while some are Chhetri. Among all respondents, six belong to Janajati, other six are Brahmin, three are Chhetri and few remaining vendors are reluctant to reveal their identities. This diversity shows that women from both marginalized and privileged caste positions are engaged in vending. While analyzing through the intersecting categories, my research reflects that caste as less significant category in the case of women street vendors. It's totally based on the reason of poverty and gender responsibilities for entering in the vending.

Educational attainment among the respondents was limited. 19th vendors mentioned that they had no formal schooling, few recognized the nepali words, read and

understand. Just two vendors were found literate. Despite being literate, they have to engage in vending work due to lack of acquired skills that market look for. The gap between formal education and practical knowledge reflects a broader pattern in which rural and low income women are excluded from institutional education system but continue to participate in urban economies through informal skill building and adaptation.

Personal narratives of respondents depicted how structural inequalities shaped their educational trajectories. N. Rajbansi who is aged of 33, was raised in her (mama) maternal uncle's house after losing her father. She shared: *"I couldn't study because others gave food only but thinking about educating me is far from their thoughts. If I had my father, he might send me to school."*

S. Karki, age of 24, the youngest respondent had completed her plus two but discontinued further education due to limited employment opportunities. She explained: *"Why to study a lot if we don't get a job? I'm studying Korean language in morning while selling small items cosmetics in Maitri bridge vending location in evening."* These stories disclose that even those with basic education often turned to vending out of necessity, not choice. Class position, gendered responsibilities, rural background, and lack of support systems deeply influenced their limited access to education, formal sectors and shaped their entry into informal urban livelihood.

In sum, the respondents' socio-demographic profiles point to a complex interplay of age, class based deprivation, and education. Together these factors influenced their positionality. There is not only exclusion from formal labor markets but also ignorance from urban planning and policies. Their entry into informal street vending as a strategy of survival and resilience. Understanding their age, educational and socioeconomic backgrounds is crucial for assessing how structural factors and lived experiences interact to generate their daily participation with urban informal economies.

3.4.2 Regional Origins and Migration History

All the respondents in this research were rural to urban migrants who had lived in Kathmandu in the rented room settlement pattern way from various districts across Nepal. The majority originated from hilly areas such as Nuwakot, Dhading, and Ramechhap, while others came from districts including Tanahun, Jhapa, Nawalparasi,

Surkhet, and Lalitpur. This geographic spread indicates that the informal vending sectors in the area of Machhapokhari attract women from the hill and Terai regions.

The duration of stay in Kathmandu among the respondents ranged from 3 to 20 years, indicating both recent and long term rural to urban migrants. Migration decisions were shaped by a combination of economic pressures, household responsibilities, and urban aspirations by its facilities and opportunities chances. Through in-depth interviews, it became clear that most women migrated due to fulfill family related goals such as supporting children's education, meeting daily household expenses, escaping rural hardship, and looking for better opportunities.

Menuka Khadka from Nuwakot, expressed that economic hardship in their villages. She mentioned that specific local challenges such as crop damage or disturbances caused by wild monkeys regularly made rural livelihoods unsustainable and limited income options, pushing her to migrate to Kathmandu in search of stability.

The majority of respondents saw migration as a required due to various factors. As a result, their experiences demonstrate how women's migration and urban livelihood paths in the informal economy are shaped by the intersection of gendered duties and rural marginality.

3.4.3 Family Situation and Economic Status

The family situations of the women street vendors interviewed in this study reveal a pattern of economic vulnerability and shared household responsibilities. Every respondent came from low income families where survival depended on single or multiple forms of informal labor. Two women vendors are found as street vending as secondary way of income sources and others remaining vendors are doing street vending as their primary way of income. This financial insecurity, combined with a lack of capital to invest in formal businesses, led them to turn to street vending that required a low budget and was a more autonomous, though still uncertain which regard as a form of livelihood.

In most respondents' houses, the husband's income was missing, irregular, or insufficient to meet basic necessities. Other additional reasons were unsupported behavior and constraint by physical illness. As a result, women have had to share the

responsibility of earning, taking on dual roles as caretakers and breadwinners. They balanced both household responsibilities such as cooking, cleaning, and childcare while also engaging in daily vending to contribute to rent, food, children's education, and loan repayments. Two of the responders were widows, and one was a single mother who supported her family completely via vending.

In some cases, their children helped at the vending site during school holidays or vacations while in some vendor families prioritized children's education and protected them from economic pressures. However, some children were moved to live with grandparents or maternal uncles when families were unable to pay for daily expenditures and school fees. This illustrates the financial strains associated with running homes in urban areas.

Thus, respondents' narratives highlight how familial conditions and economic position are inextricably linked in defining their livelihoods, impact in life opportunities, and daily experiences. Street selling, arises as a survival strategy driven by household requirements, a lack of official work, and a lack of social protection. Most respondents in this research describe their daily lives as being burdened with both family chores and earning an income.

3.4.4 Summary Table of Respondent Backgrounds:

Table 1

Summary of Respondent Backgrounds

Category	Description
Age Range	24-55Ears
Caste	- Janajati, Chhetri and Brahmin
Marital Status	- Married (with absent husband, with lack of support of husband) - Widow - Single mother - Unmarried young lady
Educational Level	- Mostly informal - A few up to Plus Two

Place of Origin	Nuwakot, Dhading, Ramechhap, Surkhet, Nawalparasi, Jhapa
Years of Vending	Ranged from 2 months to over 17 years
Types of Vending	Green leafy vegetables, fresh corns, grilled corns, clothes, peanuts, flowers, small items cosmetics
Reason for Migration	Poverty, marriage, search for opportunities, children's education, crop disruption by wild animals (especially monkeys), and general difficulties of rural life

3.5 Sample Size and Sampling Method

The universe of this thesis study consists of all women street vendors operating in Machhapokhari, Kathmandu. From this population, a purposive sample of 21 respondents was selected. This study employed purposive sampling because the researcher as a me deliberately select women vendors who could provide rich, diverse insights into the intersection of gender, class, migration status, age and single motherhood. These women daily lived experience and following livelihood strategies and everyday negotiations within the urban informal economy. In qualitative research the sample size of 21 is considered sufficient particularly phenomenological studies. After all its aim is to achieve depth of understanding rather than statistical generalization. The principle of data saturation was applied with data collection ceased once no new thematic insights were emerging. The sample shows the diversity in terms of variety of categories such as migration status, marital status, age, class, gender single motherhood and types of vending activities which strengthens the study's intersectional lens.

3.6 Tools and Techniques of Data Collection

To ensure a comprehensive and grounding understanding, the study utilized multiple tools and techniques for qualitative data collection. Such as three tools are in depth interviews, key informant interview, observation are necessities. These tools facilitate for capturing diverse perspectives, contextual nuances, and the lived experiences of respondents.

In-depth interviews:

In-depth interviews were conducted as the main technique to gather data in this qualitative study. Through these interviews, I examined the social realities of women street vendors through livelihood strategies, struggles, difficulties, and negotiation practices in the urban informal economies. Interviews were conducted in the area of Machhapokhari, Kathmandu. This area is vibrant due to the trade hub yet a contested space for women vendors. The interviews were conducted from April to June 2025. This timing was for me as a researcher to build rapport and become familiar with them. Diverse group of women street vendors were interviewed with 21 total. The interviews were conducted through a checklist of themes which provides structure and yet flexible interaction. Interviews were also conducted with the local shop community, ward officials, and women street vendors for triangulation. This triangulation of perspectives across different actors allowed for comparative understanding of the lived realities and structural constraints within urban informal vending.

Key informant interview:

The study conducted interviews with key informants including one local ward officials and six shopkeepers' community members to gain insights knowledge in the regulation, enforcement or everyday interaction with street vendors. Semi- structured interview was used to focus on themes like policy enforcement, social network, eviction practices, negotiation strategies, gender dynamics and absence of alternative plans for livelihood. Notes was taken to ensure accuracy.

Field observation:

Field observation was conducted through a combination of non-participant observation and participant observation. This technique is used for the complementary method to better understand the everyday practices, spatial arrangement, interactions, and challenges faced by women street vendors in their natural work setting. It provided visual and contextual insights of highly active and contested urban informal space. Observations were conducted at the vending site in Machhapokhari, Kathmandu. Field observations were carried out over several visits during different times of the day such as morning peak and evening rush, usually while purchasing vegetables and other goods from vendors as daily necessities from April to June 2025. The primary focus was on

women street vendors, but observations also included customers, municipal police, local shopkeepers, local people, and passersby all those who are related to the vendors' experience shaping.

3.7 Procedures of Data Collection

The fieldwork for this research was conducted over a three-month period, from April to June 2025, in the area of Machhapokhari, Kathmandu. During the data collection process, I visited the research field regularly and started engaging in interaction while purchasing everyday necessities such as vegetables, fresh corn, clothes, and other goods from women vendors with heterogeneous characteristics and both long time and short time experience. This approach helped in creating rapport and a sense of familiarity with the participants in a natural and respectful manner. I was able to gradually gain the trust of mostly street vendors through interactions. While maintaining the role of a customer, I began to observe and ask to understand their lived experiences and personal stories in depth. This is how informal talk was used as a method of interview.

For some vendors who already seemed friendly in communication with them, I pre-informed them that I was a student researcher conducting academic research as part of my master's thesis and then started taking interviews after their verbal consent.

3.8 Data Analysis

Thematic Analysis: The collected qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis. This involved coding and categorizing the data into key themes across three dimensions of women vendors' lives:

- i. Livelihood strategies of women street vendors,
- ii. Everyday challenges and urban inequalities,
- iii. Navigates process in exclusionary urban area.

Narrative Analysis: In order to understand how women, narrate their own lives and struggles, narrative analysis was used. This helped disclose how livelihood plans are constructed and expressed through storytelling and how these narratives resist dominant discourses of exclusion through navigation.

Analytical analysis: The analyzed the collected data, used an intersectional framework to explore how multiple identities such as gender, class, caste, education, and migration status while intersect shape unique women street vendors' experiences, revealing structural inequalities, social hierarchies, and power relations within structure. This analysis situates women vendors as economic actors and subjects navigating discrimination and exclusion in urban informal spaces.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

The research was conducted with full sensitivity to the vulnerable and informal status of the women vendors; informed consent was obtained before every interview. Participants were assured of confidentiality, and pseudonyms were used for those who were not comfortable revealing identities in transcripts. The research was mindful not to disrupt their vending activities or expose them to potential risks from authorities.

3.10 Limitations

The research is limited to a specific group of women vendors in Machhapokhari which may restrict generalizability to other locations. Additionally, as a student researcher limited access to official records of metropolitan authorities. Third, due to time constraint of vendors and demand of their vending work, which affect the depth and duration of interviews. Despite these challenges, the study offers in-depth insight into the understanding of livelihood strategies, challenges, and negotiation practices of women street vendors in a dynamic urban context.

CHAPTER FOUR

MIGRATION, SINGLE MOTHERHOOD AND STREET VENDING AS A LIVELIHOOD STRATEGIES

4.1 Gendered Livelihood Strategies and Urban Survival

Women street vendors make livelihood plans to sustain day to day life in the informal urban economy. For them, livelihood strategy is a form of backbone to navigate the urban space for survival. In the case of women vendors in Machhapokhari and these techniques are determined not only by economic need but also influence by these factors such as gender norms, migration histories, and household duties. As formal employment opportunities remain inaccessible due to lack of education, skills, training or systemic exclusion, women adopt street vending as a viable means to sustain daily life. Under the livelihood strategies, there are various themes which are given below:

4.1.1 Networks and Social Relations

Social networks play a significant role in shaping the livelihood strategies of women street vendors. Bourdieu (1986) describes social capital as the benefits and opportunities that emerge from enduring networks of mutual recognition and connections. Vendors are constantly targeted by the police, public health institutions, local government authorities etc. They are also denied institutional credit facilities that could help them increase their income. They have to highly depend on social networks for their business to function (Bhowmik, 2005). “Unlike other forms of capital, social capital is inherent in the structure of relations between actors and among actors” (Coleman, 1998, p. S98).

These views illustrate how important social connections and networks are to women street vendors. The following field interview examples show how social networks function and shape journey of women vendors from entry to sustainability in the informal economy.

S. Tamang, one of the green leafy vegetable vendor stated, “*Maile kahile yo kaam gareko thina, malai sikaidiyeko mero maili didi le ho. Usle yesari nai saag, tarakari bechtyo.*” (Personal interview, 1st June 2025).

This statements reveals that she had never worked as a vegetable vendor before. Under the guidance of her second eldest sister (Maili Didi), she entered the informal sector. The transfer of basic knowledge and skills from family members who can be trusted without any doubt. Such bonding is significance for initial entry into the informal economy. Learning is not always institutional rather it can be learnt more from observing, watching or learning from those who are close to you. Life survival techniques are provided via informal education and skills. Even exemplifies Bourdieu's (1986) concept of social capital according to which pre-existing familial networks or social connection provide access to trust and useful knowledge. Her sister served as a social resource, transmitting informal skills for sustaining livelihood.

A new vendor mentioned, *“My husband used to sell potatoes and onions in the past. I learned from him and he supported me. That’s the reason for being easy to start the vending journey for me.”* (L.G. Timilsena, Personal interview, 2nd June 2025)

This quote illustrates that respondent acquired basic vending skill from close ones. Her husband was already involved in same activity of business in past. It reflects that horizontal sharing of livelihood strategies for meeting common goal that is surviving within urban setting. She mentioned that her husband is supportive in terms of emotional, financial, and logistical which eventually make ease to enter in the informal work. She was embedded in a social connection where knowledge and skill available already to learn. Coleman’s (1998) view suggests that social capital is an essential component in relational structures for example among spouses, there is available of emotional, financial and technical support for livelihood. Her journey quite different and somehow easy in the beginning. In contrast this, those women who are married and absence of support from family face most difficulties in the path of vending work.

She even said, *“Nearby vendors watch over me and help me whenever I am confused while vending.”* This emphasizes that how other vendors act as a protective and supportive network. Perceiving help in real time when the respondent faced confused. Here confused refers to issues with pricing, handling customer, yet community solidarity eases the stress. The reassurance of being “watched over” implies a trusting environment, where vendors informally monitor and protect each other. It’s a kind of trust based informal safety net as a form of informal institutional support.

A vendor who sells grilled corn in the pushcart expressed,

“After my husband fell ill, I was eagerly look for some work. I asked the helpful corn-selling sister to search work for me. She told me, ‘Why are you searching for work? Do vending like me at another location.’ She guided me when I needed it the most to survive. She provided me basic information related to grilled corn vending. That’s how I started.” (Vendor A, Personal interview, 8th June 2025)

This refers that informal relationship serves as guidance while critical point of entry into livelihood activities. She as a form of informal mentorship who provides both emotional encouragement and practical guidance and provided direct experience based instruction. Empowerment through social ties shows by the statement *“She guided me when I needed it the most to survive”*. This supportiveness enables new vendors to overcome barriers especially when safety net formal sectors are absent.

In general shows that women street vendors primarily rely on the social networks such as family members, friends, fellow vendors for emotional support, encouragement, skill transfer, market information for entry into informal economy. In sum, building a trustworthy social network is really beneficial to their vending journey.

From an intersectional perspective, the reliance of women vendors on social networks shows how class, gender, migration status, marriage status and family structure intersect to influence access to resources and opportunities. Women who are married to supportive partner or come from families with previous market experience can more easily acquire skill, guidance, support and have smoother entry into informal vending. In contrast, those women without such support face greater challenges navigating both economic pressures and gender expectation. Similarly, migrant women rely on their preexisting kins or families on this unfamiliar urban environment which illustrates that how migration and urban marginality intersect with gendered labor roles. Even though social network provides knowledge, mentorship and support, its access to all women are not uniformity. Rather shaped by women’s overlapping social position.

4.1.2 Migration Background and Pathways

Pre-migration Experience/Skills

Women street vendors use their past skills and experiences which acquired in rural setting apply in the urban informal economy for surviving their livelihood. Based on human capital theory (Becker, 1964), scholars argue that knowledge, skills and experiences are kinds of capital that are used to boost productivity and income. This means that women of rural areas, with skills in agricultural labour, home based production, care giving, and petty trade shape urban informal employment pathways. These invisible skills serve as a form of experiences that later helps in the survival journey within urban space as an informal worker, such as a woman street vendor. This paper investigates on the migrant women from rural areas engaged in trade and craft work after relocating to the city of Ibadan. It emphasizes how their rural livelihood skills play a crucial role in shaping their involvement in the urban informal economy activities (Bello-Bravo, 2015).

One of the vegetable vendors recalled, *“I used to go with my grandmother to sell puffed rice when I was a kid.”* (N. Rajbansi, Personal interview, 2nd June 2025). This remark indicates that the respondent got early exposure to trading activities such as selling puffed rice through participation with her grandmother within rural households. Such early experience aids in developing practical skills, communication skills, and trading knowledge related to small scale trade. This experience makes foundational skills in negotiation, customer interaction, and product handling, which are crucial for survival in the informal economy in urban settings now.

Again she shared, *“I grew up working on soil, mud, and agriculture. I used to do all these things.”* Her upbringing in an agrarian household, where she worked closely with soil and farm food, established a sense of comfort with perishable items. And deep-rooted familiarity with physical labor and subsistence practices, which are undervalued yet essential for adaptation in precarious urban settings.

Such experiences align with human capital theory which shows that labor based knowledge acquired informally can serve as a form of capital. Her agricultural background reflects not only hard skills like farming and land preparation but also soft

skills such as endurance, resourcefulness, and time management, which are key assets for informal work such as vegetable street vending.

One of the green leafy vegetables the respondent remembered, “*I used to go to mela from the age of 11.*” (Vendor B, personal interview, 4th June 2025). It means that she had prior experience as an agricultural laborer in the village. She started earning money from childhood. Her pre-migration experience instilled basic familiarity with physical hardship, irregular wages, and long working hours, which helped her mentally adjust to the demands of urban informal work. This early involvement shaped her comfort with economic exchange, negotiation, and social networking, all of which are crucial in informal street vending in urban areas.

She expressed a strong sense of satisfaction and fulfillment from earning money even though normal income happened. She said, “*What you earn by yourself gives you the best feeling; such a feeling won’t come while others give you money or you need to ask others for money.*” This reflects her love, dedication towards her job, belief in hard work, and value of earning money. She has been working as a vendor for 16 years, which demonstrates how informal work has enabled her to survive and sustain the livelihood of her family in the city.

Thus, women street vendors are migrants from various parts of the nation due to various socio-economic reasons. Migrating to market hub area Kathmandu City which is often viewed as a break from rural livelihood. Pre-migration skills play a vital role in the transition to the urban informal economy if as vendors. Pre-migration experiences of women, such as farming, rearing domestic animals, and carrying heavy loads of grass and manure in bamboo baskets; engaging in handicrafts; participating in agricultural labor (mela, parma), and small scale trade in their own village, bring an understanding of seasonal cycles, perishability, production selection, and bargaining.

Such rural experiences help in choosing the right product at the right time, confident in their own product, while knowledge of perishability helps in managing storage and sales. Skills in bargaining, marketing, and interpersonal communication enhance the ability to attract and retain customers. Likewise, the physical stamina from years of hard rural labor makes sustaining long hours in street vending possible. Rural

knowledge remains a silent but powerful resource that enables survival and sustained livelihood in urban areas within the uncertainties of the urban informal economy.

To sum up, both stories demonstrate how prior experiences support subsequent survival, adaptation, and resilience in new environments, as well as the conversion of pre-migration skills into post-migration income earnings. While viewed from intersectional perspective, then pre-migration experience is not simply human capital. It is the conversion of gendered, classed and caste marked into survival strategies. Women's rural skills taken for granted and not taken as knowledge. But such knowledge is both asset and a marker of marginalization in urban informal economies.

Reasons for Migration and Route

Migration theme analyzing through an intersectional view reveals how gender, class, rural upbringing and life events coverage to shape women's movement and adaptation in urban informal economies. Migration is not just by the very poor during times of crisis for survival and coping but has increasingly become an accumulative option for the poor and non-poor alike (Deshingkar et al., 2003). Women migrants' poorer backgrounds were reflected in their landlessness, greater dependence on a single earning member, and lower average family income than their male counterparts (Afsar, 2009). Both studies highlight structural push factors.

“Black-faced monkeys come and eat all the food of the farms. Nothing left for us. So difficult to survive, so migrate from Nuwakot village to Kathmandu urban setting.” (M. Khadka, 4th July 2025). This quote demonstrates how environmental insecurity and conflict with wildlife operate as a driving force for migration. She emphasizes the vulnerability of agricultural livelihoods in rural places such as Nuwakot, where subsistence farming is subject to both natural and non-human challenges. Aside from this, other underlying factors include environmental pressure, poverty, a lack of steady income, a desire for children's education, etc., further intersect with social position to influence migration. For instance, rural women from Nuwakot faced agricultural losses due to wildlife and environmental constraints highlighting how ecological factors compound structural disadvantage. Therefore, in quest of alternate ways of survival, she migrated from rural to urban area of Kathmandu.

We didn't come to Kathmandu to do vending. We came after marriage just before the lockdown. But when everything shut down only vegetables were selling. That lockdown taught us to do vending. Since I had worked in farming back in Jhapa, it didn't feel new rather as a way to survive. Now it's our main earning.” (N. Rajbanshi, Personal Interview, 5th July 2025)

The phrase emphasises personal life events such as marriage intersect with economic necessity, transforming migration as a strategic livelihood decision. During the COVID-19 lockdown the demand for vegetables resulted in a new informal livelihood source, indicating how pre-migration capabilities allowed for rapid adaptability. The lockdown taught them how to vend. It demonstrates how need moulded their livelihood path, transforming non-economic migration into a self-driven informal economic strategy. It also illustrates how gendered labor experience and migration intersect to facilitate survival and economic autonomy.

Additionally, most women vendors' narratives on migration decisions are shaped by overlapping structural and aspirational factors such as poverty, lack of employment prospects, unreliable income sources, and limited access to services in rural areas were the primary driving forces behind many people leaving their home places. Other Pull factors such as the potential of greater economic possibilities and better education for their children are main motivators for their decision to migrate. It demonstrates that how gender, class, migration history and rural upbringing together influence their ability to survive and thrive in street vending work.

Overall the results illustrate that migrant women vendors can be understood as a gendered and classed process where ecological pressures, personal life trajectories and structural exclusions converge. Women do not simply move rather they carry embodied rural knowledge, gendered responsibilities and class disadvantages that are converted into survival strategies within exclusionary urban informal economies.

4.1.3 Decision Making and Business Strategy

Decision making and business tactics are quite powerful and essential for livelihood strategies. Husin et al., (2022) highlight how financial restrictions, a lack of entrepreneurial training, and the load of family commitments all influence women vendors' strategic business decisions and performance in Malaysia. Their findings

reinforce that livelihood strategies are not only economic factors but also shaped by social roles and institutional exclusion.

One research study explores the strategies adopted by street vendors in two sub-metropolitan assemblies of Kumasi, Ghana, to gain competitive advantage. Their street hawkers adopt many cost reduction strategies to remain competitive, including networking, multiple undifferentiated market strategies, the sale of convenient products, “dying and resurrecting,” regular changing of goods and services, exploitation of flexible operating hours, cost-based pricing strategy, sale promotion, trade credit, and locational advantage. Such a decision-making mechanism reflects how they manage strategic flexibility and resource management by vendors (Amoah-mensah, 2016).

"All these vegetable products are from my own garden. I display them in large plastic containers rather than using a mat, as it's quicker to pack and escape when authorities patrol the area. I keep my weighing scale inside the gate; the house owner here is friendly, so I have access to keep it there. Whenever I need to weigh the products, I go inside, weigh them, and then give them to the customers." (S. Tamang, 2nd June, 2025)

This illustrates that she is self-reliant by cultivating vegetables in her own garden according to the season. Her business strategy is direct sales of organic vegetables straight from her home garden which provides her an advantage in the local market. She uses her story as a marketing tool saying, *"It's from my own garden,"* emphasizing the freshness and organic character of her produce. Customers' trust is increased and personal branding is developed with this tactic. Producing her own food reduces her reliance on outside vendors. She guarantees the consistency, quality, and freshness of the products which can be beneficial for her as a trader while doing informal marketing.

She employs a tactical approach by using large plastic as a container that enables packing quickly and leaving during patrols by authorities. This supports the claim made by Husin et al. (2022) that women deploy flexible, adaptable and context responsive tactics despite institutional barriers. This mirrors a risk avoidance tactic. Even she has used spatial negotiation as a business strategy. She utilizes social relations with a kind and helpful house owner to secure storage space for her weighing scale. Her strategy is

to operate efficiently as being invisible in the street as a vendor in the eyes of authorities. She follows such a creative method which reflects how informal vendors form alliances to support their business operations in unstable environments.

Additionally, she builds connections with customers through soft, polite humor. On days when her vegetable garden doesn't yield produce, she chooses not to vend. This indicates that her decision was to maintain product quality over quantity. She chooses seasonal products wisely, such as other times vegetables, flower plants in monsoon season, and bloom flowers for sale at festival time. For instance, her strategy is building customer loyalty through fulfilling special orders. I saw, through participant observation, dialogue between her and her customer:

Customer: Aaja farsi ko ra iskus ko matra ho saag didi. Gava xa ki vanera aako.

She: Gava palako xaina bechne garera, tara tapai ekjana lai puxa hola, ma voli tapai lai matra lukayera laidinxu, Aaru lai pugdaina leyam vane. Aaja lai yehi saag lai janu.

Customer: (Happy smiley on her face), Hunxa (she purchased green leafy iskus that day and was gone).

Overall, this example illustrates how decision-making and business strategies in the informal economy are deeply influenced by structural constraints, yet shaped by the agency, innovation, and spatial negotiation of women vendors to sustain their livelihoods under threat.

"I don't sell vegetables or fruits because they are heavy to carry. Instead, I sell corn in summer, flower during festivals, and peanuts in winter, wisely selecting products because they are lighter and still sell well. I use a crate in front of my rented room, but on holidays I take a pushcart because there is less surveillance. To bring products every day, I go along with other vendors' friends on the same bus; it's easier and safer that way." (S. Giri, 2nd June 2025)

This quote reflects her intentional decision making process based on physical capability, seasonal market need and the escape of official observation. Her decision to choose lighter, seasonally suitable things such as maize, flowers and peanuts represents

a smart balance of personal physical limits and economic potential. This indicates a great understanding of product feasibility and market timing. Furthermore, she made the decision to sell in front of the rented room in the caret and use the pushcart on holidays to decrease her vulnerability to enforcement while increasing sales prospects. By planning daily transportation with peer vendors on the same bus, she demonstrates a collaborative approach to safety, economic effectiveness, and logistical ease.

One vendor has stated,

“I deliberately choose to sell clothes, which are non-perishable items; if they don’t sell today, they will sell tomorrow. And in the daytime, I do tailoring in a clothes shop and even sew clothes in my room; I have a machine if some customer asks for tailoring. In the morning and evening I do vending in two different locations. In the morning sitting in a different field location and in the evening a different field location at the point of the pedestrian bridge, but both are within the Basantanagar area.” (Vendor C, Personal Interview, 3rd June 2025)

Her decision to focus on clothes vending mirrors loss avoidance as unsold items are still saleable in the next day. It’s a simple but effective inventory management way to ensure non-perishable items can be sold another day. She applies several business strategies such as product selection, diversification in income, time management and location strategy. She does not depend primarily on vending. She also works as a tailor’s staff in garment shop during the day which provides as a vital second income source. This is similar to the diversification of income for economic resilience. Her regular presence on the pedestrian bridge is a conscious decision for visibility and accessibility for customers despite the risks and public annoyance. At the same time, she is able to escape quickly if need when from authorities.

One shared, *“I do whatever work I can find. In the morning, I sell green leafy vegetables during the day, I work as a house helper, and I sell grilled corn in the evening hours. My husband’s income never reaches home. He wastes it on gambling.”* (M. Khadka, Personal Interview, 4th June 2025). She chooses a highly diversified and opportunistic approach to earn to meet basic hand to mouth means. She actively pursues a variety of works at a time. Recognizing the instability of any single job, she consciously chooses to do whatever work she gets. This includes house helper work, caring for post-pregnant

women and infants during the day, early morning time green leafy vegetable vending, and evening grilled corn in evening hours. Diversification for survival is her adaptive livelihood strategy when she knows that there is no “certain work” that exists.

She starts to collect green leafy spinach while working in maize area of other farms. Then, she sells fresh collect green leafy spinach at a reasonable price in early morning time of vending. Her ability to make little money without cost inputs. She does this work of collecting leafy to cover only basic expenses like tea and bus fares. Due to her limited money for investment, her plan of buy only "20 piece corns" every day for evening sales as grilled corn exemplifies a low risk inventory management technique that avoids overstocking and potential losses on unsold perishable items.

As a crucial commercial strategy, she also uses reciprocal ties and informal networking. She receives free veggies in exchange for helping clients from a nearby vendor which lowers her home expenditures and fosters vital community support. It's a type of social capital in her difficult situation.

Despite having an unsupportive husband, she continually makes realistic decisions to maintain her family's fragile daily financial situation, from what she sells to how she interacts with her surroundings. Although her techniques are informal and often motivated by need, they exhibit a high level of skill in their tenacity and endurance, continually permitting the creation of revenue, no matter how little. In conclusion, the study reveals that women street vendors strategically choose products based on capacity, seasonal demand, diversify income and adapt their locations for safety. They demonstrate resilience and creativity in sustaining their livelihoods.

While analyze through intersectional lens find differ side to be known. Women with supportive husbands use differ business tactics, frequently sharing financial obligations. But women who are the primary breadwinners due to an unsupportive husband or being single create adaptive survival strategies. They diversify work throughout the day and focus on high demand but low quantity products. They select daily sale items like corn and green vegetables or nonperishable items like small clothing pieces. This shows how gender, class, migration status, single mother, marital status, women with unsupportive husband, relatives and structural exclusion intersect to shape decision making and business tactics in the urban informal economy.

4.1.4 Motherhood and Work Balance

Mothers who work in the informal sector must continue to contribute to the household income, care for their physical and mental health after childbirth, and try to exclusively breastfeed their infant while providing caring care. They must do all of this while working without any formal labor protection such as maternity leave (Bhan et al., 2020). The article line effectively depicts the triple burden of women vendors as mothers, workers, and caregivers highlighting their struggle to balance income generation with essential caregiving duties. This balancing act cannot be understood only as individual resilience. It must be analyzed through an intersectional lens that accounts for how gender, class, kinship, and household arrangements shape survival strategies. One of the respondents stated,

“Nearby our room, my husband’s sister (fupu of children) lives. She assists with cooking the morning meal while I come here for vending, and I manage kitchen responsibilities at night. Children support such tasks like basic cleaning, dishwashing, etc. On holidays, children come and help in the vending. My son is quite smart and does nicely trade with customers, even better than me.” (L. Timilsina, Personal Interview, 3rd June 2025)

The quotation describes how informal women sellers balance motherhood and vending work by the support system called “family”. For the household chores, they distribute the responsibilities. Children are helpful to work lighter tasks and participation in vending. This is a kind of transfer skills between generations as a means of survival. In the absence of motherhood role, kinship bonds who live near to them aid in both domestic and economic roles which is a crucial coping mechanism with difficulties.

This demonstrates how intergenerational and relative relational cooperation redistribute domestic and vending responsibilities. The gendered expectations of caregiving intersecting with class based survival needs such as children participate in labor early, acquiring vending skills as a means of sustaining the family. Such arrangement shows how women labor is embedded in family reciprocity rather than institutional protection.

One of the respondents shared,

“I am the breadwinner of the house. I wake up early in the morning and go to the market at 4 am to bring goods. Then in the morning, I sell things by mobile pushcart and return home about 10 am and then do domestic chores after eating. Everyday meals are prepared by the husband; he is disabled by illness, so he can only help with domestic tasks. Then in the evening, I start vending again. Still, I can't manage to sustain simple living. I have two sons, and one of them lives at Mama's house and bears all of the study expenses by his mama. My alone income is insufficient to support my children's studies; it's difficult.” (Vendor A, Personal Interview, 8th June 2025)

The phrase explains about management of livelihood under theme ‘motherhood and work balance’ by women seller has done both even while engage in the informal economy activities. These women navigate several roles including economic provider, caregiver, and household manager. These women prefer a flexible schedule so they can fulfill multiple roles and responsibilities daily. This illustrates how breadwinner female vendor handling triple burden for example: managing the home firstly, providing care secondly and earning without saying day and night thirdly. The above respondent feels guilty due to lacking motherhood towards that son who has lived in mama’s house. However, Kinship relational support in managing livelihood of her while the negotiation arrangement happened. This resilience with problems are essential components of their survival tactics, making "motherhood and work balance" which is a critical aspect of urban informal livelihoods.

This narrative reflects the intersection of gender and economic vulnerability. While the husband’s illness reshapes traditional gender roles. And the respondent bears the economic burden as a breadwinner. The necessity of sending a small child to extended family emphasizes the role of kinship as an alternative welfare system in the absence of state or market support. At the same time, the respondent expresses guilt for failing in the culturally valued role of motherhood.

“In the morning she comes to market for goods and vending, especially green leafy vegetable items, and then does household chores in the daytime and again vending grilled corn in the evening hours. Even I do others diverse work like house helper

and post-pregnant woman care. Having a gambling husband, all the home responsibilities are in my head. My single income is not enough. So, my son is in the village with his grandfather and studies there. My son realized that I can't bear all the expenses of both children. So he went himself. I feel guilt even simply surviving daily is also hard.” (M. Khadka, Personal Interview, 4th June 2025)

The quote elaborates the emotional, economic, and caregiving burdens women in the informal economy face when balancing motherhood and work. The woman juggles multiple income generating activities including vegetable vending and caregiving work. It demonstrates a diversified livelihood approach. Her unsupportive partner, a gambling husband places the financial and emotional responsibility on her. Whatever he earns money never arrive in home. In order to provide her kid an education, she agrees and sends him to live with his grandfather, highlighting the sacrifices women make in order to balance survival and parenting. The quote also highlights the invisible emotional toll women face while balancing motherhood with low paying work. As Carmen Teeple Hopkins (as mentioned in Bhattacharya, 2017) explains, social reproduction includes biological caregiving, unpaid household labor, and even paid care work all of which women like Khadka perform daily as part of their survival strategy.

In the case of this respondent, gender and marital relations intersect with class uncertainty. The absence of spousal support due to the husband's gambling habit make the woman's vulnerability like by pushing her into multiple low paying jobs. As mentioned in the previous respondent, same scenario happens to this respondent also. The decision to send her son to the village demonstrates how migration and kinship ties are mobilized as survival strategies. But it also produces an emotional burden with guilt emerging as part of the lived experience of juggling work and motherhood.

Combined together these accounts reveal that “motherhood and work balance” in the informal sector is not simply about individual multitasking. It is a structural negotiation shaped by intersecting inequalities such as gender norms, class location, kinship and intergenerational ties, marital status and spousal roles. Thus the balance between motherhood and work is not achieved through choice but by fragile negotiation of intersecting vulnerabilities and resources. Their survival relies on blending informal labor, kinship support and emotional endurance within structural exclusion from formal labor protections.

CHAPTER FIVE

NAVIGATING URBAN CHALLENGES AND CLAIMING SPACE

5.1 Everyday Challenges and Urban Structural Inequalities

Vending often seems like a simple or casual activity to outsiders but involves numerous day to day struggles and the need to tackle those who operate in informal urban areas. Vegetable sellers must typically begin their day in the early hours of the morning, sacrificing sleep, and reach the local market around 3 or 4 am to secure quality goods. A delay in arrival compels them to choose lower quality goods for vending on that day. However, grill corn and clothes selling vendors start sitting beside the road in the evening and have to stay until 9 pm in wearing masks and still inhaling toxic smoke every day. These daily routines expose women to multiple forms of hardship such as economic insecurity, health risks and urban exclusion.

Vendors in Machhapokhari areas are facing further complications due to the environmental conditions. The area is unsettled and unmanaged. The road is dusty and many more. Many women vendors operate along the polluted banks of the Bishnumati River which is located at the research area. Such dusty area near bridges exposing themselves daily to unhygienic and hazardous surroundings that may harm their health over time.

The uncertainty of income is a constant source of stress. On some days, sales go well and on some days they may not. Vendors need to return home with unsold goods. In the case of perishable goods, they must be discarded which leads to direct financial loss. Additionally, they are facing logistical challenges such as restricted vending hours enforced by local authorities. While earlier they were allowed to operate until 9 am, recent enforcement has reduced this to 8:30 am. And if any delay happened to leave the spot, they risked confiscation of their goods by metropolitan police.

These difficulties are a reflection of more general trends found in the literature. Solidum (2023) asserts that depending on individual and household characteristics, issues pertaining to governance, legality, socioeconomic status, and working circumstances get worse. For example, older vendors are particularly susceptible to physical strain and

health related problems while vendors with bigger household sizes are more likely to experience socioeconomic pressures.

Particularly poverty, domestic duties, and a lack of trade union backing enhance the difficulties faced by female vendors. According to Bhowmik (2005), poverty and the unemployment of male family members frequently force women to work as street vendors. They usually earn less than their male member, lack of proper recognition from labor union and face several burden of income generation, domestic duties and care givers. The intersection of patriarchal gender norms, class based poverty and institutional neglect explains why women vendors remain among the most invisible informal vendor workers.

Furthermore, their problems are exacerbated by the absence of basic services. For example, the cost of using public restrooms is Rs. 20 for each usage, which is seen as excessive for low income women vendors. It is a recurring financial burden that intersects with their class position and gendered needs. Street selling is a difficult and precarious livelihood strategy, especially for women operating without official recognition or protection, with a lack of infrastructure, in fear of eviction, and with inconsistent earnings. Such exclusion highlight how women everyday survival strategies are not just shaped by economic uncertain but also by the intersection of health, urban governance, gender and class inequalities.

5.1.1 Socio – Economic and Livelihood Struggles

Financial Problem

Several studies have shown that women in developing countries run into serious problems when accessing financial help, especially for small-scale entrepreneurs like women street vendors (Ramasamy, 2018). Mitullah (2003) reported that the two biggest hurdles women face in starting and running their business are funding and family support. These include start-up financing and access to credit, cash flow management in the early operations, and financial planning. The financial problems reported by participants' product range ultimately restrict their earning potential.

One of the respondents replied, *“I don’t have money to invest so I work as a staff member for the product owner. That’s how I do vegetable vending. If the products sell*

well, I receive payment based on the sales. But on some days, the owner says there was no business and no money so I don't get paid. This is how I earn.” It emphasizes the lack of access to initial capital which is one of the most significant structural challenges faced by women vendors in informal sectors. Absence of income certainty and highlights vulnerability of commission based vending.

Similarly, most of the participants commonly reported, *“I don't have enough money to invest so I am compelled to sell low cost items like green leafy vegetables, corn, or small quantities of non-perishable clothing items instead of offering varieties of vegetables and fruits.”* It reflects that they are just able to afford to sell low-cost and low-risk products because of financial constraints. Their inability to diversify product range ultimately restricts their earning potential.

The general summary of these interview findings show that women street vendors face difficulties due to various reasons such as lack of initial capital, credit access, and financial insecurity. They are forced to stick to survival based strategies rather than growth oriented entrepreneurship. Even structural challenges are deeply gendered as women face problems in collateral, savings, and access to loans, further reinforcing their marginalized position in the urban informal economy.

Access to finance is not only an economic challenge for women street vendors but also a reflection of gendered structural inequalities. Women vendors' lack of capital, savings, and collateral is deeply rooted in patriarchal property ownership patterns, where land and assets are primarily held by men. This limits their ability to secure formal credit, forcing them into uncertain arrangement such as commission based vending or survival oriented product choices. Thus, migration status, gender intersects with class, single mother or widow and level of education that create vulnerability where women remain at the margins of entrepreneurial growth.

Among the ongoing issues that women street vendors experience in the urban informal sector are threats of eviction, health risks, stigmatization, harassment based on gender, abuse, unstable income, and strained relationships with authorities, customers, landlords, and product owners. These difficulties derive from poor income, migration factors, systemic exclusionary systems, and single women etc. An intersectional viewpoint demonstrates how these intersecting elements influence women's

experiences. The complexity of these issues highlights the challenges these women face on a daily basis while maintaining means of subsistence.

Dealing with House owner, Customer and Product owner

In South Asia, women street vendors commonly experience a variety of forms of vulnerability. For example, a research conducted in the Andhra Pradesh region of Chittoor (Prasad, 2019) found that more than 75% of women vendors were renters with little access to formal financial institutions. This is consistent with similar trends in Nepal's cities, where women vendors usually depend on unofficial loans and rented housing to make ends meet, making them even more vulnerable financially.

Women street vendors must manage relationships with homeowners, customers, and product owners. Dealing with this agency presents a set of everyday challenges that go beyond vending itself. Those vendors living in rented rooms shared difficulties with house owners in terms of paying rent on time, building pressure due to unstable income, and judgmental behavior when guests visit. One single vendor mentioned that she is being watched closely by the house owner who frequently questions her whenever a guest or relative visits.

Women street vendors' housing insecurities are shaped by their class position as low income renters and their gendered social location. Single women face particular surveillance from landlords who question their morality and social respectability whenever guests visit. Especially single or widowed carry the added burden of gendered stigma as their presence in rented rooms is monitored through patriarchal norms. This intersection of class and gender makes housing both financially and socially insecure.

Managing tough customers poses another big challenge. Street vending is a difficult undertaking for vendors since they confront a variety of customers. Some are nice and friendly, but the majority bargain for reduced fruit prices. Vendors may assume they can provide a large discount if they bargain more. In a fieldwork interview at Prithvi Chowk, a young guy accused a vendor of defrauding him on grape weight, resulting in a conflict. The salesman tried to persuade him by offering more grapes, but he declined. The merchant had to sell fruits for more than one day. In Chipledhunga, some customers are friendly and helpful, while others engage in excessive bargaining. Women street vendors often provide opportunities for customers to behave in one way,

such as deliberately underweighting fruits or offering lower rates during bargaining with other vendors (Khawas, 2022, p. 84).

Dealing with annoying customers is also a kind of challenge. Vendors face constant bargaining, impatience, dominance, manipulation, rudeness, and at times verbal abuse. According to one participant, named S. Shrestha mentioned, *“Maile saman lyuda per kg 50 pareko xa vane, bargain garera 45, 40 samma vanne hunthyo ni, kunai customer le hepera per kg 20 ma diye hunxa, jasari ni kuhihalxa ani falne nai tw ho vanxan.”* (Personal interview, 2nd June 2025).

Dealing with illogical and irrational ways of bargaining by customers is part of a tough situation. She said that she avoids such customers by staying silent or refusing to sell due to pressure to maintain politeness and attract buyers even though she is being disrespected. This is the hardest challenge for them.

During participant observation, that newly entered vegetable vendor appeared visibly confused while using the weighing scale and responding to a customer's inquiries. The customer, dressed in flashy jewelry such as a large chain in research field on his neck and rings on his fingers, spoke in a harsh and rude tone while aggressively bargaining. Sensing her hesitation, he insulted her by saying, *“kasto psycho”* (meaning “what a psycho”). Observing the situation, a nearby vendor intervened to support her and help manage the transaction money by right calculation. This incident reflects the emotional and psychological challenges women vendors face when dealing with rude or dominant customers, especially in their early days of vending.

The class status of women vendors intersects with gender norms for example meet expectations of female politeness and passivity. These intersect produce an unequal customer and vendor relationship. Some male customers exercise dominance not economically only but also socially which reflects broader hierarchies of masculinity and class privilege in public spaces.

One of the significant challenges observed during fieldwork. Unequal and exploitative relationships between women vendors and male produce owners. One married woman street vendor named Vendor E, who lacked the financial resources to purchase goods independently. She relied on a male vendor for goods and supported his sales by displaying products and taking the lead in customer interactions. He stayed aside from

her and observed. Although she actively engaged with customers and managed the selling process, the product owner frequently insulted her in a harsh, loud, disrespectful manner with a demeaning tone. Even in engaging in an inappropriate gesture which is clearly seen as a form of sexual harassment. It means that it reflects a clear intersection of lack of financial capital class and gender who are controlled by patriarchal and sexually exploited. Leaving women doubly vulnerable in both economic and emotional terms.

In sum, these relational challenges illustrate how women vendors' vulnerabilities cannot be understood in isolation. Through an intersectional perspective, the vulnerabilities of women street vendors emerge as systemic, relational and spatially embedded. Intersectionality reveals that their struggles with landlords, customers, and product owners are shaped by overlapping inequalities such as gender, class position and marital status. These power dynamics create everyday forms of exploitation and emotional burden that go beyond the act of vending itself. Rather than seeing these as individual hardships, an intersectional lens shows how multiple factors intersect in urban informal economies which produce layered insecurities that women must constantly face.

Lack of Access of Informal Sectors

Lack of productive employment, along with poverty in rural areas, has forced many to leave their villages in quest of a better life in emerging countries' cities. These migrants do not possess the skills or the education to enable them to find well paid, secure employment in the formal sector, and they have to settle for work in the informal sector. Another segment of the people in Nepal is also forced to work in the unorganized sector (Timalsina, 2007 and 2010).

For instance, S. Karki, a 24 years old street vendor from Ramechhap shared her experience of struggling to secure a formal job. Despite completed plus two level education, she has worked as vendor. She currently sells small but essential daily use items such as combs, keyrings, nail cutters, and cosmetics on the roadside. Her vending income serve as the primary source for her daily survival allowing her to afford basic needs and pay for rent. Street vending is not a preferred choice but rather a survival strategy. Though she is preparing for opportunities abroad by learning the Korean

language. And, the lack of immediate job options has forced her into vending. Her work environment is risky and insecure exposed to police evictions and public harassment.

“If I had a job, why would I sit here in dust and pollution?” (Personal Interview, 3rd June 2025). Her frustration reveals how "dust and pollution" as a symbol of social invisibility, environmental neglect, and class based marginalization. She emphasizes systemic structural barriers, lack of job creation, class bias, and limited access to resources are causing educated youth particularly women to engage in informal labor.

While viewed through an intersectional, her situation reflects the overlapping constraints of migration, gender, class and level of education. As a young rural migrant female with limited economic capital, she is positioned at a triple disadvantage excluded from formal opportunities due to systemic class bias, undervalued because of her gender, and marginalized as a migrant in the urban labor market. Her choice of street vending is less preference and more about survival within structures that reinforce inequality. This demonstrates how multiple social locations interact to push her into uncertainty informal work while simultaneously denying them recognition and protection.

Eviction

Over a three years' period, more than 50 cases of significant eviction of street traders were reported in cities across the global South, including Bogotá, Buenos Aires, Cairo, Dhaka, Manila, Tegucigalpa, San Pedro Sula, Mumbai, Mexico City, Luanda, Lagos, Kingston, Kathmandu, Johannesburg, Jakarta, and Medellin (Roever and Skinner, 2016). The KMC locates concentrated groupings of street sellers particularly at Kalanki, Gaunshala, Chabahil, Sundhara, Ratnapark, New Baneshwor, Old Baneshwor, Indrachowk, New Road, Balaju, Koteshwor. These vending operations are especially concentrated in squares (known locally as chowks) (Dahal and Sharma, 2023). Street vendors in Kathmandu Metropolitan City experience threats and assaults physically from municipal law enforcement on a daily basis. Municipal police have been seen stealing products from sellers, committing physical assaults, and removing people in the capital (Shrestha, 2024).

Every women vendors of research area have experienced enforcement action including forced eviction from the vending spot. And had confiscated their pushcarts, goods,

products, and weighing instruments. As a result, they don't lose products only but also they even lose income and have emotional breakdowns. Few vendors experienced sharing; their experiences are as they are. The widow fresh corn seller, S. Giri said, *“My wheelbarrow was confiscated by the authorities recently. I had to pay Rs 2000 to bring it back. They warned me not to use it again in a public space otherwise I won't get it back next time.”*

The vendors recounted their own experiences that reveal the emotional and financial toll of these incidents. The institutional suppression of informal activity is exemplified by the elimination of wheelbarrows. Unofficial work is viewed by authorities as a daily survival effort that is illegal. Evictions are consistent with warnings not to return to public areas. The respondent has paid two thousand rupees as a penalty to bring back four wheelbarrows. That money is huge as a penalty, reinforcing vulnerability to the low earning vendors. An underlying threat of eviction is the potential that her wheelbarrow will not be returned the next time. It makes street vendors feel uncertain since they are always at risk of being evicted with no legal protections. The quote highlights the intersectional oppression has faced by women, the elderly, and the poor who face structural barriers to secure work spaces due to their gender and social identity.

Another Vendor C, expressed, *“Two times the authority confiscated goods on the spot. One time they returned and seeing my son cry in my arms while he was small, they felt pity. The second time, they didn't return and I didn't go to get back the goods.”* The quote emphasizes the inconsistent and absurd outcomes of state enforcement. According to the law, the individual authorities are doing their duties however they feel pity towards some women vendors. In the eviction process while they saw a woman vendor who had not managed good, combined with emotional appeals of a wailing kid scenario. That time, authority had not confiscated her product items in the name of humanity. At first, it shows that silent eviction followed by vendor. The second time, the authority confiscated all her goods, and she had no chance to get them back. It reflected an inability to confront the system of eviction by the vendor. The power imbalance between state actors and unofficial women vendors is highlighted by the woman's inability to reclaim her items which suggests a lack of access to legal channels and support structures.

She stated, *“They don’t let us sit anywhere. They chase us away from every place.”* She expressed her annoyance at being constantly moved, paid fine, confiscated and not having a secure area for vending. She believes that whenever they try to sell, authorities or other powerful people keep removing them which makes it hard for them to make a living or feel stable.

The next seller Nirmala mentioned, *“I experienced two times that authority confiscated goods, once from Maipi and next from the Machhapokhari main road. I didn’t go to take back the products because they won’t give.”* The system wide harassment at two vending locations Maipi and Machhapokhari, emphasizes the lack of secure spaces for unorganized laborers. Its result of having an unfriendly and unstable urban setting. They internalize exclusion and reject resistance because of their past experiences. The vendor’s failure to retrieve products highlights the psychological effects of eviction by revealing a loss of hope and agency. According to the quote, informal seller believe the system as closed, lack of transparency, and unfair, with no clear grievance mechanism or way to get back things that have been seized. It emphasizes how evictions are accepted by society as a normal part of urban life, underscoring the risks, losses, and mobility that come with working in the unorganized sector.

Through participant observation, it was noted that authorities daily visit the vending area for eviction as per the routine timeframe that pressured vendors to vacate the space on time. If a delay happens, it results turn in verbal abuse and the confiscation of goods. One clothing vendor secretly operated during the designated vegetable vending hours and in the same space. Her merchandise was seized by authorities highlighting the rigid enforcement and lack of accommodation for informal workers.

During the event, the vendor was tense. When observed for a while, *“she was sobbing and begging with the officers to return her goods. Continuously appeal attempted until she lost hope.”* Despite her repeated requests and attempts, her appeals were ignored. Goods were not returned. This illustrates the emotional and economic strain faced by women vendors due to law enforcement regularly.

It is proven that eviction whether through direct dislocation, confiscation, or spatial policing is a recurring and deeply embedded challenge. Eviction reflects deep rooted social political exclusion where marginalized women vendors are viewed as obstacles

rather than contributors to the urban economy. Eviction for women vendors is not only about the loss of goods but also the destabilization of their already fragile economic routines. Thus, everyday eviction is considered a part of the challenges in vendors lives.

Viewed through an intersectional lens, eviction demonstrates how gender, class, age and migration status intersect to intensify vulnerabilities. For example, widow and elderly woman corn seller who lost her wheelbarrow face compounded disadvantages such as they lack financial buffers, social protection and lack of male household support, pay fines and confiscations disproportionately devastating. Single mother with no support of husband intersect to experience enforcement differently. Unable to ask for return their goods and give back to answer to authority, it shows lack of voicing while eviction process also.

From an intersectional perspective, eviction in Kathmandu is not simply a matter of space regulation but a layered experience of oppression. Women vendors' vulnerabilities emerge from the overlapping effects of gender discrimination, class marginalization, single mothers, widow women age status and migration status. These axes of identity and inequality shape not only the material losses (goods, tools, income) but also the psychological wounds, silenced voice, and broken dignity of women vendors.

5.1.2 Gendered Care and Family Responsibilities

Single Motherhood Verses Settle Vendors

The challenges faced by women street vendors are not uniform rather they are shaped by their roles, responsibilities, and the level of support they receive from husband, children and relatives. Through the narrator's story, I, as a researcher, found two categories of vendors. There is a clear contrast between single motherhood vendors and next those vendors living with family support revealing how household structures shape their ability to manage work and survive in the informal economy. Differences are found based on lived experiences.

The single mother respondent named as Vendor D stated,

“I do green leafy vegetable vending in the morning and house helper work in the daytime. I have to make the money for the rent payment on time; otherwise, the

homeowner would threaten eviction and immediately ask her to vacate. She is compelled to allocate money first for rent rather than fulfilling daily needs of life expenses freely. Looking after my two sons' studies expenses alone by myself."
(Personal Interview, 10th June 2025)

This statement demonstrates how a single women employed in the informal sector carries various overlapping identities according to the intersectionality paradigm (Crenshaw, 1991). The respondent expresses multiple duties done as the livelihood strategy adopted simply to meet basic needs. Despite multitasking and excessive working, everyday issues still remain. Rent must be paid on time because there is always a risk of eviction when permanent housing is lacking. Women has main head of households put survival above developmental needs according to Chant (2008).

Personal well beings are deprioritized mostly, with financial decisions influenced by survival based budgeting. This quote indicates the structural pressures of poverty, lack of social safety nets, and absence of partner and family support, as well as the emotional and financial burden of sole parenthood. Single women in informal employment experience marginalization leading to unequal lived experiences compared to other vendors.

Next, a single mother and second wife living apart from her husband, Vendor C, said,

"I and my son adjust in one congested room. Even I have a machine for tailoring. Vending sustained livelihoods in the past but is now difficult. I am only able to make my son study up to plus two then I won't because I can't. Pay for house rent, daily needs, and son's school/study expenses. I do two shifts of vending clothes items in the morning and evening. Then I even do tailoring in the cloth shop however it is still difficult to survive."

The quote exemplifies the complex and layered challenges faced by a single mother in informal economy sectors as being most marginalized. Her story reveals the emotional, financial, physical and spatial hardships associated with street vending. The obstacles she encounters are like housing insecurity, rising costs of living, increased competition and strict regulation of law enforcement make survival in informal economies increasingly uncertain.

The quote also brings to light on the "triple burden" as defined by Bhan et al. (2020), which includes family management, tailoring shop labor, and economic activity through vending. The respondent has worked excessive across multiple informal sectors to survive even low earn. Which exemplifying the broader structural exploitation where women's labor is undervalued and unsupported. Despite multiple income generating activities, she remains in a state of economic uncertainty. It reflects systemic issues like the absence of social protection, legal recognition, and safety nets for unofficial women workers.

In contrast, the Magar vendor lives with her husband and son in a self-owned small tin roofed house. She expressed,

“Kam nagare paisa ko mukha dekhna paina. Derrai layera bechna umer vayo, sakdina, and lagani garna paisa lagxa xaina, tehi vayera thoraithorai vayeni saman lyauxu yestai aaduwa, khursani, dhaniya ani bechxu. Diarrhea vako char din vaiskyoy, pet dukhera garo vako xa, aaja ahile samma dui choti gaisake aaye bata.” (Personal Interview, 10th June, 2025)

According to the respondent's story, she experienced age related physical limitations, lack of capital for investment, health insecurity, and daily income compulsion. She have no savings or social security. Feeling of house ownership provide a safety net and little privilege however marginal in other aspects. There are lack of strong source of income still daily earning and daily living, aging process, physical constraint, occupational health risk etc.

She has family support which is privileged aspect for her. Household responsibilities are shared even though occasional support from husband and son eases challenges in terms of economy. Having housing security provides a sense of security and a helpful husband assists in household work is plus point. Family presence provides both emotional support and a fallback during emergencies. Still other problems remain in life. Nevertheless, daily earning remains essential for daily living.

The findings suggest that single mothers who lack both familial and structural support even bear financial, emotional, and caring responsibilities alone are the most disadvantaged group. Conversely, vendors with family backing, own house experience relatively less pressure through shared responsibilities and emotional fallback.

Childcare and Elder Care Burden

One of the major challenges faced by women street vendors is balancing their vending work with caregiving responsibilities. While most of these vendors have elderly family members living in rural areas, they are generally self-sufficient and in relatively good health. However, in times of emergency, vendors must make sudden visits or provide financial support, which adds to their economic strain.

The challenge becomes more acute in the area of childcare. Vendors working during early morning hours are often unable to directly supervise or care for their children. In their study on female street sellers in Mexico City, for example, Hernandez et al. (1996) discovered that most street vendors were moms of small children who either left their children with other family members or physically cared for them on the street. This tendency was also evident throughout my interviews with responders. The majority of respondents stated that elder siblings or close relatives were frequently given caregiving responsibilities in the home. As a result, children's daily routines such as timely meals, rest, and supervision are disrupted.

Mothers who are the sole or primary earners experience significant emotional and financial pressure. In several cases, due to limited earnings from vending women are compelled to send one of their children to live with relatives (such as maternal uncles or grandparents) to ensure better care and educational support. While necessary for survival such decision leaves women with a sense of guilt and highlights the inadequacy of their income to meet basic family needs. The triple burden as described in Bhan et al. (2020) of income generation, household responsibilities, and caregiving duties thus creates a continuous strain on women vendors making livelihood management especially difficult.

As Moussié (2021) highlights, cities pose significant problems for providing adequate childcare services to informal workers, who make up the majority of the urban poor in the global South. Access to quality childcare services helps women who are disproportionately responsible for childcare in their own families to work more and explore new opportunities. This demonstrates how caring limits in urban informal settings are both personal and societal in nature.

Women street vendors' care responsibilities disclose how gender, class, depend on family supporters level and urban marginality intersect to intensify their struggle. As low income women in the informal sector, they lack access to affordable childcare or elder care services, forcing them to rely on kinship network or older siblings. The intersections create a triple burden where women juggle paid vending, household management and caregiving. The absence of structural childcare provision in cities reflects how urban governance sidelines women informal workers, placing care demands squarely on their shoulders. Thus, caregiving challenges are not only personal struggles but also systematic inequalities shaped by gender norms, class location and exclusion from urban welfare systems.

5.1.3 Health, Safety and Environment Concerns

Health Challenges

Street vendors are experiencing a range of health issues due to their prolonged exposure to harsh working environments. Among them, the most common are gastritis, headache, backbone pain, cold and fever (Shrestha, 2013).

In the current field interviews, most of the women vendors frequently reported respiratory issues including persistent coughing, common cold, sneezing, watery nose, and frequent infections like dengue along with skin problems linking to constant exposure to dust and pollution and recurrent illness.

Women street vendors' health problems cannot be understood an isolation from their gendered, classed, and spatial positions. Their prolonged exposure to dust, pollution and unsafe environments reflects not only poor urban planning but also the marginalization of informal workers who lack access to health care and protective infrastructure. This intersecting disadvantages means that health challenges are not just biological outcomes of street vending but products of structural inequalities where gender, poverty and social exclusion.

Environmental Challenges

Informal vendors commonly operate in street or outdoor workplaces without formal building structure, such as tents, boxes, or mobile food trailers, are common for informal vendors. These vendors operate in public spaces such as storefront, sidewalks

or pavements, public outdoor markets, near downtown streets, markets, or parks (Sepadi and Nkosi, 2022). This reflects exposure to weather, pollution and unsafe physical conditions which are core environmental challenges.

Women street vendors face unhealthy environmental conditions. The vending areas are located beside the extremely polluted Bishnumati River, next to dusty highways, and are exposed to hazardous fumes from continuous traffic. Prolonged exposure to such dirt, dust, vehicular emissions, and unhygienic surroundings not only creates discomfort but also heightens health risks. The absence of nearby basic sanitation facilities in the Maitri Bridge, vendors are frequently compelled to relieve themselves in the polluted river which raises the possibility of illnesses and epidemics of infectious diseases.

One vendor shared her experience: *“I got dengue and had to stay in bed for two months. It happened because I sit on the bridge above the contaminated river. I would sell until late at night, sometimes until 9 p.m.”* This emphasizes how unsafe, unhygienic, unsanitary environmental conditions such as polluted water, mosquito breeding grounds, lack of sanitation, toxic air emission directly threaten the health and safety of women vendors. Female street sellers' reproductive health was impacted by exposure to air pollution which also raised their risk of respiratory and urinary ailments (Sepadi and Nkosi, 2022). These challenges reflect the broader structural neglect of informal workspaces within urban governance. Marginalized women are compelled to vend in hazardous environments that severely impact their wellbeing.

The environmental health risks women vendors face is not only individual struggle but outcomes of intersectional structural exclusion. Migrant women and low income structure make lack bargaining power to secure safer vending locations. Instead pushed into highly polluted and stigmatized spaces like the Bishnumati riverbanks or roadside bridges. Similarly, nature of urban governance is revealed in the neglect of informal vendors' workspaces such as sanitation, waste management and health facilities are systematically denied in areas where marginalized vendors operate. This indicates that environmental risks are not distributed normally but are concentrated along lines of gender, migration and poverty producing compound disadvantages. Thus, women vendors' daily negotiations with dust, pollution and unsafe sanitation practices exemplify how environmental hazards become embedded in broader urban inequalities.

Harassments and Abuses

A significant number of street vendors in Kathmandu Valley face various forms of harassment and abuse from authorities which deeply affects their everyday livelihood. Vendor C, a woman selling clothes on the Maitri pedestrian bridge has reported harassment from pedestrians and local residents, as revealed by personal interview. She stated,

“Every evening I display the clothes on the Maitri pedestrian bridge for vending. The bridge is meant only for people to walk across, so I claim just a small patch of space for my survival. When the crowd thickens, pedestrians start showering me with curses and humiliating words. Even nearby residents join in, beginning to abuse verbally, scold, and use foul language and derogatory remarks. Their scolding cuts deep, leaving me anxious and unsettled, but I have nowhere else to earn a living.”

Vendor C struggles to claim a space on the Maitri pedestrian bridge, a designated area for pedestrian people. It is not a place for vending despite that she has occupied space which is illegal. She occupies a small patch for economic survival, revealing how informal. The quote illustrates verbal abuse and public hostility towards street vendors, highlighting their social stigmatization and the hostile environment they face. The use of curses, foul language, and derogatory remarks reflects the inconvenient and illegitimate nature of their presence.

Vendors navigate contested urban spaces constantly facing displacement or confrontation. The experiences emotional distress due to repeated humiliation and public scrutiny leading to anxiety and unsettled feelings. This stress exacerbates the physical and economic challenges of street vending. Reflects the lack of viable alternatives for income, this is a larger structural issue where marginalized women vendors are pushed into such spatial space in informal economies out of necessity and must endure daily harassment and emotional distress in exchange for basic survival.

One of the significant challenges observed during fieldwork. Unequal and exploitative relationships between women vendors and male produce owners. One married woman street vendor named Vendor E, who lacked the financial resources to purchase goods independently. She relied on a male vendor who provided goods in the vending spot,

and she assisted by displaying products and started a lead role in customer interaction and sales. He stayed aside from her and observed. Although she actively engaged with customers and managed the selling process, the product owner frequently insulted her in a harsh, loud, disrespectful manner with a demeaning tone, shouting remarks such as, *“Just sitting idle there, you’re not even attracting customers or doing proper business.”*

Beyond verbal criticism, the situation escalated further as the product owner engaged in inappropriate gestures and sexually suggestive comments and verbal abuse. His gestures and actions were clearly harassing in nature. At one point, he went so far as to throw pebbles aimed at private body parts, which constitutes a clear form of sexual harassment. Despite this repeated abuse and knowing that, she still continues to vend in that location with that same person. It highlights both the vulnerability and lack of power of women in informal vendor networks while dependent on male intermediaries for goods.

Viewed through an intersectional lens, harassment emerges as systematic, relational and spatially embedded. It is enacted by multiple actors such as state authorities, male intermediaries, pedestrians, customers, and residents. These actors power is legitimized by broader structures of patriarchy, class inequality, and urban spatial ordering. This reveals how harassment is both systemic and personalized, manifesting in daily life as verbal insults, physical threats, sexual harassment, and emotional abuse. Ultimately, intersectionality reveals how products of overlapping structures of migration, gender, class inequality and urban spatial exclusion which together sustain their marginalization and normalize abuse in everyday urban life.

5.1.4 Social and Spatial Exclusion

Use of Public Space

Street vendors are normally connected with violations of public spaces; this is due to causing traffic congestion, inadequate hygiene, and poor waste disposal (Ramasamy, 2018). Girma (2009) showed that street vendors faced problems of accidents and loss of products during attempts to escape from the sudden arrival of authorities and the discrimination that they faced from formal traders. These have been widely reported as

challenges in previous studies. However, the experiences shared by my respondents reveal a different and more nuanced reality, as illustrated below.

While doing fieldwork, an incident occurred that vividly illustrated the contested nature of public space among women street vendors. I suddenly heard a disturbance nearby. When I arrived, I witnessed the scene: *“Two big vegetable women vendors engaged in a heated argument over vending space. The disagreement escalated when that one vendor physically grabbed the other’s hair accusing her of encroaching upon her selling area. The argument developed into a physical fight.”*

This incident illustrated how public spaces are filled with contestation. Thus, these demonstrate that the struggle over public space is not only between the state and vendors but also among the vendors themselves influenced by hierarchies of product scale and investment.

In contrast, Vendor C expressed, *“Vendors with little capital and limited goods stock are usually pushed to the peripheries, corners, narrow sidewalk or the far end of the vending line. I couldn’t secure a spot along the front road so I set up on the pedestrian bridge instead. There pedestrians and local residents often abuse and shout mostly at us for occupying the busy walkway in the evening.”*

It emphasizes how unequal access to space causes economic vulnerability by making it more difficult for vendors to draw customers and generate regular income. Furthermore, the decision to set up shop on crowded walkways or pedestrian bridges is driven by structural need rather than convenience. the outcome of being pushed out of profitable or central vending places. In addition to being unsafe, these outlying areas enable little visibility and consumer flow which further limits income prospects.

In sum, spatial exclusion is deeply gendered and classed. Women with low investment, caregiving burdens, and little social protection are more likely to be confined to these vulnerable positions. Through an intersectional point of view, these exclusions are not only about vending space but about how gender, class and migration status, intersect to determine access and opportunity. Women vendors who have with few privilege often look the spot of front side and capture wide space in comparison to marginal women vendors like low investor or low income household face compounded disadvantages that restrict them to marginal spaces with higher risks and lower returns. Thus,

contestations over vending areas reflect broader urban structural inequalities where the most marginalized women are systematically pushed to the peripheries.

Stigma and Social Judgement

Street vendors who are women face severe social stigma and judgment which undermines their feeling of value and dignity. Vending work is viewed as an illegal and criminal act in the urban society. Such negative narratives are constructed. Drawing from Cooley's (1902) concept of the looking-glass self, many women internalize the negative perceptions that society projects onto them. They begin to see themselves through the lens of public judgement where they are labelled as criminal, disruptive of urban beauty, or inferior. Thus forming a self-image shaped by social stigma rather than personal identity.

Goffman (1963) defines stigma as the situation of the individual who is disqualified from full social acceptance. It means that stigma is contextual. And it dependent on societal norms and values. In a developing country like Nepal, informal work is viewed with disgrace when practiced by marginalized groups. Their occupation such as street vending is framed as illegal, unsanitary, and a hindrance to urban development, pedestrian and for shutter shopkeeper. S. Magar, a respondent, reported how she felt in the beginning period of vending in the past: *"I felt shy and embarrassed as well as fearful of stigma. What if my village neighbors saw me in the urban area doing vending? I was afraid of their judgment within lived society."*

Her statement emphasizes that the internal conflict within her and feeling of shame when started doing street vending. She used to have fear of judgment from her social network of kinship and neighbors. Social stigma and the emotional cost of defying norms contribute to the double burden faced by women in street vending which is not only an economic activity but also a socially negotiated identity. Cooley's (1902) concept of the looking-glass self is reflected in respondent's perspective, as she internalizes sentiments of humiliation when she imagines how her rural villagers may see her street vending work. This sensation of humiliation and anxiety might be attributed to social stigma (Goffman, 1963) in which informal employment is regarded as undignified or less respectable.

Through intersectional lens, it shows that stigma is not an individual psychological burden but also interaction of gendered, classed, spatial and cultural inequalities. The emotional toll such as shame, fear and humiliation reflects not because of internalization of this. Rather daily negotiation of identity in contexts where legality, morality and dignity collide. This demonstrate legal recognition is necessary but not sufficient, stigma also lies according to narratives that heard about who belongs in urban space and whose labor is respectable.

5.2 Navigational strategies and Everyday Resistance

Women vendors face multiple hurdles and issues for instance structural exclusion, legal invisibilities and vulnerabilities. However, they develop adaptive strategies to survive and sustain their livelihoods, negotiating with the city's spatial, economic, and social structures are different by marginal vendors. The gendered, migration histories, and single motherhood make them navigate complex terrains of uncertainty. They assert their agency through resilience, resourcefulness, solidarity, demonstrating spatial resistance, community support, and micro-level innovations. This thematic analysis explores how women street vendors navigate their place within Machhapokhari urban fabric.

5.2.1 Negotiating with Urban Structures and Authorities

Customer Behavior

Marginal women vendors discussed various tactics that they use to handle uncomfortable interactions. Some of them choose to remain quite, disengagement in interaction or decide not to sell to disrespectful customers. While others take a defensive method and react forcefully. One vendor remarked, "*Tit for tat.*" She said that she replies in the same manner the way if they treat disrespect and rudely. On the other hand, some handle tension through humor or polite negotiation strategy in order to ensure the sale happens at the end.

Through observation on the field, that newly involve vendor got a disappointing experience when she was trying to measure goods and manage to understand customer demand. That proper well-dressed elite man who wear lot of gold ornaments around neck and in hand fingers rudely called her "psycho" while she had a brief moment of

confusion. Despite the verbal abuse, she stayed calm and composed and continued to sell. The same vendor shared an incident from earlier.

"When I told him that this torn note of money would not be accepted, the buyer angrily reacted that he would never again to purchase goods from me. I respectfully replied, "Okay" to her."

The quote noted that once she refused to take a damaged note of money which upset the customer. Rather than escalate interaction into the harsh argument, she prefers to speak gently and in polite manner at least from her side.

These all illustrate the mental agility needed for marginal women vendors. They do not passively tolerate difficult interactions but rather develop context specific coping techniques. Such adaptive responses are crucial for sustaining their livelihood in the absence of legal safeguards or grievance procedures.

Urban Authority

Urban authorities are a constant source of uncertainty and disturbance for all of these vendors. Some disadvantaged women vendors faced difficulties due to inability to run quickly carrying big loads in the back while constant monitor by urban authority. As a result, they are compelled to develop creative strategies to avoid eviction, confiscation of goods, and harassment by local law enforcement.

A marginal woman vendor shared her strategies why she adopted mobile vending. While using a pushcart staying in one location is unsuitable according to the law enforcement. Thus, she roaming around subway road for vending. Doing such mobile vending helps avoid fines, confiscation of goods and reduces the risk since authorities usually target stationary traders. In temporary permitted zones, women vendors respect the time limits set by authority. As an obedient vendor regularly vacate space on time to avoid seizures. This shows how they balance their work by adapting rules within the state's enforced.

Informal social networks are a crucial coping strategy. Mobile phones are used by vendors to stay in touch to get information anything related vending. Those vendors who do vend around main road site serve as early warning sentinels, alerting other

vendors farther inside the selling zone when they see authority officials approaching. This rapid communication chain allows for a quick response and temporary withdrawal, minimizing losses. Some women vendors prefer to spot themselves at the last side, corners of the subway because whenever the authority officials approach, it is easy to escape quickly.

As one vendor revealed that why she chooses to sit close to an exit point of informal vending zone, she may pack goods quickly and leave before the police reach at her. This reflects that importance of spatial tactics in navigating urban power.

In sum, women are not passive actors rather active participant who are engaged in daily negotiations with the state, space and daily struggle. Their responses mirror both resistance and adaptation to simply survive within a chaotic, hostile urban area. Finally, the main goal is to make money for living, which is why they employ any inventive resistance.

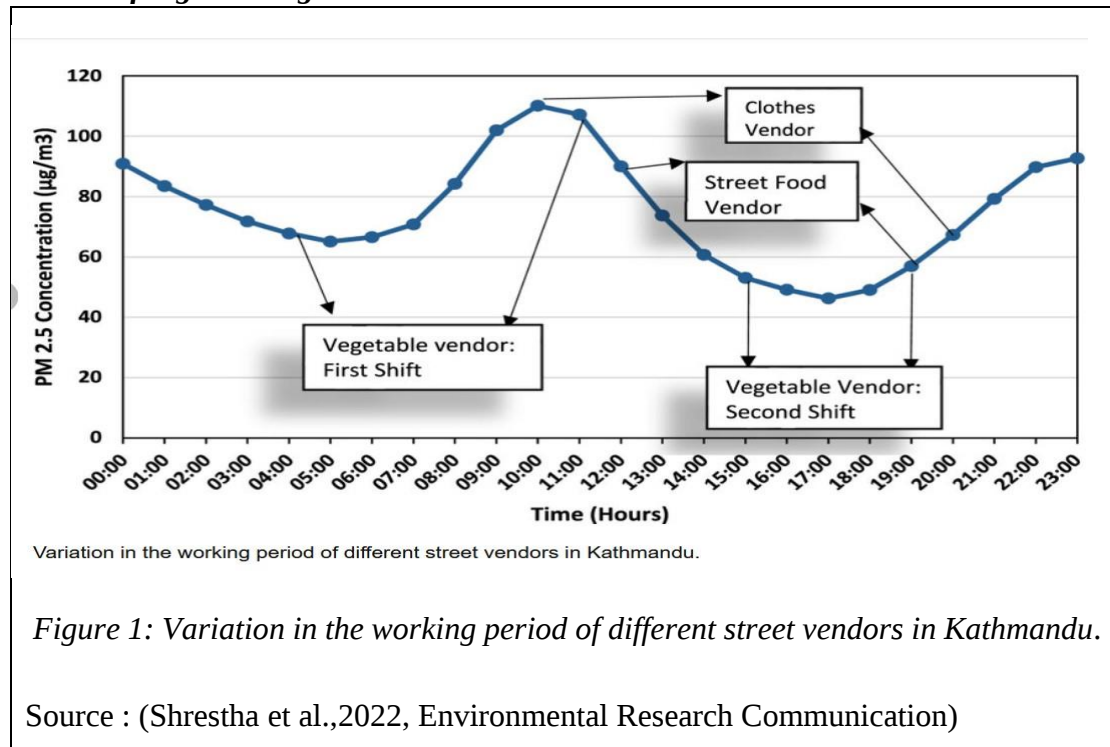
Absence of Alternatives Plans by Authority

It was discovered while doing the triangulation interview, one of the local ward officers revealed that no plans has been formulated related to relocation of vending zones. He noted that lack of public space in this periphery that's why related to vendors' issues are halted to discuss. Rather focuses conversation in the regular monitoring by authority which support for the removal of vendors from congested sidewalks and junctions. It means lack of alternative plans, disadvantaged women vendors left in a state of uncertainty to do work. Summary, disadvantaged women street vendors use navigation practices as a form of resistance with problems that arise while doing vending as illegal work in the urban space. With silence coping mechanism they have claimed urban space as belonging to them.

They turn unofficial areas into places of social, economic, and symbolic value. So, they are compelled to take the form of tactical retreat, silent endurance, and subtly defiant actions. In the disputed urban landscape, these micro practices are crucial tools for underprivileged urban actors like women vendors to build agency, negotiate their rights, and demand recognition.

5.2.2 Temporal and Spatial Adaptations

Time Shifting as a Negotiation



The diagram illustrates the empirical data on street vendors' working hours and air pollution exposure. It demonstrates even variation in the working period of different street vendors in Kathmandu. However, this representation does not fully capture the everyday practices of marginalized vendors. The finding shows that contrast in the case of readymade clothing women seller scenario. Marginal women street vendors who sell clothing items in the research area arrive at the vending area of vegetable vendors in the early 6 am before their vending shift begins. They trade discreetly hiding from the metropolitan police and stay at exist point or the corner side. In order to avoid being caught and chased away. This practice reflects their coping tactics and reveals how seller deal with time limits imposed by the authorities. Rather of rigidly sticking to the second shift shown in the picture, these women have their own temporal strategies to sustain their livelihood with the hoping to earn money.

Coping with Abuse

In hostile urban setting, marginal women street vendors frequently face verbal abuse, disrespect, and discriminatory behavior from a variety of actors like customers, product owners, authorities, and even fellow vendors.

To cope with daily problems, they adopt silence as a best coping mechanism. Most of the women claim that they choose not to retaliate when they encounter such actors using harsh, abusive language. They do not believe the problem would solve even escalating the situation, it is better to ignore it and continue vending. As a woman vendor expressed, *“I let it go... I have no other choice; this work feeds us.”* The phrase illustrates that they are not passivity, selective silence shows a calculated resilience.

While intense disputes or aggression occur between vendors or with outsiders in some cases, informal peer support networks activate. Such solidarity among vendors creates a sense of protection in uncertain situations. Friends intervene in the middle of the discussion and offer moral support and deal as mediators. Despite tolerating disrespect and vulnerability, these women persist in their vending work due to compulsion to sustain and remain alive.

To cope with daily challenges, they adopt adaptive silence as a coping mechanism. Most of the disadvantaged women claim that they choose not to retaliate when they encounter such actors using harsh, abusive language. They do not believe the problem would solve even escalating the situation; it is better to avoid it and continue vending.

Market Information

Access to timely and accurate market information to ensure their survival strategy for marginal women street vendors functioning in informal urban sectors. Such knowledge gets through everyday market interactions and informal peer networks. These horizontal networks serve as valuable social capital, since sellers constantly communicate information about pricing fluctuations, quality sourcing, and seasonal demand.

As reportedly, the majority of vendors get to know other vendors either before or soon after they begin their business. Find the best places to buy products whether they are from Kalimati, Machhapokhari, Sangla, Bhatkeko Pul, Sundhara, or Bouddha with the help social connections. This knowledge exchange includes practical insights about quality products, bulk purchasing possibilities, and specific discounts which allow even new or financially disadvantaged sellers to actively participate in the market. During seasonal shifts, choose diverse goods based on changing demand of customer and concern with profit margin.

Marginal women vendors' despite being excluded from formal support systems demonstrate economic adaptability by utilizing efficient market knowledge, social and situational awareness to sustain their livelihood in an unpredictable urban informal economy.

Communication and Product Strategy

Disadvantaged women vendors use unique tactics in both product presentation and customer interaction to thrive in the competitive and unpredictable informal sector. Their tactics are not only influenced by economic necessity but also by individual constraints such as age, physical strength, and capital limitations.

Proficiency in communicating is essential for building long term relationships and trust with clients. *"Politeness from the mouth is key to sustaining in vending work,"* said one seller that highlighting the importance of verbal etiquette in business interactions. The majority of vendors make an effort to keep their loyal customers by using tactful negotiation and situation specific discounts.

On the other hand, product displays are wisely chosen to attract the attention of customers. One vendor continuously mentioned her product is from her vegetable garden which highlights organic, fresh, and reliable goods. Some attract products with lower prices, freshness, discounts, polite speaking etc. Now, after authority's constant eyes on them for monitoring, most vendors get smart. They sell products picked up from sacks, plastics, and bamboo baskets rather than displayed on mats. It won't take up as much space as displaying goods at mats.

One grilled corn seller woman changes products according to the season's demand and profit margin in mobile carts. Another raw corn seller chooses that product wisely due to her physical limitation. She changes products according to the season: corn in summer, flowers on festival occasions, and peanuts in winter. She stated, *"I cannot bear heavy weight due to back pain so this suits me better."* Their main strategy is to earn high profit through lightweight products.

A careful selection of vending products is carried out. A single woman vendor explains why she chose non-perishable clothing. According to her, the non-perishable clothing weighs very little. *"It can sell tomorrow if it doesn't sell today."* Her tactics involve

making small initial investments before lowering risks and potential losses. In order to earn for living in urban informal markets, marginal women vendors make use of their communication abilities and product flexibility. Even though it operates outside of established economic structures, it exhibits vendor resiliency and market knowledge.

5.2.3 Collective Strategies and Alliances

Spy Tactics/Strategy Sharing

In response to the continuous threat of confiscation and eviction by Metropolitan authorities, marginal women street vendors have developed creative and unofficial self-defense techniques. One common strategy that enables them to quickly gather and relocate goods pack in large plastics or sacks which is portable when police officers arrive is the use of portable. These tactics are commonly shared within the vendor community through informal social networks of conversation and observation.

For instance, the story of the Upreti sister vendor arriving in the early morning hours and starting clothes vending in vegetable trade zones, doing so strategically until 7:30 am, and then leaving the space due to the anticipated arrival of enforcement officers. Whenever authorities aim for a raid, vendors move their goods inside nearby shops secretly. This shows utilizing existing relationships with shopkeepers and local residents. This secret collaboration and alert system is a key component of risk reduction.

Furthermore, in order to make it simpler to escape or pack up when authorities are spotted, some sellers purposefully place themselves near the back or edge of selling zones, especially in areas that are more open or uncontrolled. This kind of placement enhances the possibility of departing without losing the items and lowers the chance of a frontal encounter.

These tactics demonstrate a communal kind of spatial intelligence and resistance in which peers constantly exchange knowledge vocally and through observation in order to survive in a highly restricted and exclusive urban setting. In navigating unstable livelihoods under constant surveillance, women street sellers' adaptation and resilience are highlighted by informal, community based knowledge systems.

Alliances with Other Vendors

Alliances and cooperative fellow vendors have emerged as vital survival strategies in the difficult and cutthroat competitive world of informal urban market. It is clear from participant observation and interviews that disadvantaged women street vendors get support from their informal networks particularly those who are running mobile vending carts and hut stalls.

These informal friendships go beyond casual contacts. Vendors help one another load and unload things, inquire about one another well beings, discuss current market trends and price situations, and coordinate their selling techniques. This everyday solidarity promotes emotional support and knowledge exchange. For instance, vegetable vendors work the morning shift but hut stall clothes vendors used to work later in the day. Recently, hut stall merchants have begun operating from morning hours with vegetable vendors. This is how support, promote and market each other's businesses. It is a form of assistance to establish a symbolic relationship of mutual support.

Furthermore, such alliances reduce stress and promote understanding when small dispute happen. One of the hut stall vendor mentioned that sometimes vegetable waste remains near their stall which is a problem. Still seeing it as a problem. He stated, “We all have families to feed, we all are the same this is our shared space and our struggle to meet common goal.”

Such coalitions present as a means of collective resistance to metropolitan pressures like eviction and displacement. Within contested urban places vendors establish informal systems for coexistence, resilience, and market adaptability by cultivating belonging feeling within community and have common identity.

Learning from Experience

Few disadvantaged women vendors stated that they entered the informal market as a result of unsuccessful or exploitative employment experiences rather than as a clear choice. In the early phases of their urban livelihood journey encounter unexpected issues. Some women reported engaging in daily wage jobs such as construction or domestic work however won't get wage as they were promised. Common incident of few vendors such as: wage theft took over by contractors who refused to pay them,

leaving them economically and emotionally vulnerable later. As one vendor shared, “I work hard, but the contractor takes away all my money. That’s when I thought, I’ll do my own small business and start selling vegetables on the street.”

This transition from oppressive wage labor to vending indicated the beginning of a learning process which is shaped by daily struggles, peer support, and observation. In earlier times, starting with low investment items like green leafy vegetables. These women slowly understand market knowledge like where to source affordable product, products demand in certain area, and bargain skill to with deal wholesalers.

Over time, women vendors also learned to read the behavior pattern of urban authorities, anticipate crackdowns, and develop mobility based tactics to evade confiscation such as using pushcarts, selecting escape friendly vending spots, and discreetly timing their presence in restricted areas. These tactics represent not just survival but an embodied intelligence developed through consistent trial, error, and community based adaptation.

Therefore, their experiential learning plays a crucial role in navigating urban informality. It enhances their resilience and provides the practical, useful skill to function within an uncertain, often hostile, urban landscape.

5.2.4 Coping and Resilience Practices

Coping with Abuse

In hostile urban setting, marginal women street vendors frequently face verbal abuse, disrespect, and discriminatory behavior from a variety of actors like customers, product owners, authorities, and even fellow vendors.

To cope with daily problems, they adopt silence as a best coping mechanism. Most of the women claim that they choose not to retaliate when they encounter such actors using harsh, abusive language. They do not believe the problem would solve even escalating the situation, it is better to ignore it and continue vending. As a woman vendor expressed,

“I let it go... I have no other choice; this work feeds us.” The phrase illustrates that they are not passivity, selective silence shows a calculated resilience.

While intense disputes or aggression occur between vendors or with outsiders in some cases, informal peer support networks activate. Such solidarity among vendors creates a sense of protection in uncertain situations. Friends intervene in the middle of the discussion and offer moral support and deal as mediators. Despite tolerating disrespect and vulnerability, these women persist in their vending work due to compulsion to sustain and remain alive.

To cope with daily challenges, they adopt adaptive silence as a coping mechanism. Most of the disadvantaged women claim that they choose not to retaliate when they encounter such actors using harsh, abusive language. They do not believe the problem would solve even escalating the situation; it is better to avoid it and continue vending.

Borrowing Money

In-depth interviews reveal that compound of marginal women street vendors mostly rely on informal borrowing networks to manage financial demands during emergencies due to some reasons. Most vendors replied they prefer small, short term loans borrowed from relatives, friends, or trusted vendors within their own community circle.

These social capital acts as a source of low risk borrowing, allowing them to run their vending work without engaging in formal big debt arrangements. Even they clearly expressed that they were not willing to take out a large loan, voicing fear of long-term repayment problems, interest buildup, and future financial insecurity. Instead, they like to take on debt up to their manageable level. In contrast, a few well-off women vendors join in microfinance organizations, making small monthly payments and obtaining loans through organized group lending systems.

This borrowing practice exemplifies a practical strategy to financial survival that balances risk, trust, and accessibility. It emphasizes disadvantaged women sellers' limited access to official financial institutions, as well as their reliance on community-based financial initiatives to support their informal businesses.

Role of Humor, Faith and Positivity

The role of humor, faith, and positivity is there. Among vendors' friends, they do humor and have faith that every day, if one day no sales happen, they hope for tomorrow. It

depends on luck also, they think. Stay positive, and the future will be a better one. So they focus on the study of children so their children won't face this problem. This is how they navigate the present situation.

Many marginal women street sellers use humor, faith, and optimism as emotional coping mechanisms to get by in the face of social exclusion and economic instability. While observing, I, as a researcher, see that sellers frequently participate in lighthearted interactions and collective joking with their fellow friends and customers in the middle of selling products. Interviews with them reveal it helps reduce stress and helps their peer networks grow more robust and unified.

During discussions, a number of vendors shared their faith in fate and divine timing. They interpret low sales as temporary setbacks. As one vendor expressed, *"If not today then tomorrow, I have faith, things will be better."* Such sentiment reflects a deep rooted hope tied to a belief system and eventually helps them to endure uncertainty in life and vending work.

Positive faith towards the future brings hope. Their investment in children's education will later help them escape the emotional and financial hardship that they are currently facing. This forward looking mindset helps them make sense of their sacrifices and provide a sense of purpose during tough urban environments. Therefore, humor, faith, and positivity are not just emotional responses. Rather navigational tool for function while uncertainty in urban informal economy.

Navigating Gender Norms

It has been noted through observation that marginal women vendors deliberately control gender norms in the behavior and appearance. Prior to social appropriateness and acceptability, everyone is spotted wearing the most comfortable attire such as traditional kurta salwar or casual clothes with a regular t-shirt salwar and windcheaters. They avoid wearing dress like skimpy one like tight pants and t-shirt at vending time. Prefers comfort to fit within broader societal norms.

Most of marginal women vendor in term of behavior liked to speak in lower tones and soft voices because they want to maintain respectful interactions with customers and minimized unnecessary conversation to avoid drawing unwanted attention. Due to

concerns about social rejection and safety, most people avoid vending late at night and prefer vending around their rented room area.

These strategies reflect a gendered navigation of urban informality where marginal women actively adjust their behavioral pattern and appearance to ensure personal safety, social acceptance, and economic continuity within a male dominated public space.

5.2.5 Household and Family Based Support

Children's Role in Support in Household Work/ Business

Most of the marginal women vendors noted the support of children is in household activities rather than in vending work. Their children help with basic home duties like cleaning, cooking, and filling water in drums and buckets. Mothers are out early morning hours for vending and again reach the road in the late evening also. Children assist their mother in household work so women are able to balance the dual responsibilities of earning and caregiving effectively. Somehow the role of children in the household economy of women street vendors emerged as implicitly crucial.

In several cases, older children assist their small siblings, get them ready for school and send them to school, support them with homework, and prepare meals for them. Quite a few vendors' children help directly in the vending work, particularly on holidays. These children start displaying products, managing customers, handling money, and carrying goods. One respondent mentioned, *"My son likes vending and smartly does trades, even managing customers better than me."* She feels pride in how her child learned the skill of "smart selling technique" just by observing her. Such small help from children makes it easier for their mother to ease the physical and emotional burden and get time to rest.

However, Khadka's mother, a vendor, explained the importance of education over labor; currently, her children are studying at the secondary level. She won't ask for help for herself or children. Totally discourage them explicitly from assisting in vending. She chooses instead to protect their study time and educational aspirations. She expressed, *"I do this work because I am illiterate. If I were educated, I wouldn't be doing this; I might have the best job and opportunity. So, I hope my children won't have*

to struggle like I do.” She strongly stands alone and navigates all challenges to provide education for children and for survival livelihood.

The dynamic role of children seems to be according to their family and living structure. Some are directly engaged in vending, and some are not. Some totally assist with basic household work. These illustrate how marginal women vendors handle both responsibilities and navigate economic survival for their families.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

6.1 Summary

This thesis explores the livelihood strategies, everyday challenges, and negotiation practices among women street vendors in area of Machhapokhari. This study is grounded in qualitative methodology. Using phenomenological approach within qualitative methods and purposive sampling strategies was used to select participants. It focuses on how multiple identities such as gender, age, migration histories, class, marital status and single motherhood, shaped the unique experience of women navigating the urban informal economy. Through in-depth interviews, field observations, and document analysis. This study provides rich narratives, or personal stories, of their survival tactics within hostile and exclusionary urban environments.

The findings of the research illuminate the complex and intersecting structures that shape livelihood strategies for women street vendors. First, women who are in multiple marginal positions develop survival strategies that are creative, relational, and deeply embedded in informal social networks. The combination of gender, age, migration history, class, single motherhood, and women without family, peers or relatives support emerged as not only background identities but also active forces that configure access to resources, types of labor undertaken, and social support systems. These findings demonstrate that livelihood is not merely a response to poverty but a deeply social, gendered, political and adaptive process shaped by everyday negotiations.

Second, the findings address that women street vendors particularly those who are migrants, low socio economic status, aged, single mothers, widow, married women who lack family support, relatives' helping hands, spatial inequalities or exclusion and gendered dual responsibilities that shape their everyday realities. Even they encounter problems such as harassment from municipal authorities and product owners, abuse from pedestrians and local residents, health risks from the vending field which is in a polluted environment, unhygienic spaces, limited access to sanitation, and lack of legal recognition. These layered difficulties illustrate the urgent need for inclusive urban governance that recognizes the compounded vulnerabilities of women vendors in informal work. Without an intersectional approach in policy, these women continue to

face invisibility and difficulties in urban space. Such issues of women street vendors are unheard by urban planners and neglected in public discourse. Therefore, this research urges for urban planning and development frameworks that center women vendors' lived experiences not only as economic actors but also as breadwinners, caregivers, and citizens entitled to safety, dignity, and participation in the city.

Third, this research concludes by emphasizing the agency connection and innovation found in women vendors' regular negotiation methods. Despite being constantly monitored, displaced, harassed, and evicted, these women employ adaptable tactics. They rely on informal networks which provide warning alarms before enforcement arrives, uses mobile carts for fast mobility, choose safer vending spots, negotiate with time shift, alter product strategies seasonally, coordinate with collective alliances of vendors. These negotiation practices reflect survival mode. These represent a silent but more powerful form of resistance and spatial claiming.

This thesis questions the prevalent homogeneity of women in Nepali urban discourse and provides a unique contribution by elevating the voice of the most disadvantaged women vendors. It advocates for an inclusive, gender-sensitive urban planning framework that acknowledges the complex, intersectional realities of informal women workers which promotes equitable and responsive urban governance.

6.2 Conclusion

The research undertaken in this thesis has explored diverse experiences of women street vendors in Machhapokhari, Kathmandu. Focusing on their livelihood plan, daily obstacles, and innovative approach to navigating urban isolation. This study has used a phenomenological approach under qualitative method which emphasized that every woman street vendors experience diverse realities and adaptive strategies. Such diverse shaped by intersecting factors such as migration histories, gender, class, age, marital status, degree of support from spouse and single motherhood. A group of highly marginalized women with little social support, low economic resources, and a fragile system of authority emerged as central to this study.

Women vendors are not just economic actors but also citizen, mother, migrant, widow and caregivers. Their hardships such as tolerating customer behavior, daily struggle for public space, harassment and abuse, eviction, and lack of social protection are

compounded by gendered roles, socio economic status, migration histories, age factors and lack of kin support. Despite these challenges women display creativity and resilience through flexible vending strategies and social network support. Informal network act as survival mechanism by providing information, solidarity, and protection in chaos urban setting.

The findings resonate with broader debates in South Asia. Bhowmik (2005) emphasizes women vendors in India face gendered vulnerabilities under liberalization policy. This thesis research confirms that such parallel situation seen in Nepal under neo-liberalization policy where women vendors of Nepal also face harassment, gendered vulnerabilities and eviction. Timilsina (2007) and Thapa- Parajuli et.al (2024) explained about street vending in Kathmandu. This thesis study mainly focuses on women vendors and demonstrates how intersecting inequalities deepen exclusion. Harvey's (2003) "accumulation by dispossession" and Ghertner's (2011) "rule by aesthetics" were evident in Kathmandu's eviction policies which prioritize investment and aesthetic over livelihoods. Thus this research support existing debates and gender-specific marginality insightful view provide that is in Nepal's urban informal economy.

The theoretical lens of sociological imagination (Mills, 1959) aids in explain these research findings. Among its three axes, social structure such as neo liberal urban policies, patriarchal governance and eviction system shape women vendors' hardship. Their hardship is not isolated rather it is shaped by broader social structure of society. Intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989) demonstrated how gender, class, age, migration status, marital status, kin support and single motherhood intersect to create layered vulnerabilities. Ellis concept diversification for livelihood help to explain how women combine multiple strategies to negotiate with obstacles and do multiple work in order to earn money for fulfilling basic needs. In the same way, Bourdieu's social capital concepts explain how they depend on network for survival daily life.

The thesis also carries important implication for urban governance. Current policies criminalize vendors without providing alternative way. Neo-liberal urban planning favors aesthetics, beauty view, malls and private investment while totally ignoring informal livelihoods. Lack of recognition and legal protection exposes vendors particularly women to harassment, abuse and insecurity. The research argues for inclusive urban governance that recognizes women vendors as citizens, mother,

caregiver, and contributors to the city economy. Provides designated vending zones, social security, sanitation and dignified life. Incorporated marginal women vendors' voices into urban planning.

Historically Nepal feminist neglect the discourse related to informal and working class women. In our society, women's struggles are shaped by patriarchy obviously. But there are also others categories exist that compound the oppression of women. While intersecting categories such as class, migration, age, marital status etc. compound form of marginalization. This marginalization need to be addresses who face extreme social realities of vulnerabilities and bring in mainstream. So, intersectionality is not just a theory a necessary framework in Nepal to understand the issues of disadvantages group of society. It challenges the dominant narratives that either romanticize street vending or criminalized. More importantly, it challenges the homogenization of women in mainstream Nepali feminist discourse. Despite marginalization, women vendors demonstrate adaptive strategies, community solidarity and silent way of resistance. For instance, informal networks, mobile vending, flexible time shifts, sharing information and even humor to cope with stress.

In conclusion, this thesis affirms that women street vendors' problems are not isolated hardships but rather reflect wider social categories, gendered and urban disparities. Their existence and behaviors call into question traditional concepts of legality, urban beauty, and progress. Women traders are not just vendors but also mothers, citizens, and breadwinners etc. Their one and only wish is for legal recognition and mainstreaming. Their personal stories challenge us to consider what type of city we are developing and for whom. This thesis insists on the use of intersectionality not only as a framework but also as a call to reshape public discourse, development narratives, and urban inclusion. The findings urge planners and policymakers to see street vendors not as problems but as part of the social and economic fabric of the city.

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Annex-I: Checklist of Thematic Analysis Linked to Research Questions

RQ1: How do the combination of gender, migration histories, and single mother (single migrant woman) influence the livelihood strategies of women street vendors?

Themes:

a. Social Network

Checklist Indicators:

Family members involved

Support from frns / neighbor / relatives

Any informal women's group (eg: Aama samuha)

Trust networks for credit

Any mentorship or advice received.

b. Pre-migration Experience/ Skills

Checklist Indicators:

Type of work before migrating

Skills (agriculture, business, product-making, handicraft)

Transfer of rural knowledge- urban vending

Impact of skill level on product choice.

c. Decision- making and Business Strategy

Checklist indicators:

Autonomy in decision-making

Influence of past experience

Trial and error

Seasonal adaptation

Vendor to vendor knowledge transfer

d. Motherhood and Work Balance

Checklist Indicators:

Daycare support or older siblings

Schooling arrangement

Role conflict between mother and worker

Dependence on children to assist in vending

RQ2: What is specific challenges do they face due to their status as women, migrant and single mother?

Themes:

- a. General Challenges (male / female vendors)
 - Checklist Indicators:
 - Daily routines
 - Safety concerns
 - Time- management issues
- b. Single Mother Verses Settle Vendors
 - Checklist Indicators:
 - Housing insecurity
 - Lack of emotional support
 - Perceive by house owners / customers
 - Difference in coping strategies
- c. Dealing with House owner, Customers and Product owner
 - Checklist Indicators:
 - Conflict frequency
 - Rent pressure
 - Verbal abuse or manipulation
 - Power dynamic (tenant, landlord, customer)
- d. Use of Public Space
 - Checklist Indicators:
 - Control over vending space
 - Conflict with other vendors
 - Space insecurity
- e. Lack of Access in formal Jobs
 - Checklist indicators:
 - Low educational attainment or skill certification
 - No access to employment networks or job placement centers
- f. Eviction
 - Checklist Indicators:
 - Frequency of eviction
 - Warning system
 - Possession loss

Return Strategies

g. Harassment / abuse

Checklist Indicators:

Verbal/ physical harassment

Emotional response

Support system

h. Economic uncertainty

Checklist Indicators:

Daily income range

Loan or credit dependency

Coping during low season

i. Customer behavior

Checklist indicators:

Favoritism or discrimination

Complaints about pricing/product

Bargaining stress

j. Child care or elder care burden

Checklist Indicators:

Age of dependents

Type of care needed (medical, feeding, transport)

Missed workdays

k. Stigma and social judgement

Checklist Indicators:

Neighborhood gossip

Perception of morality

Internalized shame

Strategies to deal with judgement

RQ: 3: How do they navigate and negotiate certain challenges, still continuity vending work as well?

Themes

a. Customer Behavior

Checklist Indicators:

Calm vs defensive response

Humor, politeness, negotiation

- Impact on mental health
- b. Urban Authority
 - Checklist Indicators:
 - Bribes
 - Avoidance pattern
 - Use of local networks
- c. Coping with Abuse
 - Checklist Indicators:
 - Emotional resilience
 - Collective support
 - Ignoring / Standing up
- d. Market information
 - Checklist indicators:
 - Sources of info (vendors, relatives, travel)
 - Price awareness
 - Seasonal trends
- e. Communication and Product Strategy
 - Checklist Indicators:
 - Customer handling style
 - Product display
 - Product freshness or uniqueness
- f. Spy Tactics / Strategy Sharing
 - Checklist Indicators:
 - Whistle/code system
 - Use of children or co vendors
 - Mutual warnings
- g. Borrowing Money
 - Checklist indicators:
 - Loan sources (micro finance, friends)
 - Repayment challenges
 - Interest burden
- h. Children's Role in Support in Household Work/ Business
 - Checklist Indicators:
 - Basic household tasks (cleaning, washing, cooking)

- Selling, carrying goods, keeping watch (in holiday)
- Skipping school to help
- Learning vending as future skill
- i. Role of Humor, Faith and Positivity
 - Checklist Indicators:
 - Personal Beliefs (God, fate, karma)
 - Use of humor to survive hard days
 - Rituals or prayers
 - Positive sayings
- j. Alliances with Other Vendors
 - Checklist Indicators:
 - Rotation or group selling
 - Division of vending spot
 - Warning systems or collective resistance
 - Shared storage or cost-saving measures
- k. Learning from Experience
 - Checklist Indicators:
 - Knowledge of work
 - Product changes (based on season and demand)
 - Change in interaction
- l. Navigating Gender Norms
 - Checklist Indicators:
 - Dress choices to avoid harassment
 - Speaking less/more to maintain respect
 - Avoiding nighttime work
- m. Absence of Alternative Plans by Authority
 - Checklist Indicators:
 - Lack of concrete plans
 - Admitted lack of urban infrastructure
 - Municipal awareness but inaction
 - Impact on women vendors
 - No inclusion in formal urban development frameworks

Annex-II: Some photographs captured in the field visit



On 13 June 2025, women street vendors were selling their goods in front of the closed shutters of other businesses.



On 23 June 2025, vendors occupied Maitri bridge to sell their goods despite the river below being heavily contaminated.



On 25 June 2025, vendors are gathered to sell vegetables in the early morning in the temporary vending zones.



On 27 June 2025, women vendors are displaying their products in the pedestrian bridge.



On 28 June 2025, a woman vendor was selling grilled corn from a mobile cart in the evening along a sub road of the area.



On 28 June 2025, a woman was selling green veggies from vending field to the customer.



Kathmandu city police snatch goods of street vendors. The Kathmandu Post (2025 September 25)

Source: <https://kathmandupost.com/province-no-3/2024/06/09/kathmandu-street-vendors-lament-lack-of-options-two-years-since-ban>



Woman in Kathmandu depend on the roadside for livelihood. The Kathmandu Post (2025 September 20)

Source: <https://kathmandupost.com/money/2022/04/22/street-vendors-are-crucial-to-urban-economy-but-their-plight-is-huge>