



Problems Faced by Local Vendors From Tourism in Selected Tourist Destinations of Hooghly District in West Bengal

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Abstract

The present study highlights the problems faced by local vendors as a result of tourism in selected tourist destinations of Hooghly district in West Bengal. Principal component factor analysis which resulted in three factors has been applied. Ten major problems have been identified: permanent shops/stalls, financial support from Government, proper sanitation facilities, bargaining of the tourists, small quantity of goods, interference of middlemen, slack season, online payment system, scarcity of suppliers and providing schemes. After factor reduction, three major dimensions identified are: economic problem of the local vendors, infrastructure problem to local vendors and administrative problem of the local vendors. Cronbach's Alpha test has been conducted to assess the consistency and reliability of the variables included in the study. Kaiser Meyer Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy has been employed to evaluate the validity of the sample data for the factor analysis. A Correlation analysis has been conducted to examine the relationship among the problems affecting the local employment at selected tourist destinations in Hooghly. This study has found that permanent shops/stalls have significant positive relation with provision of schemes to tourists. Financial support has positive significant relation with the bargaining behavior of the tourists. Small quantities of goods have a negative relation with providing schemes. Similarly, interference from middlemen has a negative relationship with the availability of small quantities of goods, while the provision of schemes has a significant positive relationship with the presence of

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permanent shops/stalls. The State Government should extend greater support to local vendors by providing adequate financial assistance so that they can expand their business activities during tourist seasons. The MSME sector in West Bengal is currently experiencing significant growth and development. Therefore, private companies should collaborate with the government through the PPP model to strengthen local employment opportunities. In addition, commercial banks should consider reducing interest rates for local vendors to facilitate easier access to credit, enabling them to obtain loans and repay them within the stipulated time period.

Keywords: Local Employment, Tourism, Exploratory Factor Analysis, Economic problem of local employment, Infrastructure problem of local vendors, administrative problem of local vendors, Government Grant.

Introduction

Tourism is one of the key sectors for employment generation in India. In West Bengal, registered homestays provide employment to 41,320 local people (Budget Speech 2025, Finance Department, Government of West Bengal). Tourism also generates local employment through various fairs and festivals organized across the state. Therefore, the government should provide adequate financial support to promote and expand local employment opportunities. The lack of knowledge regarding tourism-related activities and difficulties in obtaining bank loans are among the major challenges faced by small tourism business enterprises (Issakov et al., 2023). Information related to festivals, fairs, and tourist attractions should be updated regularly through social media platforms to enhance awareness and tourist participation (Puha et al., 2018). The present study highlights ten major problems faced by local vendors in the three selected tourist destinations of the Hooghly district, West Bengal. These include the absence of permanent shops/stalls, financial support from government, proper sanitation facilities, bargaining by tourists, limited quantities of goods, interference of middlemen, slack season, inadequate online payment facilities, scarcity of suppliers and insufficient schemes

Review of Literature

The review of literature includes studies from both national and international contexts.

Paliwal & Sharma (2022) highlighted that the association of Tourism and local employment is positive. Government must play an important role in

providing adequate funds to Tourism sector which in turn may create local employment opportunities at the tourist destinations.

Amanda Richka Razim (2022) examined the factors influencing community support for tourism development and its impact on local employment. The perceived benefit was directly associated with tourism development whereas certain characteristics of the surrounding community had a negative impact on tourism development. Moreover, community's support for tourism development was not influenced by perceived costs. The study suggested that a greater number of people should participate in tourism related activities to enhance local employment opportunities, particularly in areas with attractive tourist destinations.

Issakov et al., (2023) found that small tourism business owners in Almaty encountered several constraints, such as limited knowledge of tourism-related activities, breakdowns in contractual relationships between entrepreneurs and employees, and inability to obtain loan from banks.

Ramil et al., (2022) identified both internal and external factors contributing to the challenges faced by small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the tourism sector. The major challenges included a lack of knowledge and skills among SME owners, limited access to finance, transportation problems, funding constraints, and marketing challenges.

Serefoglu and Gokkaya (2017) observed that rural SMEs in Ankara, Turkey, faced several challenges, including administrative and legal obstacles, as well as a shortage of technical staff.

Hlengwa and Thusi (2018) highlighted that tourism SMEs within the Umsunduzi Local Municipality faced several challenges, including funding constraints, marketing difficulties, staffing issues, and limited opportunities for business expansion.

Moagi Joseph Thato, Ivanovic Milena, and Adinolfi Correia Maisa (2021) found that street vendors faced inadequate financial support from the government. In addition, they encountered several challenges, including safety concerns, transportation difficulties, inadequate storage facilities for goods, and adverse weather conditions.

Azizah Siti (2018) in his study "Study of Street Vendors arrangement in the big city as the Tourism potential of the city case study: The Street Vendor arrangement in Bandung and Solo, Indonesia" highlighted that policy of the local government had changed the attitude of street vendors towards tourism and they felt safe. Local government had managed to provide facilities like comfortable pedestrian roads, playgrounds and entertainment stage.

Rahaman B. and Noviani A. (2022) in their study “Analysis of the problem on Street Vendor relocation in Menara Kudus Tourist area” pointed out three parameters like visibility, environmental and competition which could influence the relocation of street vendors in a particular tourist area.

Barman Barnali (2023) in her study “Socio-Economic status of the Street Vendors of Hilly Region- A Case Study of Yumthang Valley, Sikkim highlighted that street vendor faced many problems like climate and physiography, transportation and communication, seasonal uncertainty, medical facilities and domination of local communities from tourism.

Research Gap

The present study identifies certain gaps in the existing literature. Previous studies have not adequately addressed the major barriers faced by local vendors in tourist areas such as Bandel Church, Hooghly Imambara, and Tarakeswar Temple. Furthermore, the impact of these barriers on the socio-economic conditions of local vendors has not been sufficiently examined in earlier research.

Objective of the study

To identify and analyze the problems faced by local vendors due to tourism in selected tourist destinations of Hooghly District in West Bengal.

Methodology

The present study is both exploratory and empirical in nature. It is based on the perceptions of 400 sample respondents, comprising local vendors engaged in various businesses in the vicinity of three prominent tourist destinations, namely Bandel Church, Hooghly Imambara, and Tarakeswar Temple. The study identifies ten major problems affecting local employment in relation to tourism, namely: 1) permanent shops/stalls, 2) financial support from government, 3) proper sanitation facilities, 4) Bargaining power of tourists, 5) small quantity of goods, 6) interference of middlemen, 7) slack season of tourism, 8) online payment system, 9) scarcity of suppliers, 10) providing schemes. These ten problems have been categorized into three broader factors, namely: (a) economic problems, (b) infrastructural problems, and (c) administrative problems. The study employs a random sampling technique based on the opinions of vendors regarding issues affecting local employment in selected tourist destinations of the Hooghly District, West Bengal.

Major problems that local vendors face from tourism

1. Local vendors do not have permanent shops/ stalls.
2. Local vendors do not get any financial support from Government.
3. Proper sanitation facilities are not available to the local vendors for attracting tourists.
4. Bargaining of the tourists creates problem for local vendors.
5. Small quantity of goods is a problem for local vendors.
6. Interference of middlemen during tourism is a threat for local vendors.
7. Slack season for tourism is a problem for local vendors.
8. Online payment system is a problem for local vendors from tourism.
9. Scarcity of suppliers during tourism is an obstacle for local vendors during tourism.
10. Local vendors do not provide schemes like big establishments to the tourists.

Box 1

Types of Research Design	Explorative research design
Questionnaire Design	Five-point Likert Scale (5= Strongly Agree, 4= Agree, 3= Neutral, 2= Disagree, 1= Strongly Disagree)
Data Sources	Primary Data
Approach of Research	Survey method through physical interaction with respondents
Research Instrument	Structured close ended questionnaire
Sampling Technique	Random Sampling (Based on opinion of local vendors regarding the problems of local employment in selected tourist destinations of Hooghly district in West Bengal).
Sample size	400
Area of Research work	Bandel Church, Hooghly Imambara, Tarakeswar Temple.
Period of study	01.01.2025 to 31.03.2025 (Period has chosen as festive season like New Year's celebration, Holi and Muslim festival)
Statistical tools used	IBM SPSS 20.
Statistical Technique	Exploratory Factor Analysis (Principal Component Analysis).

Hypotheses

H1: Permanent shops/stalls have significant positive relation with providing schemes to the tourists.

H2: Financial support has positive significant relation with bargaining of tourists.

H3: Small quantity of goods has got negative relation with providing schemes.

H4: Interference of middlemen has negative relation with small quantity of goods.

H5: Providing schemes have significant positive relation with permanent shops/stalls.

Data Analysis, Presentation And Findings

The present study has identified ten major problems affecting local employment in three selected tourist destinations in the Hooghly District. The following section presents the results of the consistency and reliability tests conducted for the study.

Consistency and Reliability Test

Table 1: Case Processing Summary

	N	%
Valid Cases	400	100
Excluded	0	.0
Total	400	100.0

a. List wise deletion based on all variables in the procedure

Table 2: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
.808	10

Table 3: Item Statistics

Particulars	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Permanent Shops/ Stalls	3.405	1.13906	400
Financial Support from Government	3.45	1.18936	400
Proper Sanitation facilities	3.25	1.13753	400
Bargaining of the Tourists	3.485	1.06085	400
Small quantity of goods	4.085	0.78156	400
Interference of middlemen	3.82	0.92296	400
Slack season	3.335	1.14426	400
Online payment system	3.255	1.26411	400
Scarcity of suppliers	3.165	1.231	400
Providing schemes	3.172	1.22121	400

Table 4: Item-Total Statistics

Particulars	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Permanent Shops/ Stalls	27.845	19.036	.356	.559
Financial Support from Government	27.8	16.472	.620	.477
Proper Sanitation facilities	28	18.151	.457	.531
Bargaining of the Tourists	27.765	21.336	.144	.613
Small quantity of goods	27.165	23.425	-.021	.635
Interference of middlemen	27.43	20.618	.287	.579
Slack season	27.915	20.048	.246	.589
Online payment system	27.995	19.442	.254	.589
Scarcity of suppliers	28.085	19.626	.251	.590
Providing schemes	28.0752	19.625	.241	.589

Consistency among the ten problems is denoted in Table 1 to 4. Value of Cronbach's Alpha is .808 which shows that samples are consistent and reliable for the analysis.

Data Adequacy and Validity Test

Table 5: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	.775
Approx. Chi-Square	212.158
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	
df	45
Sig.	.000

Table 5 describes the sampling adequacy and validity of data. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling adequacy test has been done. Value of KMO and Bartlett's is .775 which is significant at 5 % level of significance. So, it can be stated that samples are adequate and valid for the analysis.

Table 6: Communalities

	Initial	Extraction
Permanent Shops/ Stalls	1.000	.443
Financial Support from Government	1.000	.707
Proper Sanitation facilities	1.000	.509
Bargaining of the Tourists	1.000	.713
Small quantity of goods	1.000	.836
Interference of middlemen	1.000	.313
Slack season	1.000	.606
Online payment system	1.000	.326
Scarcity of suppliers	1.000	.229
Providing schemes	1.000	.225

Table 7: Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% Of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% Of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% Of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.381	26.459	26.459	2.381	26.459	26.459	1.847	20.525	20.525
2	1.217	13.52	39.979	1.217	13.52	39.979	1.727	19.187	39.712
3	1.083	12.038	52.017	1.083	12.038	52.017	1.107	12.304	52.017
4	0.98	10.894	62.911						
5	0.887	9.853	72.764						
6	0.769	8.543	81.306						
7	0.694	7.707	89.014						
8	0.607	6.748	95.762						
9	0.381	4.238	100						
10	0.371	4.578	98.75						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 8: Component Matrix^a

	Component		
	1	2	3
Permanent Shops/ Stalls	.582		
Financial Support from Government	.820		
Proper Sanitation facilities	.674		
Bargaining of the Tourists	.318	.581	-.524
Small quantity of goods		.412	.816
Interference of middlemen	.495		
Slack season	.459	-.612	
Online payment system	.430	-.324	
Scarcity of suppliers	.417		
Providing schemes			.750

a. 3 components extracted

Table 6 and 7 describe exploratory factors analysis using Principal Component Analysis. Here, all the ten variable statements are grouped into three factors. 52.017% of the data is explained by the three factors. Eigenvalue is used to reduce factors. If the Eigenvalue is more than 1, then factors will be selected. So, only three factors have been selected out of ten variables. % Of variance of Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings of the first factor is 26.459% followed by 13.520% for the second factor and 12.038% for the third factor. On the other hand, it has been noticed that, % of variance of rotation Sums of Squared loadings for the first factor is 20.525% followed by 19.187% for the second factor and 12.304 % for the third factor.

Table 9: Rotated Component Matrix^a

	Component		
	1	2	3
Permanent Shops/ Stalls	.217	.629	.005
Financial Support from Government	.707	.443	.105
Proper Sanitation facilities	.656	.279	-.004
Bargaining of the Tourists	.736	-.343	-.233
Small quantity of goods	.019	-.021	.914
Interference of middlemen	.523	.162	.119

	Component		
	1	2	3
Slack season	.006	.672	-.394
Online payment system	.068	.566	.029
Scarcity of suppliers	.224	.376	.193
Providing schemes	.217	.378	.198

a. Rotation converged in 6 iterations.

Table 8 and 9 denotes extraction of factors. From table 8, we have found that only 3 factors have been extracted. Loading values of all the ten variables have been shown in table 8. Table 9 shows Rotated Component Matrix which explores the factor loadings of all the ten variables. Financial support from government and online payment system are in factor 1. Permanent shops/ stalls, proper sanitation facilities, bargaining of the tourists and slack season are in factor 2 and small quantity of goods, interference of middlemen, scarcity of suppliers and providing schemes are in factor 3. So, the 3 factors are named as Economic problem, infrastructure problem and administrative problem of the local vendors from tourism in selected tourist destinations in Hooghly district, West Bengal.

Table 10: Rotated Component Matrix^a

	Component		
	1 Economic Problems	2 Infrastructure Problems	3 Administrative problems
Permanent Shops/ Stalls		.629	
Financial Support from Government	.707	.443	
Proper Sanitation facilities		.656	
Bargaining of the Tourists		.736	-.343
Small quantity of goods			.914
Interference of middlemen			.523
Slack season		.672	-.394
Online payment system	.566		
Scarcity of suppliers			.376
Providing schemes			.475

Factor 1: Economic Problems

Under the economic dimension of local employment, financial support from government and online payment system variables are considered. Tourist destinations in Hooghly are highly economically backward areas and as a result local vendor faces these kinds of problems. The selected three tourist destinations i.e., Bandel church, Hooghly Imambara and Tarakeswar Temple show limited economic development. As a result, local vendors surrounding these places have been significantly affected.

Factor 2: Infrastructure Problems

Permanent shops/stalls, proper sanitation facilities, bargaining of the tourists and slack season are the variables in this factor. Bandel church, Hooghly Imambara and Tarakeswar temple face these kinds of problems as these tourist destinations are in remote place.

Factor 3: Administrative Problems

Small quantity of goods, interference of middlemen, scarcity of suppliers and providing schemes are in this factor. Local vendors from the selected tourist destinations in Hooghly district i.e., Bandel church, Hooghly Imambara and Tarakeswar temple encounter these kinds of administrative problems to a greater extent.

Table 11: Component Transformation Matrix

Component	1 Economic Problems	2 Infrastructure Problems	3 Administrative problems
1	.742	.671	-.011
2	.611	-.669	.423
3	-.276	0.320	.906

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization

Component Matrix highlights correlation matrix of three factors i.e., Economic problems, infrastructure problems and administrative problems. From the above table, it is observed that there is a positive association between Economic problems and infrastructure problems of the local employment. There is a positive relationship between infrastructure problems and administrative problems of the local vendors. Economic problems have significant negative relation with administrative problems.

Table 12: Correlations

	Permanent shops	Financial support	Proper sanitation facilities	Bargaining of tourists	Small quantity of goods	Interference of middlemen	Slack season	Online payment	Scarcity of suppliers	Providing schemes
Permanent shops	Pearson Correlation	1	0.009	0.014	0.057	-.093*	0.057	-0.009	-0.038	0.800**
	Sig. (1-tailed)		0.431	0.393	0.129	0.032	0.129	0.428	0.222	0
	N	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400
Financial support	Pearson Correlation	0.009	1	0.05	.811**	-0.042	.811**	0.012	0.059	0.009
	Sig. (1-tailed)	0.431		0.16	0	0.198	0	0.402	0.12	0.431
	N	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400
Proper sanitation facilities	Pearson Correlation	0.014	0.05	1	0.051	.140**	0.051	-0.024	0.046	0.014
	Sig. (1-tailed)	0.393	0.16		0.152	0.003	0.152	0.316	0.182	0.393
	N	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400

Bargaining of tourists	Pearson Correlation	0.057	.811**	0.051	1	-0.092*	1.000**	-0.042	0.006	-0.038	0.057
	Sig. (1- tailed)	0.129	0	0.152		0.033	0	0.201	0.45	0.227	0.129
	N	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400
Small quantity of goods	Pearson Correlation	-0.093*	-0.042	.140**	-0.092*	1	-0.092*	-0.044	-0.059	0.012	-.093*
	Sig. (1- tailed)	0.032	0.198	0.003	0.033		0.033	0.188	0.12	0.409	0.032
	N	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400
Interference of middlemen	Pearson Correlation	0.057	.811**	0.051	1.000**	-0.092*	1	-0.042	0.006	-0.038	0.057
	Sig. (1- tailed)	0.129	0	0.152	0	0.033		0.201	0.45	0.227	0.129
	N	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400
Slack season	Pearson Correlation	-0.009	0.012	-0.024	-0.042	-0.044	-0.042	1	.301**	-0.057	-0.009
	Sig. (1- tailed)	0.428	0.402	0.316	0.201	0.188	0.201	0	0	0.129	0.428
	N	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400

	Permanent shops	Financial support	Proper sanitation facilities	Bargaining of tourists	Small quantity of goods	Interference of middlemen	Slack season	Online payment	Scarcity of suppliers	Providing schemes
Online payment	Pearson Correlation	-0.038	0.059	0.046	0.006	-0.059	0.006	.301**	1	-0.038
	Sig. (1-tailed)	0.222	0.12	0.182	0.45	0.12	0.45	0		0.222
	N	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400
Scarcity of suppliers	Pearson Correlation	-0.038	-0.048	.091*	-0.038	0.012	-0.038	-0.057	0.012	-0.038
	Sig. (1-tailed)	0.223	0.169	0.035	0.227	0.409	0.227	0.129	0.408	0.223
	N	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400
Providing schemes	Pearson Correlation	0.750**	0.009	0.014	0.057	-.093*	0.057	-0.009	-0.038	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	0	0.431	0.393	0.129	0.032	0.129	0.428	0.222	
	N	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400

*, Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).

**, Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

Analysis of Hypotheses Result**H1: Permanent shops/stalls have significant positive relation with providing schemes to the tourists**

The correlation coefficient between permanent shops/stalls and providing schemes is 0.800 and it is significant at 5% level of significance. So, permanent shops/stalls have significant positive relation with providing schemes to tourists.

H2: Financial support has positive significant relation with bargaining of tourists

The correlation coefficient between financial support and bargaining of tourists is .811 and it is significant at 5% level of significance. So, financial support has got positive relation with bargaining of tourists.

H3: Small quantity of goods has got negative relation with providing schemes

The correlation coefficient between small quantity of goods and providing schemes is -.093 and it is significant at 5% level of significance. So, small quantity of goods has negative relation with providing schemes.

H4: Interference of middlemen has negative relation with small quantity of goods

The correlation coefficient between interference of middlemen and small quantity of goods is -.092 and it is significant at 5% level of significance. So, interference of middlemen has negative relation with small quantity of goods.

H5: Providing schemes have significant positive relation with permanent shops/stalls

The correlation coefficient between providing schemes and permanent shops/stalls is 0.750 and it is significant at 5% level of significance. So, permanent shops/stalls have significant positive relation with providing schemes to tourists.

Conclusion

The study reveals that local employment in select tourist destinations in the district of Hooghly is heavily depended on local tourism. Local vendors in select tourist destinations of Hooghly district faces several problems like permanent shops/stalls, Financial Support from Government, Proper Sanitation facilities, Bargaining of the Tourists, Small quantity of goods, Interference of middlemen, Slack season, Online payment system, Scarcity of suppliers and Providing schemes. The State Government should extent

support by providing adequate funds to the local vendors so that, they can expand their volume of business during tourism. Local businesses should also promote their products and services through word-of-mouth publicity to attract customers and potential sponsors. Since local vendors are not trained, appropriate capacity-building and skill development programs should be implemented to strengthen local employment. MSME sector of West Bengal is currently emerging. Therefore, private companies must collaborate with the Government in PPP mode to strengthen the local employment. Commercial Banks must consider reducing interest rates for the local vendors so that, they can avail bank loan at any time and repay them in the stipulated time.

Limitations of the study

- ❖ The sample size could have been more.
- ❖ The duration of the study could have been extended.
- ❖ Statistical techniques may have its own limitations and may affect the results.

Scope for Future Research

- Problems faced by large-scale business organizations due to tourism in selected districts of West Bengal may be explored.
- Problems faced by local vendors across all districts of West Bengal can be further investigated to provide a broader understanding. The role of local government in addressing the problems faced by small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the tourism sector in West Bengal may be examined in future studies.

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