

Employment in the Informal Economy: A Sociological Study of Informal Sector and Street Vending Activists in the Period of COVID-19 Pandemic at Gopalganj Sadar, Bangladesh

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Abstract: Informal sector and businesses activities are directly dependent on Covid-19. It has been observed that there is influx of population as well as natural population growth which created tremendous problem in providing services by the different urban public agencies as well as providing employment opportunities for the ever increasing population. As a result, the new migrants are compelled to work in the informal sector where there are fewer requirements of capital and other supporting services and Covid-19 is impediment. Gopalganj is the still rising city of Bangladesh where most of the population is the migrants from the neighboring districts. The present study has been conducted with an aim to find out the socio-economic status, forms and structure, distribution pattern and Covid-19 risk of informal sector business activities in Gopalganj Sadar, Bangladesh. The study shows that, most of the young people are engaged in the informal sector business activities. The study revealed three types of informal- trade food, services and others. The trade food activities dominate the informal sector in the Gopalganj Sadar. It has been observed that, few numbers of women engaged in the informal sector are engaged in trade food. It also observed that informal worker faced covid-19 risks. Most of the informal sector business activities have been developed with their own capital and few people received institutional loan so far. The reasons for selecting the location for the informal sector business activities are availability of space, availability of customers, demand for the particular type of activity etc. In this sector service is sold instead of any product and obviously at low cost. There are some services that are available only in informal sector.

Keywords: Informal economy, Street Vending, Coronavirus (COVID-19), Bangladesh.

I. INTRODUCTION

In many nations, especially developing ones, the informal sector is a vital component of the economy and the labor market. Bangladesh's informal sector is a major driver of the country's economy and employment opportunities, especially for the country's low-skilled urban and rural residents. Traditional economists formerly paid little heed to the economics of activities that occurred outside of the economy.

Only social scientists and cultural anthropologists gave any credence to the possibility that such pursuits ever existed. However, economists began routinely investigating the informal aspects of organizational life in the 1950s and 1960s as a result of their growing recognition of their importance (Blau and Scott, 1963; Gouldner, 1954).

In 1972, the International Labor Office (ILO) conducted research on this unnoticed phenomena, which it dubbed the "informal sector." The idea of the "informal sector" was first developed through research conducted in a developing-country setting (Hart, 1971). The informal economy was first researched in developing nations, and then its importance was recognized in the industrialized world. Subsequently, significant works focusing on developing nations, a scattering of works focusing on post-socialist nations (mostly the Soviet Union), and, most recently, works focusing on transition nations, appeared. The last four decades and more have seen unprecedented rates of urbanization in many countries, and Bangladesh is no exception. By the year 2020, urban areas were home to roughly 28 percent of the country's overall population (Omobowale et al., 2020). Also, many newcomers to cities lack the prerequisite knowledge and experience for gainful employment in the formal economy. However, rather than relocate back to the countryside, they have remained in this transitional zone between urban modernity and rural traditionalism (Banwell, 2001). Overflow from the countryside, seeking employment, makes up a major portion of the urban poor. Ultimately, they work with the city's unofficial economy. The informal economy in cities often creates more jobs than the formal economy does. Thus, the informal sector has been expanding in spite of challenges and inadequate external support. In 2013, 75.2% of urban residents worked in the unofficial sector of the economy (BBS & ILO, 2015).

In 2013, it was estimated that 87.4% of the country's employed population (aged 15 and up) was working informally. The agricultural sector had the highest rate of informal employment

(97.9%), followed by the industrial sector (91.4%) and the service sector (71.2%). (World Bank, 2017; BBS & ILO, 2015). Also, in 2013, over 91.7% of the young people (15-29) and 84.1% of the older people (30-64) were working in the informal sector (BBS & ILO, 2015). In reality, individuals work in the informal economy because the formal economy offers so few employment options (Sarker et al., 2016). In 2021, the informal economy contributed 43% of the country's GDP through its total gross value added (Reed et al., 2021). Therefore, the informal sector is vital to Bangladesh's economy for the many ways in which it influences the formal sector and the country's economy as a whole (Raihan, 2010). SARS-CoV-2 is the causative agent of COVID-19, a kind of coronavirus disease. The majority of those infected with the virus will suffer from a mild to moderate case of respiratory infection and recover without any particular therapy. Although, unfortunately, some may become gravely ill and necessitate professional medical care. The likelihood of a serious illness occurring increases with age and the presence of a preexisting medical condition, such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, or cancer. COVID-19 is an extremely dangerous virus that can strike at any age and cause severe illness or death (Shomali & Gotlib, 2022; Al-Mamun et al., 2022). Unemployment, family savings depletion, and diminished income were among the topics addressed by COVID-19 and other socioeconomic perspectives. The prolonged closures have cut off citizens' access to many economic opportunities, leading to a significant drop in income, if not a complete loss (Parvez et al., 2023). Fear of poverty, hunger, and job loss is another factor that has contributed to non-compliance. It appears that the spread of COVID-19 is stunting Bangladesh's economic development. The findings demonstrate that the affluent are not immune to the economic downturn and are, in fact, experiencing a relative decline in their standard of living.

1.1 Objectives of the Study

The present study is aimed at understanding the working conditions and covid-19 effect and on the informal sector in urban economic system and the possible consequences during covid-19 pandemic at Gopalganj Sadar, Gopalganj, Bangladesh. However, the specific objectives are given below:

- i. To identify the informal sector and business activities with socio-economic conditions during covid-19 pandemic at Gopalganj Sadar, Gopalganj, Bangladesh
- ii. To know the standard of living of the workers during pandemic involved in informal sectors.
- iii. To assess the problems faced by informal workers during covid-19 in their business.
- iv. To suggest some recommendations for creating better business environment for informal workers.

II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The goals of the study have been met through a thorough literature review. The term "Informal Economy" has been around for a long time, and it encompasses a wide range of problems relevant to the topic of this inquiry. It was previously

indicated that the informal sector can be broken down into many types of informal enterprises and activities. This portion of the literature review provides extensive definitions of gender-related words.

Assessment of the Socio-economic Aspects of Street Vendors in Dhaka City: Evidence from Bangladesh by Husain et al. (2015) looks at the income, access to finance, working hours, employment status, education level, and impact of social capital of street vendors in Dhaka. Indicators point to poor income, rural-to-urban migration, lack of education, an abundance of available labor, and large families as key motivators for engaging in a wide range of street vending activities. They also stressed the importance of a street vendor's social capital, which includes their network of acquaintances, customers, and friends. Most of the vendors' customers are regulars who frequent the neighborhood, such as rickshaw and automobile drivers, school and university students, residents, tenants, shop owners, and day laborers. This social capital was crucial in facilitating the acquisition of supplementary income. Inadequate managerial ability, an absence of risk assurance, transportation issues, and a lack of suitable and sufficient sources of funding also plague this enterprise. They are subjected to police and extortionist harassment, as well as arrests and demands for money. The study concludes that some of the challenges faced by street vendors can be alleviated by implementing a few targeted policies and programs at the federal, state, and local levels.

Despite causing issues in metropolitan areas due to trash production, foot traffic congestion, and a general lack of formalization, Akharuzzaman and Atsushi (2010) found that street vending is one of the better informal job prospects for poor people. The street vendor community will look to public management systems as something they have come to expect. In her study "Socio-economic state of the street vendors in Dhaka city," which she presented in 2014, Suraiya revealed that street vendors provide millions of individuals in Bangladesh with essential means of support, including money, jobs, and services. The report also includes data on the monthly earnings, services provided, average family size, and total monthly expenses of city street vendors. The low income of street vendors means that they frequently must resort to high-risk borrowing. However, it appears that natural and physical resources are declining (Rahman and Junayed, 2017).

Khan et al. (2018) paint a vivid picture of the demographic make-up and food-safety habits of street-food sellers in the Barisal metropolitan area. A variety of food-borne illnesses are increased because street sellers frequently do not follow safe and hygienic food handling methods. It's safe to assume that sellers are aware of the importance of keeping food clean. However, there are details that require emphasis, such as the safety of water used for drinking and cooking, the cleanliness of hands before handling food, the recycling of leftovers, and the availability of goods for sale when people are unwell. They mention how training and instruction in food-handling, awareness programs, enforcement of government regulations, and infrastructure may help make street food safer. According

to Bhowmik (2010), many street vendors are low-income, educationally disadvantaged, and uninformed about food safety, the environment, sanitation, hygiene, types of food display, food service, hand washing, cooking ingredient sources, and potable water use. Therefore, items sold by street vendors are widely seen as a serious threat to public health.

Street vendors provide city inhabitants with extensive services at affordable prices. This research probes the social and economic situation of street sellers in Dhanmondi, Motijheel, and Lalbag. The study also reveals the significant significance that mobile street sellers play, particularly in terms of social status. When provided with the proper resources and training, the people of Dhaka City will be able to better their economic situation (Suraiya and Noor, 2012). In her paper titled Diseases and health condition of street hawkers in Bangladesh, Nazmoon Nahar (2016) details the illnesses that negatively impact the livelihood of street vendors in Dhaka and the methods they use to treat these conditions. She used a structured questionnaire to survey 300 Dhaka, Bangladesh street vendors at random. According to the data, most people who make a living selling their wares on the street are from middle-class backgrounds, and they all have to work outside in the elements. Without access to clean restrooms, female street vendors in the city face significant health risks. Many people on fixed incomes cannot afford to shop at upscale retail establishments, so they look for alternatives that offer the same or similar products at lower prices. Based on this analysis, it's clear that rural migrants engage in business activities in the informal sector, which in turn helps create jobs and plays a significant role in the country's central economy.

III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

Theoretical analysis is very important in sociological research. In fact, sociological research is considered as incomplete without theoretical framework. In an effort to understand the phenomenon of Informal sector businesses activities and the subsequent economic exploitation, recreational exploitation they faced on the informal businesses by the politician and Government, the study employed the Social System theory and Maslow 's hierarchy of needs theory.

3.1 Harvey's Production of Spaces

David Harvey described it as follows-

More than only the freedom to use urban amenities, the right to the city also includes the opportunity to better ourselves by shaping the built environment. Furthermore, it is a communal rather than an individual right because the realization of this transition requires the deployment of a communal capacity to reform urbanization. One of the most valuable but undervalued human rights is the one that allows us to shape and reshape our own cities and lives (Harvey, 2008).

Harvey maintains that only the organization of a worldwide political fight can guarantee the right to the city for all people living in urban areas. He's also cognizant of the fact that setting up such a showdown would be challenging. In addition, Harvey (2009) aimed to adopt the Right to the City as a working slogan

and political ideal due to the fact that it addresses the issue of who controls the link between urbanization and surplus production and use.

A variety of social interactions are required for daily survival. Which combination gives life its various dimensions. However, the quality of life of people of varying socioeconomic standings should be evaluated according to a variety of factors, and this includes the right of the impoverished to improve their lot. As a result, the impoverished in metropolitan areas engage in a variety of economic pursuits and engage in a wide range of social relationships. They have adopted a lifestyle, characterized by a variety of informal pursuits, that necessitates the use of public urban places. It is in this setting that debates over the proper level of formality in research have taken place.

3.2 Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory is a psychological explanation of human motivation. It identifies five distinct needs: I physiological, (ii) safety, (iii) love, (iv) self-esteem, and (v) self-actualization (Maslow, 1954). The rise in grassroots business activism in the informal economy can be explained by Maslow's theory. The satisfaction of these requirements drives human beings. Physiological needs (basic needs) including food, housing, and clothes are at the bottom of Maslow's hierarchy because they are required by all humans. Humans strive for the next level of requirements on Maslow's hierarchy once their most fundamental ones are satisfied. If they can't afford to get by otherwise, low-income families may decide to go to the shadow economy. When these demands are met, a poor man's quality of life in a family unit improves dramatically. Without them, activists in the informal sector of the economy may be led to the places they believe they can obtain food, shelter, and clothing. In other cases, even if families have provided for their members' fundamental needs, the absence of higher-order requirements like safety may prompt men or women to seek employment with the business activists. If a mother or daughter feels unloved, they may seek out informal activists.

3.3 Social System Theory

The functionalist viewpoint on the social system is primarily concerned with the functioning of its many systems. A stable society is one in which its members generally agree on a common set of rules and values and use those as the basis for cooperative behavior among themselves. Instability in the family system or, more broadly, by the social system, is the result of the breakdown of the family institution, and both have contributed to the phenomenon of decreased income. It's the end outcome of a breakdown in the social structure. However, when social scientists look for the functions served by poverty, racial discrimination, or the oppression of women, they are not justified by the understanding of the above idea, leading one to conclude that the functionalist paradigm makes the assumption that functionality, stability, and integration are necessarily good.

IV. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Phases, procedures, tasks, approaches, and tools are all components of a robust methodology, which serves as a set of rules for approaching and addressing problems. Quantitative and qualitative techniques were used in the investigation. A greater understanding of research topics can be attained through the use of mixed techniques, which combine quantitative and qualitative approaches (Creswell and Clark, 2007). The purpose of this primary data-driven study is to compile a detailed profile of the informal economy and business environment in Gopalganj Sadar, Bangladesh over the period of covid-19. For this investigation, a convenience sample was drawn and simple random sampling analyzed as it had been drawn from a statistically significant population. This is done by administering a semi-structured questionnaire to test takers before the actual test. The respondent's involvement is entirely voluntary, and their information will remain private. For the purposes of this study, the demographic and analysis unit is limited to the informal sector of the area of interest. The number of respondents was 120, and they were spread throughout three informal sectors in the Gopalganj district. People who labor in the informal retail sector and on the streets are included in the survey's sample. Stage sampling is used to help discover and get a personal interview by using a structured questionnaire, and 22 in-depth interviews are conducted to back up the findings. These have been categorized, and provide important data that may be used to highlight knowledge gaps in the Gopalganj Sadar. Researchers have employed inclusion and exclusion criteria after identifying the research difficulties and deciding on the most appropriate form of aim. To be considered for participation in the study, potential participants must meet certain inclusion requirements. The qualities of potential participants that are used as exclusion criteria are those that would rule them out of participation in the study. A theme discussion was offered after evaluating the secondary sources and the study's goals in order to fill in the gaps in our understanding.

V. ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

We can say that Street vending are grown from surplus labor force. So many people involve in different types of informal activities side by side with other profession and increase income to uplift the economic condition. And in these ways different informal activities are grown very fast in which country has low capital for growing formal sector. So informal activities are helpful for labor surplus economy to reduce economic gap between rich and poor people.

The Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Table 1: Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	92	88%
Female	28	12%
Total	120	100%

Field Survey, 2021

About 88% respondents are male and 12% respondents are female among 120 respondents.

Table Number 2: Age Status

Age	Frequency	Percentage
20-30	53	42%
31-40	30	24%
41-50	22	22%
51-60	15	12%
Total	120	100%

Field survey, 2021

The maximum number of people in Street vending are of the age between 15 to 25 years. The lowest and highest age group contains the lowest number of respondents, which refers to the inefficiency of those specific age groups especially in this specific purpose that is to be an owner of a shop. The middle age groups contain the highest but the number is changes at a decreasing rate towards the higher age groups. The contribution of female is not very significant here. Female contribution in the service sector is zero as the job is not suitable for them

Table Number 3: Education Pattern

Level of Education	Frequency	Percent
Primary	52	44%
Secondary	34	34%
Higher Secondary	20	16%
Illiterate	14	6%
Total	120	100%

Field work, 2021

This table shows that most of the respondents are literate and 44% respondents has cross their primary level, 34% respondents are Secondary level, 26% are Higher secondary and 6% respondents are illiterate.

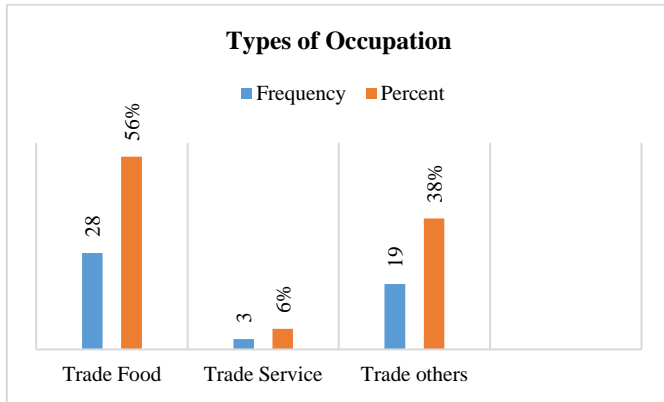
Table Number 4: Housing pattern

Housing Pattern	Frequency	Percentage
Building	15	10%
Semi Building	25	26%
Katcha	15	8%
Tinshed	65	56%
Total	120	100%

Field work, 2021

Among 120 respondents about 10% respondents has building, 26% respondents have semi building, 8% respondents have Katcha housing pattern and 56% respondents has Tinshed housing pattern. This table shows that most of the respondents housing pattern Tinshed and semi building.

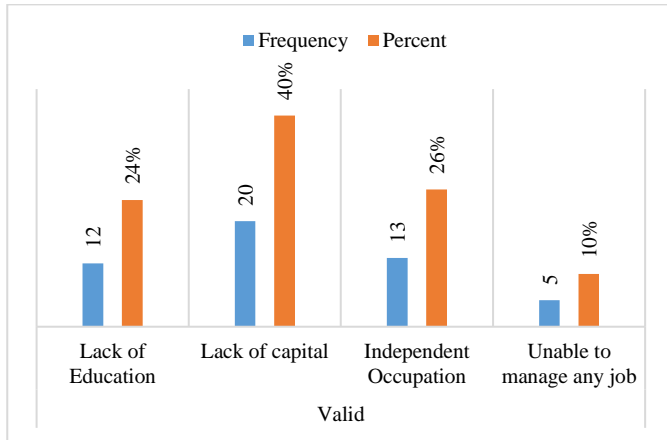
Chart Number 5: Types of occupation



Field work, 2021

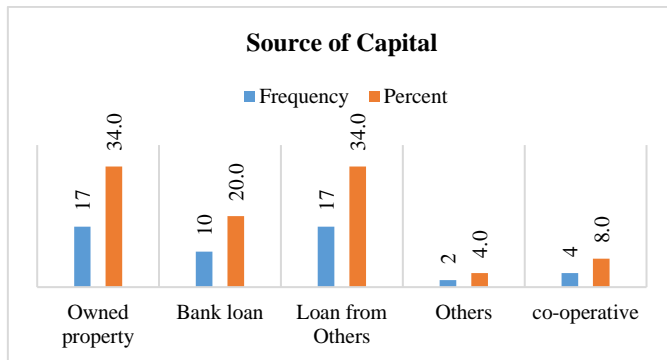
This chart shows that about 56% respondents are related with food selling informal business activities, 6% respondents are engage with trade service and 38% respondents are engage with others informal business activities.

Chart Number 6: Reason of present occupation



This chart shows that respondents engage their present occupation because of their different reason about 12 respondents engage this present informal business because of lack of education, 20 respondents are lack of capital, 13 respondents are feel comfortable for independent business and 5 respondents did not find any other job.

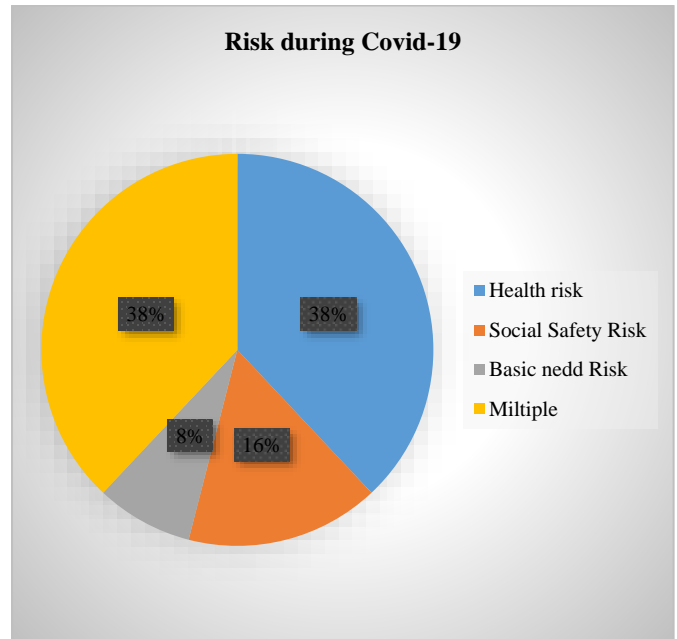
Chart Number 7: Source of Capital



Field work, 2021

This chart shows that 34% respondents has accumulated their capital from their own property, 20% from bank loan, 34% from loan from others, 2% respondents has collected from others sources and 8% respondents has collected their capital from cooperative.

Chart 8: Different Risks during Covid-19 period on informal workers



Field work, 2021

About 19 respondents has faced their health risk, 8 respondents have faced social safety risk and 4 respondents faced basic need risk and 38 respondents has faced their multiple risk. Health risk is the first and critical problem in this period. In this informal activities most of the respondents has faced their health risk problem.

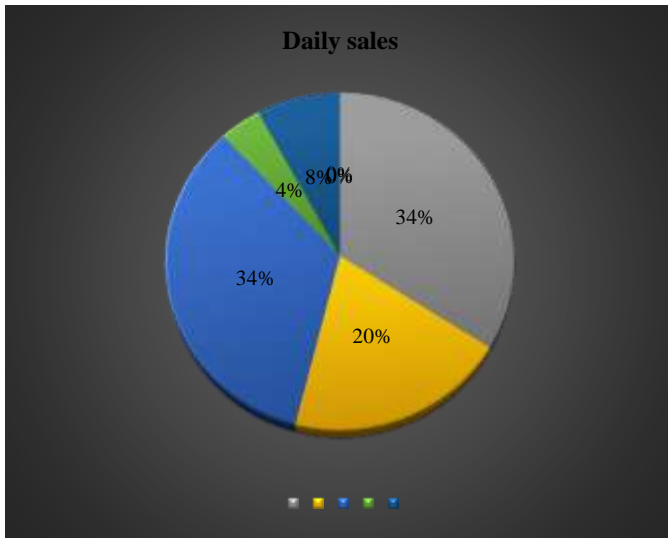
One of our respondents have shared her vulnerabilities during covid-19 period,

“During the coronation period I could not provide cloths or any other facilities to my family members due to lake of funds more over this time I would spend the day in panic because the incidence of corona was much higher in the area. Even my father was affected by corona. I was very worried about his treatment mentally.”

The informal economy, which is still the largest employer in developing nations, has been hit hard by the shutdown. Self-employment, reliance on day-to-day wages, and a lack of social protection all contribute to the precariousness of the informal sector. One of our respondents have lamented his experiences,

“I have faced several complexities including affected in covid positive on that time. I was so scared because there are no other sources of income except me on that time. My wife also faced covid positive on that time”.

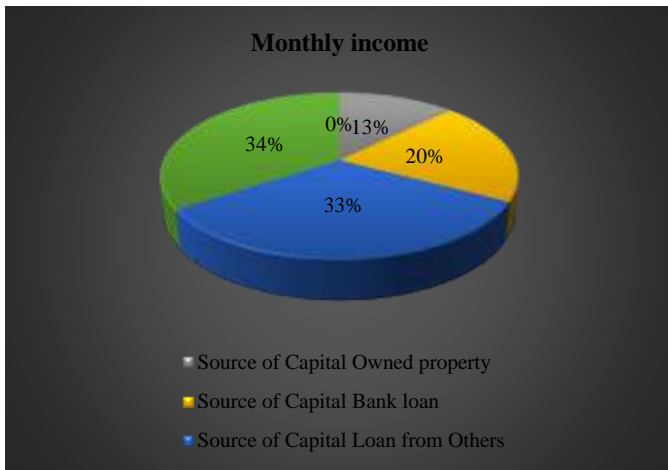
Chart Number 9: Daily sales



Field work, 2021

This chart shows that about 26% respondents daily sales rate 100-1000, 9% respondents daily sales rate 1001-2000, 18% respondents sales rate 2001-3000, 22% respondents sales rate 3001-4000 and 26% respondents daily sales rate 4000 plus.

Chart Number 10: Monthly Income



Filed work, 2021

Covid-19 is a pandemic situation. Every informal business man monthly income has been decrease in this time. This chart shows that about 21% respondent's monthly income was 5000-15000, 35% respondents monthly income was 15000-25000 and 44% respondents monthly income was 25000-35000.

One of the respondents have lamented his experiences,

".....during the covid 19 pandemic because of the restricted rules of opening and closing hours of our business We had to pass a day with difficulty depending on his little income along the cost of his family members. Not only the business sectors but also his family directly affected by the

severe impact of this covid- 19. I could not earn more than 150TK in a day. At those days whenever the whole city was under the control of police defining as red zone."

There has never been anything like the social, political, and economic upheaval and shocks caused by the coronavirus commonly known as COVID-19, and its impacts will have repercussions that make the entire world more susceptible to threats. Nearly a million people have died as a result of the virus, and country economies have been wrecked, as seen by the slowing of the global economy. This might have particularly devastating effects on the poor in emerging countries. Another informal worker has shared his vulnerabilities to us,

"A sense of economic catastrophe had been appeared all over the country and his financial condition was also like the others. That's why I could not ensure necessary foods, clothes, medicine".

Since many individuals depend on the informal sector for their livelihood, the lockdown laws made it much more difficult for those who rely on it. High rates of informality and economic incompetence in underdeveloped countries make it difficult to prevent the spread of the epidemic and its devastating secondary effects. A young man has lamented his sorrowing's,

"It is very difficult to run a family with this low income. At the time of COVID-19 lockdown the financial situation was very bad. Besides, I was the only source of income for the family which made it very difficult to handle everything. It was very difficult for the family members to provide clothes and medicine for elderly mother".

Table Number 11: Monthly expenditures

Expenditures name	Amount
Family Expenditure	5000-15000
Business purpose	5000-20000
Personal expenditure	1000-5000

Field work, 2021

About 5000-15000 tk is family maintaining cost during Covid-19, 5000- 20000n tk for business purpose, and 1000-5000 tk for personal cost in per month for a informal business man.

Table Number 12: Respondent family saving account status

Family Saving Account	Frequency	Percent
Yes	22	44%
No	28	56%
Total	120	100%

Field work, 2021

This table shows that about 44% respondents has their family saving account and 56% respondents has no saving account. 28 respondents are day to day worker.

Wage level

At least in the area where the research is being done, the shop owners in the Street vendor industry are too financially strapped to hire staff. They can't afford to hire more than one worker at a time since the workload is too small to warrant it. Despite the fact that some industries necessitate round-the-clock operations. This is when an alternative form of assistance becomes absolutely necessary. However, this supporting hand is not always the paid labour, but rather the owner's family or any other relative of the owner who does not require payment for his assistance. Two main forms of labor are performed here. There are two types of work: unpaid and paid.

Table Number 13: Percentage of shop using labour

Types of labour	Trade food		Trade others		Services		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Owner alone	3	20.00	6	66.67	4	66.67	13	43.33
Family labour	5	33.33	1	11.11	2	33.33	8	26.67
Waged labour	7	46.67	2	22.22	0	0.00	9	30.00
Total	15	100	9	100	6	100	30	100

About 43.33% shops require no labour at all. Mainly in trade food waged labour is highly required. About 30% shops required waged labour.

Problems Faced by Informal workers:

Not enough money

When it comes to expanding or diversifying into other lines of production, capital is a major limiting factor, just as it is when getting started. Due to greater input costs and cash flow concerns, a lack of working capital tends to restrict transactions, and hence its profitability. Vulnerability may rise as a result of limited access to finance, which could lead to an increase in the use of intermediaries, which is not necessarily a good thing. The folks who work as street sellers either don't have any savings or haven't started saving anything at all. Funding large purchases with credit is a common strategy for building wealth. People in the informal economy typically suffer a shortage of both demand and supply due to a lack of access to financing.

Due to a lack of available credit

The growth of street vendors is dependent not just on access to markets, but also on access to resources including training, capital, inputs, and technology. According to a number of studies, street vendors have almost no access to credit facilities from formal credit institutions, and the cost of credit that is accessible through informal sources is quite high.

Not enough infrastructure for providing essential services and utilities

Having access to reliable utility and service infrastructure is crucial. However, these services are unavailable to the

merchants on the streets. Most of them have no access to electricity, which makes finding your way around at night difficult. No running water or bathrooms are available.

Inadequate personal hygiene

There is a concern with the lack of sanitation for street sellers. People who work in this industry spend their days outside in the sun. They must continue working despite the presence of smoke, dust, and other potentially disease-causing byproducts.

Inadequate job security

Having a guarantee of employment is an essential part of any job. Selling goods on the sidewalk typically comes with low pay and few benefits. A person's daily wage will be withheld from him if he fails to show up to work. Anyone who disappears for more than a month risks losing his job. And if a person were to lose his current business, it would be difficult to launch a new one.

One of the main issues faced by street vendors in our cities is the absence of legislative and organizational support for the manufacturing and promotion of their goods and services, in contrast to other South Asian cities (such as Manila, Singapore, Jakarta, etc.).

Emergence at random

The city's chaos may be traced in large part to the proliferation of unregulated street vendors. Without giving the region in question its due consideration in the planning process and without first establishing its necessity. As a result, many street merchants set up shop in places where they weren't needed. However, many locals are suffering since there aren't enough stores to meet their demands for a wide variety of staple goods and services.

Disorientation and lack of focus

The money generated by the unofficial economy is hardly enough to break even. There is no plan in place for investing back into the company and expanding operations. As a result, most of the businesses run by street vendors are disorganized and pay poorly. An informal sector business owner has limited information and no idea how to expand his company. Lack of formal sector employment has been the driving force behind the establishment of such firms, rather than a desire to generate value for customers. For these and other reasons, businesses in the informal economy have remained relatively small, preventing them from reaping the cost savings that come with increased production volume. From the standpoint of the customer, the informal sector business does not offer a value proposition that could reduce his switching costs. As a result, businesses in the informal sector typically operate without a clear long-term goal in mind.

VI. POSSIBLE SUGGESTIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Since the contributions of the street vendors are very important in economic development of a developing country like Bangladesh, the Govt. should adopt proper policies to develop

this sector and to upgrade the socio-economic status and the living status of the vendors. Therefore, by this study offer the following recommendations to develop the street vending sector and to upgrade the vendor's socio-economic status. Here are some policy recommendations for street vendors. Some policy should be taken by the Government of Bangladesh to improve this sectors of work.

- Street vendors should be registered with the local government. No eviction of licensed vendors from the identified vending zone would be legal unless it is proved to be in the public interest.
- Vending committees should be formed at ward level in the cities with legal authority to allocate space for vending. Representatives of the police, the public works departments, the city corporations or municipality authorities, local (micro-credit) banks and of the vendors themselves should be members of these committees – among them at least one third women.
- The local government authorities should delineate vending zones, in conformity with urban development policies and the existing formal laws, and allow genuine street vendors to sell within these zones for a specific licensing fee. Priority should be given to vendors, who were already in business at these sites.
- Laws should be formulated within the period of this parliament to provide legal, financial and socio-economic support to the vendors as well ensure safety and nutrition of the public consumers.
- A close coordination has to be established between the relevant actors, e.g. the local government authority, police, health department and the vendors or their associations to implement the new laws and the new vending-zones through the vending committees.
- The newly installed local vending committees will charge fees for allocation vending spots and issuing the licenses. They will keep record of the number of registered vendors, map and record the vending zones and individual plots allocated to the vendors with the agreed day(s) and time(s) of vending, record the collected fees, promote activities undertaken by the vendors to improve the hygienic conditions of food vending, as well as register complaints by concerned consumers.
- Public awareness should be raised on the safety of street vendors especially women social pro□
- In addition, as a result of transient nature and small scale of the informal activity authentic, disaggregated information on time is required to locate these type of businesses with the help of Government to ensure appropriate development of skills through capacity-building activities and financial assistance as required.

VII. CONCLUSION

It is generally agreed that the informal sector plays an important part in the growth of emerging economies. Since the vast

majority of the poor in these countries depend on the informal sector—consisting of very small-scale economic activities—for their survival, and since this sector accounts for a substantial and growing share of employment in most developing countries, any credible strategy to reduce poverty in these countries must give it due attention. Entrepreneurs in the informal economy can be the key to national success in Bangladesh, a country that is actively seeking ways to alleviate poverty. Covid-19 plays a critical role in the informal economy and in the operations of enterprises. Authorities at both the local and national levels need to act quickly to address the rapidly shifting urban landscape brought on by factors such as rising demand for basic urban amenities, the spread of infectious diseases like Covid-19, and the resulting deaths of thousands of people. The development community is paying closer attention to the Informal Sector (IS) as a result of its growing significance, and this includes the IS as a whole, the conditions under which labor is being absorbed, and the IS's ability to absorb further increases in the labor force. One of the most noteworthy aspects of this research is the relatively low levels of female engagement in these activities. Capital isn't the only thing holding new entrants back; expertise and access to markets are also major issues. Factors such as low income, imperfect marketing, and a lack of readily available sources of credit are just some of the obstacles to getting this business off the ground that have already been uncovered in the study. Businesses in this sector have taken measures to reduce the financial burden of new capital expenditures by reusing, repurposing, and repurposing existing assets whenever possible and suitable. As this research shows, however, informal sectors are a drag on economic growth across the board, both in developed and developing nations. This is especially true in Bangladesh, where unemployment is a pressing issue, as formal sector job creation has lagged behind for years. In the long run, it may be able to mitigate this problem and lift millions of people out of poverty. Employment creation and economic growth are two areas that benefit from the expansion of the informal economy.

VIII. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The purpose of this research was to examine the informal business sector in Gopalganj Sadar, Bangladesh, and learn more about its current state, structure, distribution, and vulnerability to Covid-19. Inconsistencies in methodology and data saturation biases would be inevitable. The perspectives of rural inhabitants on COVID-19 and cybercrime, community participation and awareness during and after COVID-19, pandemic fanaticism, and the prevalence of risk factors should all be investigated in future studies.

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Conflict of Interests

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Data Availability

The article contains all of the data necessary to support the results. Thus, no additional data sources are required.

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