Ethics Appendix

Entrepreneurs of Emotions: Evidence from Street Vending in India

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Foreword and background on the initiation of this project

To understand the context and sensitivities involved in working with children for the study, I first conducted interviews with several local NGOs, including Salaam Baalak Trust, Save the Children, Butterfly, Chintan, and Railway Children, beginning in 2019 (two years before starting fieldwork on this project on street vending in 2021). I also conducted interviews at the Office of the Delhi Commission for Protection of Child Rights, the Ministry of Home Affairs and Urban Development, the Delhi Police Department, the National Association of Street Vendors of India, and the National Hawkers Federation, as well as multiple focus group discussions with street families, to better understand the policy landscape.

These conversations helped me comprehend the intricacies and multifaceted nature of working children's circumstances. These discussions inspired me to conduct a thorough investigation into the street vending market—one of the most common sources of income for street-connected children—before considering policy design in this area. As a result, the present study is a step in that direction and part of my broader research agenda in understanding the street economy.

I outline below the ethics of the study design and the safety protocols, following the guidelines in *Asiedu et al.*, *(2021)*.

Policy Equipoise and Scarcity

1. Is there a policy equipoise? That is, is there uncertainty regarding participants' net benefits from each arm of the study relative to the other arms and to the best possible policy to which participants could have access? If not, ethical randomization requires two conditions related to scarcity: (1) Was there scarcity, i.e., did the inclusion of multiple arms change the expected aggregate value of the programs delivered? (2) Do all ex-ante identifiable participants have equal moral or legal claims to the scarce programs?

The experimental components of this paper did not involve implementing an intervention or a traditional randomized controlled trial. Instead, the paper uses within-subject randomization in the three experimental components of the study (a lab-in-the-field and a field experiment with vendors and a survey with passersby) to test the research hypotheses. No participant in any study component can be predicted to be better off or worse off than another participant or a non-participant.

Researcher Roles with Respect to Implementation

2. Are researchers "active" researchers, i.e., did the researchers have direct decision-making power over whether and how to implement the program? If yes, what was the disclosure to participants and the informed consent process for participation in the program? Providing IRB approval details may be sufficient but further clarification of any important issues should be discussed here. If no, i.e., implementation was separate, explain the separation.

The researchers were directly involved in implementing the study, conducting surveys, and interacting with the participants. Every survey team member completed the Protecting Human Research Participants (PHRP) training, acknowledged their responsibility for the study implementation while prioritizing the participant's safety and comfort, and received detailed instructions and protocols for interacting with participants and taking informed consent. The IRB approval for the study was obtained from Harvard University (IRB19-1905). Both the experimental components involved informed consent of vendors; adult and parent consent forms, and child assent forms were reviewed by the IRB.

Potential harms to participants or nonparticipants from the interventions or policies

3. Does the intervention, policy or product being studied pose potential harm to participants or non-participants? Related, are participants or likely affected non-participants particularly vulnerable? Also related, are participants' access to future services or policies changed because of participation in the study? If yes to any of the above, what is being done to mitigate such risks?

Although we studied an economically and socially vulnerable population, our study did not pose any harm to the participants and non-participants. The field team had completed the Protecting Human Research Participants (PHRP) training and was fully aware of the local context, including the local language, culture, and social norms. The Principal Investigator had detailed conversations with various stakeholders, including the Delhi Police, the Railway Police, and the Delhi Commission of Child Rights Protection in India before starting the fieldwork, and maintained contact with the local NGOs working with children in case of an emergency or distressing situation.

It was made clear to all participants that the study does not affect in any shape or format, any individual's access to future services or policies because of their participation or non-participation in this study. Throughout the research process, the safety and the consent of participants, including that of their guardians in the case of children, were of utmost importance to the research team. The Principal Investigator and the research team extensively piloted and tailored the incentive payment for the participants to avoid any unintended inducement to work during each research exercise.

The following table provides a detailed explanation of risks and mitigation strategies that were adopted for each research exercise to minimize potential harm to the participants or nonparticipants from the interventions or policies:

Participant	Exercise	Risk Mitigation Strategy and Protocols
Street Vendors	Observational Study: Enumerators observed street vendors for a few hours on different days and collected data on the observable characteristics and actions of the passersby and vendors such as passersby gender, whether the vendor solicited the passerby, whether a sale was made, etc. Participants were fully informed about the study, and the data being collected.	Participants were informed that we would observe their interactions with passersby and knew what data would be collected. Verbal consent was taken from all the participants. Additional consent from the parent/guardian was obtained first in case the participant was a child (7–16 years of age). The parent/guardian was fully informed about the kind of information that would be recorded. No sensitive questions were asked and neither any sensitive information nor any personal identifiers of the passersby were recorded during the observation. Participants had the right to withdraw their participation from the survey at any time without giving any explanation to the enumerators. All the surveys took place during the day in a safe environment such as markets, metro stations, and other public spaces. Participants and enumerators followed all COVID-related safety protocols. The amount chosen for the participation reward was based on earlier focus group discussions and piloting experience. The reward paid was locally and contextually appropriate.
Street Vendors	Lab-in-the-Field Experiment: The participants were shown information about the cost of an item and they were asked to quote a price that they would sell an item for to the randomly selected buyer/passerby category — similar to what they do regularly when trying to sell their product(s). Participants were also asked a few questions about their unit costs and pricing.	Participants were informed about the study and the kind of questions they would be asked. Enumerators walked them through trial questions before proceeding with the actual survey to ensure that the participants understood the exercise. Verbal consent was taken from all the participants. Additional consent from the parent/guardian was obtained first in case the participant was a child. No sensitive questions were asked. Participants had the right to withdraw their participation from the survey at any time without giving any explanation.

		All the surveys took place during the day in a safe environment such as markets, metro stations, and other public spaces. Participants and enumerators followed all COVID-related safety protocols. The amount chosen for the participation reward was based on earlier focus group discussions and piloting experience. The reward paid was locally and contextually appropriate.
Passersby	Survey with passersby: The survey involved a standard willingness to pay exercise. Participants also played an incentivized dictator game where they were shown profiles of recipient child and adult sellers and panhandlers. Participants were also asked a few questions related to the social norms and their opinions on street vending and panhandling.	No sensitive questions were asked in the survey. Verbal consent was taken from each participant. They were informed about the kind of questions they would be answering and how their responses would be helpful to the study. Enumerators walked them through a trial before proceeding with the actual survey to ensure that the participants understood the research exercise. Consent was also taken from the sellers and/or panhandlers whose profiles were presented to the participants about whether their pictures, names, ages, and nature of work can be shared with others or not for this research experiment. Participants had the right to withdraw their participation from the survey at any time without giving any explanation. All the surveys took place during the day in a safe environment such as markets, metro stations, and other public spaces. Participants and enumerators followed all COVID-related safety protocols. The study did not impose any financial obligations on the participants in any way. The participants had a chance to win Rs. 100 through a lottery. Extensive piloting of the survey showed that there was no need to provide any monetary or in-kind compensation to every participant as the survey duration was between five and ten minutes and involved making choices that the buyers make on an everyday basis.

Street Vendors	Field Experiment: This was similar to the observational study. Since the purpose was to closely study the behavior and interactions between a seller and potential buyer, the enumerator randomly selected a buyer category and the participant was asked to approach (or not) potential buyers and quote a randomly selected price.	Vendors were informed about the study purpose and the fact that they would be observed for a few hours, including the pricing and sales decisions that would be recorded. Verbal consent was taken from all the participants. Additional consent from the parent/guardian was obtained first in case the participant was a child. The parent/guardian was fully informed about the kind of information that would be recorded. No sensitive questions were asked and neither any sensitive information nor any personal identifiers of the passersby were recorded during the observation. The enumerator was present throughout to clarify the doubts of the participants. Participants had the right to withdraw their participation from the survey at any time without giving any explanation to the enumerators. All the surveys took place during the day in a safe environment such as markets, metro stations, and other public spaces. Traffic/red lights were not considered as a location for this exercise to mitigate any risk or safety threat. Participants and enumerators followed all COVID-related safety protocols. The experiment study did not impose any financial obligations on the participants as the enumerators did not interrupt their work in any way. Participants were free to keep all the money that they had earned during the survey duration. The amount chosen for the participation reward was based on piloting and compensation used in other components of the study and was locally and contextually appropriate.

Potential harms to research participants or research staff from data collection (e.g., surveying, privacy, data management) or research protocols (e.g., random assignment)

4. Are data collection and/or research procedures adherent to privacy, confidentiality, risk management, and informed consent protocols with regard to human subjects? Are they respectful of community norms, e.g., community consent not merely individual consent, when appropriate? Are there potential harms to research staff from conducting the data collection that are beyond "normal" risks?

The research process was adherent to all risk management, data collection, and storage protocols as per the Institutional Review Board procedures (Institutional Review Board approval by Harvard University (IRB 19-1905). No sensitive questions were asked from the participants at any stage of the research process and consent was taken from the participants at every stage when the researchers were directly interacting with them. The participants had the freedom to leave the study at any time if they wished to without explaining themselves to the field surveyors. There were no financial, emotional, or psychological risks involved in any study component. Even though no harm was involved to participants in the study, we made arrangements to connect the participants with the appropriate resources if any unexpected situation arose (through maintaining contact with local NGOs and organizations working with this population). Data was not shared with anyone except the research assistant. Confidentiality and consent of the participants was duly respected. The safety of the research staff was also ensured throughout. All the surveys and study experiments took place during the day in open public spaces. Since the study took place during the time of COVID-19, the research staff followed all the COVID-19 safety protocols, and they were provided with safety materials, including hand sanitizers, masks for themselves and the participants, and hand gloves.

Financial and reputational conflict of interest

5. Do any of the researchers have financial conflicts of interest with regard to the results of the research? Do any of the researchers have potential reputational conflicts of interest?

No.

Intellectual freedom

6. Were there any contractual limitations on the ability of the researchers to report the results of the study? If so, what were those restrictions, and who were they from?

No. The researcher had unrestricted intellectual freedom to report the results of the study.

Feedback to participants or communities

7. Is there a plan for providing feedback on research results to participants or communities? If yes, what is the plan? If not, why not?

No. As the study does not collect any data related to the benefits or costs of any kind that the participants are unaware of and may benefit from knowing, and since some components of the study involve collecting de-identified data only, there is no plan to debrief the participants. The informed consent procedure, therefore, did not promise any relaying of research results.

Foreseeable misuse of research results

8. Is there a foreseeable and plausible risk that the results of the research will be misused and/or deliberately misinterpreted by interested parties to the detriment of other interested parties? If yes, please explain any efforts to mitigate such risk.

The objective of this paper was to understand the behavior of street vendors and passersby to understand what influences transactions and earnings in this market. The research, therefore, does not make any normative statements or provide any policy recommendations that can directly alter their lives. Further, to mitigate any risks of the paper being misinterpreted as it involves an economically and socially vulnerable population, the results of the paper will be explained and emphasized simply and understandably, with a clear disclaimer statement when discussing the implications of the study on welfare and policy design, that the results are not intended to further any normative stances.

Other ethical issues to discuss

9. Are there any other issues to discuss?

No.

References

Asiedu, E., Karlan, D., Lambon-Quayefio, M. and Udry, C., 2021. A call for structured ethics appendices in social science papers. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, *118*(29).