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Street Food Dynamics in Cox's Bazar: Balancing Economic Vitality with Health Challenges

Soeb Md. Shoayeb Noman
Department of Business Administration, Uttara University, Bangladesh
Email: shoayebnoman@uttarauniversity.edu.bd

Zahidul Islam
Department of Business Administration, Uttara University, Bangladesh
Email: zahid@uttarauniversity.edu.bd

Masuda Islam
District facilitator, UNFPA Bangladesh
Email: masudaislam31@gmail.com

Abstract

Although street foods provide low-cost meals for all types of people, the health risks may outweigh their benefits. Health-conscious people try to avoid consuming these foods due to the non-use of fresh ingredients, the non-hygienic environment, and the lack of diversification. This study aims to evaluate the existing street food production and sweet corn cultivation environment in the target area and provide overall guidance in the production and marketing processes.

The sources of data incorporate household surveys of the selected stakeholders, focus group discussions in producers' communities, key informant interviews of value chain actors, and a review of similar study documents, databases, and relevant reports. The analysis was done mostly using descriptive statistics like percentage, frequency distribution, and mean with graphical representation and tabulation. The study reveals that only eight percent of processed food vendors are selling healthy processed food, and the monthly average income of a typical street food producer is BDT 26,500. On the other hand, the average sales of corn, fish fry, pickles, and fruit juice are 2,858.4 Kg, 1,796.3 Kg, 3,932.5 Kg, and 17,973.3 Gl. per year respectively. In the studied areas, street foods are sold and food safety issues are not taken into consideration either on the producer or on the consumer side.

More attention needs to be drawn to the nutritional quality of the street foods sold and strategies developed to ensure the sale and purchase of nutritious foods.

Keywords: Street Food, Bangladesh, Vitality, Nutritional Quality, Health Challenges

1. Introduction

The street food industry in Bangladesh plays a significant role in the local economy by providing cheap food to a diverse range of the population and, a substantial number of people contribute to the sales of street food (Abid et al., 2022). In many parts of the world, particularly in developing countries, street food vending also makes an important contribution to employment, household revenue, and food security. Street food vending is a prevalent and distinctive part of the informal sector in densely populated cities like Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh. It plays a crucial socio-economic role by providing affordable, nutritious meals, particularly for lower-income groups (Muzaffar et al., 2009). A study conducted by Njaya, (2014) showed that the sale of street food creates an alternative people-friendly economic dimension that significantly reduces unemployment, increases the incomes of vendors, and provides inexpensive and varied meals. On the other hand, around 2.5 billion people worldwide consume street foods daily, most of which are from developing countries (Sun, et al., 2015). This street food consumption is not unique to Bangladesh, but rather a global phenomenon, supporting the livelihoods of millions and contributing significantly to the economy (Ma et al., 2019). Additionally, there is a low percentage of vendors selling healthy processed food and a lack of food diversification, indicating a need for improvement in the nutritional quality of street foods (Mamun et al., 2020).

However, anxieties about health risks related to street food consumption have been raised, including the use of non-fresh and tasteless ingredients, non-sanitary food preparation environment, non-diversity of the food, and absence of food safety certifications (Banik et al., 2018; Hassan et al., 2019). Categorically, street food is a certain type of food that has been prepared outside the home environment and has historical roots with complex socioeconomic and cultural implications. Local food business in Bangladesh is very crucially a livelihood source for lots of people through street food selling. Nevertheless, these food security challenges cannot be neglected by the authorities as the quality, quantity, and also the nutritiousness of the food needs their attention (Khairuzzaman et al., 2014). Research has shown that street vendors tend to sell less healthful items more frequently in higher-poverty, minority communities, highlighting implications for food disparities and the concept of 'food deserts' and 'food swamps' (Lucan et al., 2020). On top of that, street foods are becoming very appealing to many foreign visitors, and the increase in these spots is now one of the many factors that make the features of many destine very appealing. By the fact, street foods have demonstrated a very great deal of contribution to tourism and also economic prosperity in a region based on the study carried out in the case of Bangladesh (Hossain and Wadood, 2020).

Cox's Bazar has the reputation of a very continuous beach along the sea which is known worldwide and is very popular with its millions of visitors (Shahzalal and Elgammal, 2012). The coastline of Cox's Bazar is the longest sandy beach in the whole world that combines the natural landscapes, hills above the ground, dunes, and also other diverse assets, and this is always successful in drawing the greatest number of guests who desire to have the spectacular experiences (Rakib et al., 2021). Street vendors in Cox's Bazar sell a vast array of eatables including fruits and also other nutritious items (Mramba et al., 2015). This economic and nutritional importance of street food is very obvious in the studies done in other regions, such as Nigeria, where they form more than 70% of the dietary energy and also micronutrients ingested by the market women

(Sahabuddin et al., 2021). Moreover, it has been noticed that there is no control over the environment of the production of street food and the atmosphere often lacks hygiene — which could increase the risk of health due to non-hygienic places of cooking and sale (Mamun et al. 2020).

Yet, street food safety and hygiene cultural challenges pose the problems that should be addressed to overcome them leading to the widespread use of street food culture among the community which would influence the health and wellness of the people which is a major measure of the cultural development. This objective can be accomplished by introducing methodologies like microbiological safety testing of street foods, preparing rules for the processing and sale, and guiding the population about the greater value of foodstuffs of better quality (Banik et al., 2018). Additionally, the efforts should be directed towards improving the working conditions as well as the infrastructure of the street food stalls, including the availability of potable water and an efficient waste collecting and disposal system.

2. Rationale and Objectives of the Study

This study aims to evaluate the existing street food and sweet corn cultivation environment in the target area. This includes identifying the types of street food vendors, their locations, the variety of food offerings, and the prevailing hygiene and safety practices and current condition of sweet corn production. Thus, the overall objective of the study is to assess the current street food landscapes, evaluate hygiene and food safety practices, establish indicators, and identify opportunities for improvement. Moreover, there are some specific objectives of the baseline study that are relevant to this task:

- To establish a clear understanding of the current socio-economic conditions of the target population;
- To evaluate the comparative income pattern of corn producers and processed food manufacturers at Cox’s Bazar;
- To assess the current hygiene and food safety practices followed by street food vendors in the target area;
- To identify specific opportunities and strategies to promote and enhance the availability of healthy street food options.

3. Literature Review

For an assessment of the sales and profitability of the sea-food entrepreneurs at Cox's Bazar Beach, Bangladesh, it is necessary to take into account several important points that can affect the business environment and economic activity in the area. The article by Sahabuddin et al. (2021) provides information regarding the business and loyalty pillars of Cox's Bazar which might also be relevant to comprehending consumer behavior and satisfaction with healthy street foods. Besides, Hossain and Wadood (2020) conducted a literature review on the relationship between tourism and economic growth plus other relevant information on business opportunities in the street food industry at Cox's Bazar Sea Beach. On the other hand, the research work of Roy et al. (2023) considers the manufacture of nanocrystalline titania from the beach sand at Cox's Bazar which shows an opportunity for local business activities and employment. In addition, the study “Climate change impacts on the water demand during the Boro rice cultivation in Bangladesh” by Islam et al. (2019) reveals the role

of climate change in the water needed for the Boro rice season and its implications for food production and businesses in the region. On the same hand, (Mia et al, 2020) studied the periphery of Cox's Bazar-Teknaf Coastal area, revealing environmental and geographical properties of the region which can provide a significant contribution to the location-specific aspects of the street food industry. The study by Akon (2019), looks deeper at the geology, minerals, and economic aspects of heavy mineral sand that exist in Bangladesh. The study offers very useful information to entrepreneurs who are interested in working on the Cox's Bazar Sea beach.

In the modern world, although the popularity of fast food has increased heavily, traditional street food continues its dominance worldwide, but the relationship between street food consumption and well-being, especially health issues is unknown (Buscemi, et al., 2011). Mwangi, et al., (2002) examined the need for street food varieties for a healthy diet and revealed that usually most of the street vendors sell only a few items as the purchasing powers of the consumers limit the vendors in providing lower variety. As of today, there are many studies aiming to investigate the quality of street foods, their adulteration, and the factors influencing them. Lues, et al., (2006) and Nizame, et al., (2019) indicated that hygienic practices of food handlers play an important role in maintaining the quality of street food. According to Chavez, et al., (2021) unhealthy processed foods are highly available in low-income neighborhoods, although, in Mexico City, street food stands are sources of both healthy and unhealthy foods. Mensah, et al., (2002) and by examining more than one hundred menu items by Canini, et al., (2013) found the infective quality of street foods is within acceptable limits, but exposure of food to coasts, and inadequate hygiene practices during production and serving have the risk for adulteration.

Education and the food safety knowledge of the street food vendors play an important role in determining the quality of the street food (Oladipo-Adekeye & Tabit, 2021). Hossen, et al., (2020) found that the level of education influences the food safety practices of the vendors. The results of the study conducted by Mwove, et al., (2020) indicate that the majority of street food vendors do not receive any formal training on hygiene and safety. Studies show that education, training, experience, and infrastructure play a key role in ensuring food safety while vending in the street (Habib, 2016). Privitera, and Nesci, (2015) also indicated that street food vendors lack proper training in hygiene and safety practices during food preparation. Different studies have been conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of health educational programs for vendors related to street food safety; and the result shows that the health educational program improves the knowledge of vendors and consequently the food safety measures (Wickrematilake, et al., 2022).

According to Khairuzzaman, et al., (2014), the attitude towards the street food of the consumers might have influenced the safety practices of the vendors. In line with that Rahman, et al., (2012) and Abid, et al., (2022) separately revealed that food safety attitude depends on knowledge, training, and duration of vending; although, the knowledge of food safety practices depends on age and ethnicity. Not only having poor food hygiene and safety practices but also putting too much emphasis on instant energy, trans fats, salt, and sugar the street food vendors are creating a public health risk for the consumers (Hill, J., et al., 2019). Steyn, et al., (2014) suggested that street

foods ensure the daily intake of protein sufficiently but the intake of nutritional fat and carbohydrates has some concern.

Morales and Kettles, (2009) explored the dimensions of street food vending, their regulations, and its historical policy problems. While trying to find a way to reduce the risks of street food consumption, a review of the literature has been conducted by Alimi, (2016); which indicates that a complete safety protocol is needed for the chain of street food business including good agricultural practices, and good hygiene practices by farmers, vendors, and consumers. According to Bouafou, et al., (2021), street food generates health and environmental hazards due to the use of plastic packaging. On the other hand, Sezgin and Şanlıer (2016) and Morano, et al., (2018) focused on the threat of open place dirt, risk of contamination, hygiene, attitude, and applications adopted during the preparation of the food. Campbell, (2011) opined that street food contamination is inevitable which can cause foodborne diseases. Sheikh, (2010) explained that culture, economy, and environment have a definitive impact on tourism development. Promsivapallop and Kannaovakun, (2020) examined and identified that the food familiarity, food image, and availability of local food influence tourists' decision on their destination. In the case of domestic tourists, Hassan, et al., (2020) found that not only does food strongly influence the traveling behavior of the people but also food can be a purpose of tourism.

There exist several factors that can motivate consumers to buy from street vendors. Saha, and Roy (2016) reveal that product diversity, price, nature, the way to display the product, and flexibility influence consumers' decisions to purchase from the vendors. Nevertheless, street food safety is an issue in many regions, with studies outlining the safety perception of municipal street foods and the need to improve vendors' food safety knowledge and practices (Rheinländer et al., 2008; Addo-Tham et al., 2020; AlHazmi et al., 2021). Research has shown that street food vendors often face challenges in maintaining food hygiene, and there is a lack of diversification in the types of food offered, with only a small percentage of vendors selling healthy processed food (Habib, 2016). Furthermore, the nutritional quality of street foods has been a subject of interest, with a call for strategies to encourage the buying and sale of more nutritious foods (Verma and Mishra, 2020). Street food vending has also been recognized as a source of employment, particularly for women, and a means of providing food at affordable costs to lower-income groups in urban areas (Njaya, 2014; Moussavi et al., 2016). A review of all these studies indicates that there is still a need for more studies on the different aspects related to the procurement of healthy street food, its selling, and how the earnings of these entrepreneurs can be increased.

4. Methodology

4.1 Desk Review and Questionnaire Development

The research team has reviewed different project documents, logical frameworks, and secondary online sources to understand the study objectives and beneficiary details. Structured questionnaires and question fill-up guidelines were developed to collect information about the target group and analyze the present scenario. Once the questionnaire was finalized a formal training for the data collector was organized. During the training, they were briefed on the whole process and given a better understanding of the overall picture of the project areas.

4.2 Data collection

After the training of the data collector, the data collection process started. Each data collector interviewed their targeted respondents with structured questionnaires, collected the information, and sent the data set to the concerned researcher. Due to the nature of the study, both secondary and primary data were required for a comprehensive understanding of the situation; and both qualitative and quantitative data were gathered. Review of similar study documents, databases, and relevant reports have facilitated the gathering of secondary data while the sources of primary data incorporate some distinct approaches of household survey of the selected stakeholders; Focus Group Discussions (FGD) in producers' communities; and Key Informant Interviews (KII) of value chain actors like input seller, output buyer and government agriculture officials. The data collection process was participatory with all types of key stakeholders.

4.2.1 Household survey of the selected stakeholders

Field visits were carried out to gather primary data from different stakeholders and sources. Primary data were collected in an organized manner with a specific questionnaire which was used to collect key information about the respondents in the area of socio-economic condition, family condition, business patterns, corn, and processed food production and distribution, their sources of expenditure, sweet corn farming, street food selling, and financing. To conduct the survey, this study used two sets of questionnaires for corn producers and street food producers. As the total number of participants is 200, all of them were taken in the survey as the respondent. The selected survey includes all the maize farmers and street food sellers engaged with the project. The study used census data by collecting information from the project members, including 200 entrepreneurs of Chakaria and Sadar Upazila of Cox's Bazar District.

4.2.2 Focus group discussions in producers' communities

A focus group discussion (FGD) was used to explore the meanings of survey findings, and the range of opinions/views on a topic of interest and to collect a wide variety of local terms. In that discussion, the participants were free to talk with other group members and encouraged discussions with other participants. It involved a small group of 12 to 15 people. It was led by the moderators (researchers themselves) in a loosely structured discussion of various topics of interest related to our study area. As the discussion progressed a few modifications were made to the predetermined questionnaire.

4.2.3 Key Informant Interviews

Key informant interviews involve qualitative, in-depth interviews of Upazilla Agricultural Officer, BSTI Officer, and Marketers for their first-hand knowledge about street food vending. The interviews are loosely structured, and resemble a conversation among associates, allowing a free flow of ideas and information. When formulating study questions, this study has limited the amount to five. To allow the interview for free and in-depth discussion by informants, the interviewers tried to cover all the relevant topics but the items were limited.

4.3 Data Analysis

The baseline study pursued both the quantitative and qualitative approaches for collecting information about the status of the project target groups and understanding the overall scenario of the target groups. The analysis was done mostly using descriptive statistics like percentage, frequency distribution, mean, and tabulation where appropriate to analyze the collected information from the sellers. For making a sensible analysis of collected data, the descriptive summary statistics, graphical representation, and confidence intervals for crucial variables were checked. Based on the output generated by the data analysis, the frequency tables were prepared for all the variables, and necessary cross tables consistent with the study objectives were prepared.

5. Results and Discussion

The study collected information from the respondents and presented it according to the area of demographic information, their economic condition, family condition, business patterns, corn, and processed food production and distribution, their sources of expenditure, sweet corn farming, street food selling, and financing.

5.1 Demographic Information of the Entrepreneurs

Table 1: The information of market actors and service providers

Market actors and service providers	**Number of the Members**		
	Male	Female	Youth (18 to 35 years)
Maize producer	90	10	20
Materials & Technology Suppliers	5	10	3
Traders/Marketers	5	-	
Processors (street food vendors)	45	5	15
Retailers (pickles, maize retailers)	20	10	2
	165	35	40

* In total 100 members are from Cox's Bazar Sadar and 100 members are from Chakaria Upazilla

There are 200 members of this value chain sub-project. Among them 165 are male and 35 are female. Out of these two hundred members, 100 are from Cox's Bazar Sadar and 100 are from Chakaria Upazila. Understandably, the youths remain more productive than other groups of people; and this sub-project has 40 such members who belong to the youth group.

Table 2: Product-based member segmentation

	Number of the Members		
	Male	Female	Total
Fish fry	45	5	50
Pickles	25	15	40
Sweet corn	90	10	100
Fruit Juice	5	5	10
Total	165	35	200

5.2 Family Condition of the Entrepreneurs

To get an idea about the economic and demographic situation of the entrepreneurs, it is imperative to explore the information on the family condition. Here, the study demonstrated some family information of the selected entrepreneurs like the number

of earning family members, the amount of income they receive, etc. The study found that most of the families have single earning members, and only a few numbers of families have two or more than two earning members.

Table 3: Size distribution of the families of the farmer

Size of Family	No of Families		Family Size	
Two to five	95		Mean	5.8
Six to eight	91		Minimum	2
Nine to fourteen	14		Maximum	14
Total	200			

From Table 3, it is found that there are 95 families out of 200 families that have five or less than five members, 91 families have six to eight members and only 14 families have more than eight family members respectively. The mean family size is 5.8, the maximum is fourteen, and the minimum is two. It can also be seen that ninety families have only one earning member, ninety-eight families have two earning members and only twelve families have three or more earning members. The mean number of earning members is 1.6 with a maximum of five and a minimum of one as expected.

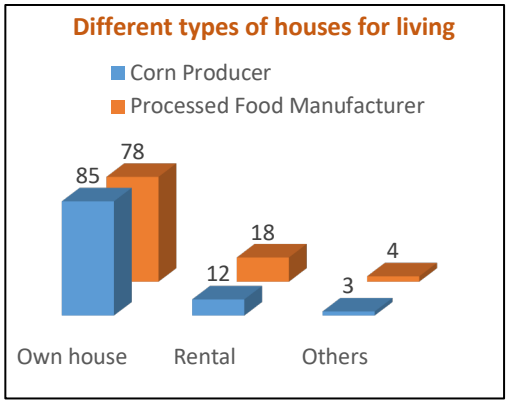

Figure 1: Different types of houses for the entrepreneurs to live in

The entrepreneurs of the project have different types of houses for their living, such as their own house, rental, or some other forms as shown in Figure 1. Eighty-five out of a hundred corn producers live in their own houses while seventy-eight out of a hundred processed food producers live in their own houses. In the case of rental houses, the number goes down to twelve and eighteen respectively for corn and processed food producers.

Figure 2 shows the comparison between the monthly income of corn producers and processed food manufacturers. The average monthly income of corn producers is 26,473 Tk and the average monthly income of processed food producers is 26,850 Tk. The minimum and maximum income of corn producers is 9,000 Tk and 50,000 Tk respectively. The minimum and maximum income of processed food producers is 8,000 Tk and 80,000 Tk respectively.

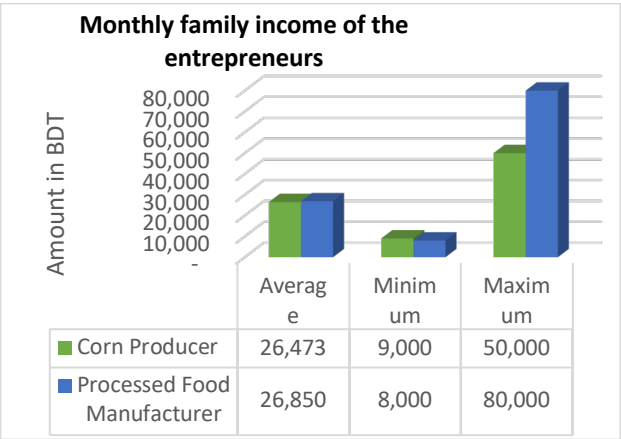

Figure 2: Comparative average monthly family income of the corn and processed food producers

A comparison between the sources of expenditures of corn producers and processed food manufacturers shows that family expenses lead the way for both the corn producers and processed food manufacturers with the amount of 14,850 Tk and 15,934 Tk respectively. Both entrepreneurs spend less on education, reinvestment, and asset generation; and they save less as well.

5.3 Business pattern of the entrepreneurs

Both processed food makers and corn producers have been doing their business for a while. The average length of business for the corn producer is seven years whereas the average length for processed food producers is 6.8 years. Although they have been doing business for over six years, they have not registered their business yet.

The pattern of the business depends on the length of the business and the number of employees used by the entrepreneurs. Figure 3 shows the average number of employees used by processed food manufacturers and corn producers. On average a typical corn producer uses 1.8 employees and a processed food producer uses 1.9 employees, either full-time or part-time.

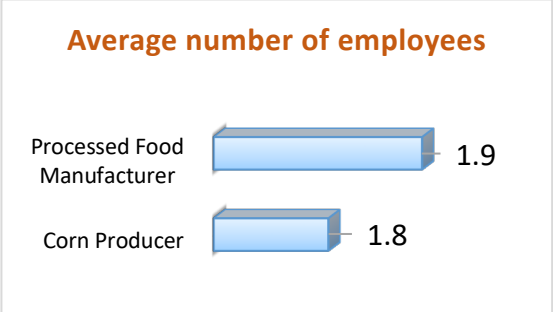

Figure 3: The average number of employees used by entrepreneurs

Table 4: Starting and ending times of the business

Type of Producer	Time
Corn Producer	06:00 am to 06:00 pm
Processed Food Producer	08:00 am to 06:00 pm & 04:00 pm to 12:00 am

The starting and ending times of their business or the work hours are different for both types of entrepreneurs. From Table 4, we can see that the processed food sellers have different sets of time for their business. One of them starts at 08:00 am early in the morning and ends at 06:00 pm; the other group starts at 04:00 pm and ends at midnight. The corn producers on the other hand start at 06:00 am and their work ends at 06:00 pm.

Table 5: Loan taken by the entrepreneurs from different sources

	Corn Producer	Processed Food Manufacturer
Yes	15	22
No	87	79
Average amount of loan (in Tk.)	32,000	71,818

Entrepreneurs are used to taking loans from different sources. However, both the corn producers and processed food sellers are reluctant to take loans from formal sources. Only fifteen out of ninety-eight corn producers and twenty-two out of seventy-nine

processed food sellers have taken loans from different sources. The average loan for corn producers is 32,000 Tk and for processed food sellers it is 71,818 Tk.

5.4 Corn production and distribution

Several factors affect the production of corn. The corn producers gave their opinion on the factors that affect more than the other factors. Lack of technical knowledge, lack of capital, lack of logistics, and lack of marketing are highly hindering corn production. Lack of working opportunities also has some effect on corn production as well, although the effect is not as high as the other factors.

Table 6: Production of sweet corn and the cultivation method

	Produced sweet corn	Use of safe cultivation method	
		Regular corn	Sweet corn
Yes	6	14	5
No	94	86	95
Total	100	100	100

Table 6 shows information about the farmers who are producing sweet corn and their cultivation methods. Only six out of a hundred entrepreneurs are producing sweet corn and only five of them are using safe cultivation methods. On the other hand, out of the hundred corn producers, only fourteen of them are using safe cultivation methods.

Table 7: The production, sales, revenue, and profit of corn and sweet corn production

	Land used	Yearly production (in Kg)	Yearly sell (in Kg)	Average selling price (in Tk.)	Average yearly revenue (in Tk.)	Yearly production cost (in Tk.)	Yearly average profit (in Tk.)
Corn production	89.7	3,606	2,858	34.3	98,043	34,104	63,940
Sweet corn production	40.6	2,080	1,450	38	55,100	24,500	30,600

* Average profit per decimal land for corn is 712.8 Tk and for sweet corn, it is 753.7 Tk.

Table 7 shows the details of production, sales, revenue, costs, and profit of corn and sweet corn production. On average an entrepreneur is using 89.7 decimals of land for corn production and 40.6 decimals for sweet corn production. The average selling price is higher for sweet corn which is 38 Tk compared to 34.3 Tk for corn. Yearly average production of corn is 3,606 kg and sweet corn is 2,080 kg; the average revenue from corn is 98,043 Tk and from sweet corn is 55,100 Tk; and the average production cost of corn is 34,104 Tk and of sweet corn is 24,500 Tk. The yearly average profit on corn is 63,940 Tk and on sweet corn is 30,600 Tk; although the profit per decimal land for corn is 712.8 Tk and for sweet corn it is 753.7 Tk. So, the sweet corn has a higher profit margin than the regular corn.

Table 8: Support needed for the increase in the sale of corn

	Technological knowledge	Financial capital	Service sector development	Distribution
Yes	99	100	82	100
No	1	0	18	0
Total	100	100	100	100

The entrepreneurs were asked to talk about the support they needed to increase their production and sales. Ninety-nine out of a hundred entrepreneurs mentioned technological support, one hundred mentioned financial support, eighty-two mentioned service sector development, and all of them mentioned the improvement of the distribution of both corn and sweet corn.

5.5 Processed food production and distribution

Table 9 shows the number and types of customers that the processed food manufacturers have. On average each entrepreneur has to deal with twenty-six customers each day.

Table 9: Number and types of customers of processed food manufacturers

Average Number of Customers per day	Types of customers		
	Local people	Informal sector employees	The tourist
26	7 %	3 %	90 %

Out of these customers, only seven percent are local people, only three percent are informal sector employees and ninety percent are tourists so while determining the policy and strategy the entrepreneurs have to put their main focus on the tourists.

Table 10: Monthly average sells, revenue, and profit of processed street food

	Average sell (Monthly)	Average revenue (Monthly)	Average Cost (Monthly)	Average Profit (Monthly)
Fish fry	149.69 Kg	21,159.15 Tk.	14,194.44 Tk.	6,964.71 Tk.
Pickle (Seasoning)	327.71 Kg	22,586.96 Tk.	11,934.78 Tk.	10,652.18 Tk.
Fruit juice	1,497.78 Gl.	21,111.11 Tk.	11,800.00 Tk.	9,311.11 Tk.

Table 10 shows the monthly average sales, revenue, costs, and profits from different types of processed street foods. Selling 149.7 Kg of fish fry generated 21,159.2 Tk of revenue with a cost of 14,194.4 Tk and a profit of 6,964.7 Tk. Selling 327.7 Kg of pickle generated 22,586.9 Tk of revenue with a cost of 11,934.7 Tk and a profit of 10,652.2 Tk; whereas 1,497.7 Gl. of fruit juice generated 21,111.1 Tk of revenue with a cost of 11,800.0 Tk and a profit of 9,311.1 Tk. It has been interesting to see that the entrepreneurs know healthy street food; as eighty-six percent of respondents said yes, they know healthy street food. On the other hand, we can see that only eight percent of respondents are selling healthy street food.

Table 11: Problems faced by the entrepreneurs during the expansion of the business

	Lack of Technical Knowledge	Lack of Capital	Lack of Logistics	Lack of Marketing	Lack of Working Opportunity
Yes	85	76	70	42	28
No	14	24	28	54	69
Total	99	100	98	96	97

Table 11 depicts the problems of the entrepreneurs in the expansion of their street food business. Eighty-five people faced the problem of lack of technical knowledge, seventy-six respondents faced a lack of financial capital, seventy faced a lack of logistics, forty-two faced a lack of proper marketing and only twenty-eight faced a lack of working opportunities. Solving these problems may increase the sales and income of the entrepreneurs.

Figure 4 shows the opinion of the street food sellers regarding the support they need to increase their sales. Seventy-nine out of a hundred entrepreneurs mentioned technological support, sixty-two mentioned financial support, fifty-seven mentioned about availability of logistics, and forty-nine mentioned the improvement of the marketing of healthy street food.

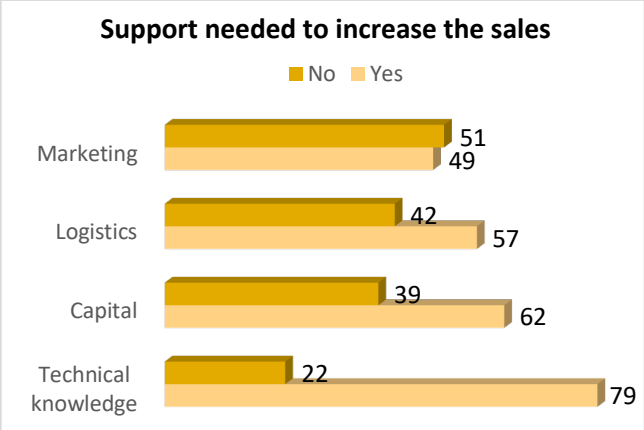

Figure 4: Support needed for the increase in the sale of healthy street food

6. Findings of the Study

While evaluating the existing street food and sweet corn cultivation environment in the target area, the study includes identifying the types of street food vendors, their locations, the variety of food offerings, and the prevailing hygiene and safety practices and current condition of sweet corn production. In many cases with a view to the consumer perspective, the quality of street foods has been determined by the business organizations, regulatory aspects, and technical aspects of food sold on the streets.

This study gives us a clear understanding of the current socio-economic conditions of street food vendors and corn producers. Both the producers of street food and corn have a decent income through their selling, but food safety practices remain a concern for the consumers. On the other hand, good technological knowledge, financial capital, and the development of service sectors and distribution channels remain concerns for street food vendors. To increase the income of the producers and improve safety practices, initiatives need to be taken in terms of knowledge, capital, and distribution channels.

7. Conclusion

The street food industry in Bangladesh plays a significant role in the local economy, providing low-cost meals to a diverse population. However, concerns about health risks associated with street food consumption have been raised. These risks include the use of non-fresh and non-tasty ingredients, unhygienic food preparation environments, lack of food diversification, and absence of proper certification. This highlights the need for increased attention to the nutritional quality of street foods and the development of strategies to promote the sale and purchase of more nutritious options. Governments need to embrace street food vendors as a dynamic economic sector and implement strategies to enhance the safety and nutritional quality of street foods.

In many areas, street foods are sold and food safety issues are not taken into consideration either on the producer or on the consumer side. Consumption of street foods, or ready foods marketed in public areas of urban neighborhoods, is an important food security strategy for a large number of urban residents, particularly the urban poor. The tourists consume the largest amount of street foods at Cox's Bazar Sea Beach. Attention needs to be drawn to the nutritional quality of the foods sold in the area of the sea beach and strategies planned to inspire the sale and obtaining of the most nutritious foods.

8. Acknowledgment

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